

MINUTES
WATER RESOURCES COMMITTEE
Tuesday, May 31, 2022, at 9 a.m.
UNITED WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Boardroom, 1701 N. Lombard Street, Oxnard CA 93030

Committee Members Present:

Chair Daniel Naumann
Director Maulhardt
Director McFadden

Staff Present:

Mauricio Guardado, Jr., general manager
Dr. Maryam Bral, chief engineer
Brian Collins, chief operations officer
Anthony Emmert, assistant general manager
Dan Detmer, water resources manager
Dr. Zachary Hanson, hydrogeologist
Kathleen Kuepper, hydrogeologist
John Lindquist, senior hydrogeologist
Josh Perez, chief human resources officer
Zachary Plummer, technology systems manager
Dr. Bram Sercu, senior hydrologist
Daryl Smith, controller
Ambry Tibay, senior accountant
Brian Zahn, chief financial officer

Public Present: (see attached)

Omar Castro, City of Oxnard
Monica Noeng, Ventura Water

OPEN SESSION: 9:00 a.m.

Director Maulhardt called the Water Resources Committee Meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

1. Public Comment

Director Maulhardt asked if there were any public comments for the Water Resources Committee.
None were offered.

2. Approval of Minutes - Motion

Motion to approve the March 1, 2022, Water Resources Committee meeting minutes, Director McFadden; Second, Director Maulhardt. Voice vote: two ayes (Maulhardt, McFadden); none opposed; motion carries 2/0.

Chair Naumann joined the meeting at 9:06 am.



3. Urban Water Management Plan update, Oxnard Hueneme System (see attached slides)

Dr. Zachary Hanson made a presentation on the Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP) update for the Oxnard Hueneme (OH) pipeline. He stated that the UWMP and Water Shortage Contingency Plan (WSCP) were submitted to the Department of Water resources (DWR) in 2021 and United was notified that DWR had approved the plans on May 20, 2022.

Director Maulhardt asked if the UWMP and WSCP include the projects that were included as part of the Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agencies (FCGMA) Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). Dr. Hanson stated that while this is the District's document, staff does rely on FCGMA planning documents. Chair Naumann noted that the FCGMA recently amended their GSP with the annual report to DWR and asked if the UWMP matches those changes. Dr. Hanson stated that the UWMP was submitted in June of 2021 so those updates were not included when it was adopted, however updates will be captured in the annual assessments that the District will submit to DWR by July 1, 2022.

Dr. Hanson also provided an update regarding Executive Order (EO) N-7-22 that was issued by Governor Newsom on March 28, 2022. He stated that since this EO was issued, DWR has been working to update their guidelines for submission of the preliminary and final Annual Assessments that are due June 1, 2022 and July 1, 2022, respectively. General Manager Mauricio E. Guardado, Jr. stated that a third of water agencies have gone through a significant amount of outreach to get rate payers invested in programs to improve water supply infrastructure. He added that these agencies do not require conservation mandates, they do not have shortages, and their rate payers are now upset because they have invested in a drought-proof system, but they are still required to respond to the EO.

Director Naumann asked if it is the District's responsibility to reduce OH deliveries by 20% or the City of Oxnard's responsibility to reduce retail delivery by 20%, which then lowers demand from United. Dr. Hanson stated that this is a complicated topic, in part because as a wholesaler United has reduced requirements and authorities for conservation efforts and regulations. Staff understanding is that the District cannot demand any reductions from their customers, and that District actions are triggered by FCGMA actions to reduce allocation for the OH System. Mr. Guardado, Jr. stated that the District will be relying on the Cities to comply with the Governor's EO.

Water Resources Manager Dan Detmer stated that the District's two largest customers have alternative water suppliers. He stated that while retailers are required to reduce demand by 20%, it does not need to be reduced evenly among their sources. He added that retailers might choose to rely on local groundwater reserves and utilize their full allocation of groundwater, and can reduce their State Water imports. He stated that it is on the customers/users to not exceed their groundwater allocation and if they do, they will pay penalties to FCGMA.

