

Santa Rosa Plain Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

Date/time: Monday, July 8, 2019 / 3:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Meeting Location: Santa Rosa Utilities Field Office, 35 Stony Point Road, Santa Rosa

Contact: Andy Rodgers, GSA Administrator

Email: arodgers@westyost.com | Phone: 707-508-3661

MEETING RECAP

Summary of Action Items

<i>Action Item</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
Send an email to the Advisory Committee members detailing the process for renewing two-year and three-year terms for all Advisory Committee members and Alternates.	Andy Rodgers	Complete
Review the Ordinance and provide feedback for improvements to Andy Rodgers before the next Board meeting.	Advisory Committee Members	August 7
Send additional feedback to Andy Rodgers about the well Registration program.	Advisory Committee Members	August 7
Send any additional comments or questions for Carrie about the rebate program to Andy Rodgers.	Advisory Committee Members	ASAP
Send feedback to Marcus Trotta on latest GSP subsections.	Advisory Committee Members	August 7
Send GSP Development PPT from this meeting to the Advisory Committee members.	Marcus Trotta	ASAP
Member agencies notify the Administrator, in writing, who will serve on the Advisory Committee for the next term beginning January 1, 2020 and ending December 31, 2021, as well as the alternate (even if it is the same members).	Advisory Committee Members representing member agencies.	November 1

Next meeting: Monday, September 9, 2019, 3:00 – 5:30 p.m., City of Santa Rosa Utilities Field Office (UFO), 35 Stony Point Road, Santa Rosa

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MEETING SUMMARY

Welcome, Introductions, and Agenda Review

Rich Wilson, Sacramento State University Consensus and Collaboration Program (facilitator), opened the meeting, suggested a round of introductions, and followed with an overview of the meeting's agenda. No comments were received on the agenda.

General Public Comment Period

No public comments were received.

GSA Staff and Advisory Committee Updates

Andy Rodgers, Administrator, presented the June GSA Board meeting activity – the Board accepted the Raftelis rate study report, adopted an Ordinance requiring registration of groundwater use facilities, adopted a Resolution for establishing the fee, and approved a Reserve policy for agency financial reserves. The County of Sonoma Board of Supervisors and Sonoma Water's Board of Directors approved an "Alternative Plan" supporting GSA activities for Fiscal Year 2019-2020 through 2021-2022 providing a combined contribution up to \$240,000 annually. The annual cost to fund the GSA is \$337,000 a year and there is an annual projected deficit of \$6,887. Rodgers identified various options for addressing the annual operating deficit.

At the April 11 SRP Board meeting, the Board offered unanimous support for Sebastopol joining the Santa Rosa Plain GSA and agreed to Sebastopol paying a prorated contribution of \$71,400 for three years. On June 25, Sebastopol City Council voted to join the GSA Board and voted Council Member Michael Carnacchi the GSA Board Member and City Mayor Neysa Hinton, the Alternate. Henry Mikus thanked Marcus Trotta for his time and support at the June Sebastopol Council meeting.

The two-year terms for Advisory Committee Members appointed by Member Agencies are up for renewal at the end of 2019. This concerns eleven seats including Sandi Potter, Mary Grace Pawson, Craig Scott, Jennifer Burke, Mark Grismer, Carolyn Dixon, Wayne Haydon, Matt O'Connor, Chris Bates, Henry Mikus, and Maureen Geary; these individuals need to re-apply. **By November 1, 2019**, the GSA is requesting member agencies notify the Administrator, in writing, who will serve on the Advisory Committee for the next term beginning January 1, 2020 and ending December 31, 2021, as well as the alternate (even if it is the same members). This will allow the GSA to maintain complete records.

Interest-based seats have a three-year term that ends December 2020. *There is nothing needing to be done for these seats in 2019.* However, interest-based members must apply to the GSA for the next term by October 1, 2020, even if they're already serving.

Marcus Trotta mentioned a plan for a community workshop in late 2019/early 2020 which would focus on work done to-date of the basin setting section of the GSP and moving forward concentrate on SGMA's six sustainable management criteria.

- Bob Anderson - How big a public workshop? What kind of outreach are you doing to solicit people to attend?

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- Trotta - We plan to present our understanding of the water basin, describe its conditions, present the water budget, convey next steps and introduce the concept of sustainable management criteria (including setting thresholds) to the public. We look to Ann DuBay for outreach.
- Ann DuBay, Sonoma Water Outreach - Said there is funding available to send a postcard to everyone in the basin. They will also do traditional press releases and use social media, free media if possible. The meeting will most likely take place in the November/December timeframe.
- Member Furch suggested to hold the meeting in October as November/December are very busy periods.
 - Dubai - We are concerned about October as we need materials to be ready. Might look at moving the meeting to January to increase the opportunity for public involvement. She agreed November and December aren't as good for getting high attendance.

Trotta on basin prioritization - DWR recommended Wilson Grove Basin be a very low priority basin based on comments and information received. Santa Rosa Plain was reprioritized to medium rather than high priority. These are still draft recommendations, there is a 30-day comment period. The County submitted comments in support of the draft recommendations during the comment period and several resource agencies and organizations, including NOAA, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Nature Conservancy, California Trout and Trout Unlimited. DWR is in the process of considering the comments received and plan to release their final determinations early summer.