Dr. Hanson then stated that because of the EO, the District made sure to inform all OH users of the order, offer some alternative response actions, and encouraged users to reduce their total water use by 20%. Chair Naumann then asked if staff has calculated this projected pumping reduction in the new District budget. Chief Financial Officer Brian Zahn stated that these numbers have not been adjusted as a result of the EO, and stated that staff continues to use the five-year average for pumping projections.



4. Water Resources Department Update

Mr. Detmer provided updates on the recent department activities, including basin optimization modeling efforts. He said staff is working on a report detailing the results of the efforts and will be bringing a presentation to the committee.

Mr. Detmer then stated that United's Principal Groundwater Modeler Dr. Jason Sun has built and calibrated a solute transport model for the Mugu Project Area but that a break-out Semi-perched aquifer model for the area still needs to be refined. He stated that this aquifer has some shallow groundwater contamination and the seawater density wedge at the bottom of this aquifer needs to be simulated. He added that staff will need to demonstrate that water will not leak down through the confining unit at rates that would affect near-surface contamination. To do that, we will break the Semi-perched aquifer into multiple sub-units and simulate downward gradients. He stated that staff is working with the Navy to obtain historic record sets from shallow wells. Director Naumann then asked how deep it goes. Mr. Detmer stated that there are five layers in the perched zone model to a depth of 130 feet. He said that the Navy is planning to install 240 monitoring wells this summer as part of their per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) investigation. He stated that staff is aware there is some PFAS in shallow groundwater, and PFAS is an emerging issue that the Division of Drinking Water (DDW) takes very seriously.

Director Maulhardt asked if United's groundwater modeling can support the FCGMA Water Market and stated that United provides the FCGMA much of their technical data. He stated that while the District does not want to be a small version of FCGMA, other issues related to this will arise with the other Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) and they too will need our help with basin analysis. He stated that staff needs to be ready and willing to look at these issues. Mr. Detmer stated that there are existing rules for the Water Market but he does not believe there are any limitations to transferring production from the Upper Aquifer System to the Lower Aquifer System or vice versa. He stated that staff will work with FCGMA and the Water Market administrator on these issues. Director Maulhardt suggested staff evaluate if a white paper or formal guidelines will help provide legal protection for this work.

Mr. Guardado, Jr. weighed in on the conversation and said that while it is not specifically United's issue, the mission of the District is to help fortify the basins. The District has spent a lot of effort, time and resources to prepare a lot of this information for the FCGMA Board. He stated that staff is always prepared to deliver information and always willing to help, but sometimes it is a willingness issue.

Mr. Detmer also provided updates on the City of Ventura monitoring efforts in the Santa Clara River estuary, and recent activities on grants by district staff.

5. Groundwater Sustainability Agencies Update

Mr. Detmer provided updates on GSA activities for the Fillmore and Piru Basins, the Mound Basin and FCGMA (Oxnard, Pleasant Valley and Las Posas Valley basins). He stated that FCGMA has received a number of variance requests and the Board has been asked to rule on those. Director Maulhardt stated that he has a meeting on June 10, 2022 to discuss CombCodes that allow owners and operators to pool well allocations among a number of wells and properties.



Mr. Detmer then stated that the FPBGSA has is working on grant funding opportunities for monitoring well (MW) installations. They have put bid packages together for the proposed wells and advertised on BidNET. He stated that MBGSA has also received DWR grant funding for MWs. Last week a DWR contract driller installed a deep well cluster at the Ventura Wastewater Plant at Ventura Harbor. United also recently installed pressure transducers in existing shallow monitoring wells along the lower Santa Clara River and this will help address GSP comments on surface water - groundwater interaction issues. At the end of the committee meeting Mr. Detmer thanked Director McFadden for his involvement as a committee member and his support for the Water Resources team.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Committee members offered no suggestions.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Naumann adjourned the meeting at 10:01 am.

I certify that the above is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Water Resources Committee Meeting of May 31, 2022.

ATTEST:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Daniel Naumann', is written over a horizontal line.

Daniel Naumann, Chair