- Member Furch – I read a lot of concerns about the Coho streams. The timeline is challenging to amend boundaries right now. If we can be specific about the upland area there may be some ways to include those areas even if DWR can't include them in the boundaries. We might be able to take them into account anyway.
 - Trotta – In our current GSP we are taking them into account. We think the GSA would be able to find support for monitoring in the contributing watershed areas outside of the Bulletin 118 Basin. We will continue to coordinate with Wilson Grove no matter which way the prioritization goes. DWR will not allow basin boundary change requests again until after 2022.
- Member Furch – That is my understanding but given the sensitivity of the issue it seems we might be more specific about looking at the streams and the impacts. It seems like they will be included in some future boundary amendment.

Trotta mentioned grant funding approval from DWR to install twelve shallow monitoring wells in the Santa Rosa Plain Basin. He received a draft agreement and is in the process of reviewing and finalizing scope with DWR. Currently looking at drilling logistics and working on access and permitting issues. Hopefully, the wells will be installed by early fall to start collecting data that will be useful in the GSP.

Update and Future Direction of Rate and Fee Study

Andy Rodgers provided the Ordinance updates. He put forward some ideas for improving/revising the Ordinance and mentioned the Board is hoping the Advisory Committee will provide them with advice.

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Comments/Questions

- Member Furch - Suggested to have an executive summary or fact sheet to explain what the Ordinance is.
- Member Bertsch – On the first section of the Appeals, it prompts one thing that can be appealed which is the amount of the groundwater fee. I wonder how that relates to this. The people won't be paying for three years. We aren't showing it on the tax roll. If the purpose of the registration process is to correct data, we might want to separate those things. Maybe we should have a very simple way to correct data.
 - Andy – The Appeals is more for someone who thinks they shouldn't be charged for anything. The registration program is set up to get new data to correct data and doesn't have anything to do with the Appeals.
- Member Bertsch – Is there a cheat sheet that explains why they aren't paying anything right now but will be in three years? Is there anything that shows exactly what the County is paying?
 - Rodgers – It speaks to what Member Furch mentioned before. We need to have some good at-a-glance materials.
- Member Potter – Regarding production of wells in Windsor – Section 2a Municipal Large Water service providers – make sure it includes irrigation water, not only drinking water.
- Member Hayden – Regarding the Raftelis report – include mention in the Ordinance. We should specifically say we are using Raftelis numbers.
 - Rodgers – good idea, will check with Legal Counsel.

Andy Rodgers then gave an update on the groundwater user registration program. He said the direction from the Advisory Committee and the Board is to keep it simple. Currently looking at ways to exchange information and make sure our data sets get better over time. We need to develop materials to be sent to SRP groundwater users for Board review and he solicited the Advisory Committee members' help. He noted the importance of working with a lot of people on the materials to make sure it is clear, then asked if there was interest from any Advisory Committee Members to be involved.

Comments/Questions

- Member Furch - Suggested Ann Dubay's Communications sub-committee (Rue is part of the committee), and noted it would be nice to have something in Spanish too (such as a two-page flyer).
- Member O'Connor – Said he would be interested to provide feedback but would prefer not spending meeting time to do so.
- Rich Wilson – The committee must be Brown Act compliant so less than majority of the group could participate.

Andy Rodgers said there would be a phased implementation. Phase 1 - FY19/20 would include initial groundwater user notification, implement website updates and distribute supporting materials and review updated datasets from municipal and large groundwater users. Phase 2 - FY20/21 would review/update datasets from small water service providers and agriculture, and Phase 3 - FY21/22 would review/update datasets from rural residential and urban well users.

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Comments/Questions

- Member Furch – It seems data from rural residential will be the most difficult to collect. Why start with the large groundwater users?
 - Rodgers – We are starting with the large users because there are fewer of them than water service providers, agricultural users and rural residential users.
- Member Soiland – It seems strange to tell people they will not be paying for three years. It is a long time from now, it is a bit of a disconnect.
 - Rodgers – We won't be assessing a fee but will be collecting data. We already have our understanding of the basin. People will have the opportunity to add information. We will focus on making the groundwater user classes and update our datasets with the new information.
- Member Anderson – Slide 30, third bullet. How is large defined? Public interpretation is different from ours. Take the “and” out of the bullet.
 - Rodgers - Good comment.

Carrie Pollard, Sonoma Water – Presented the Prop 84, Northern Sonoma County Water Conservation Program. The North Coast Resource Partnership Prop 84 grant makes grant money available to private well users including mutual water systems, shared well, community wells, and other non-profit water systems in the GSA through August 2020. Four programs are included; turf replacement rebate, high efficiency toilet rebate, high efficiency water rebate, and residential water use consultation. 75% will be covered by the grant, Sonoma Water will cover a match contribution of 25% as an in-kind match contribution to the SRP GSA. Sonoma Water will develop the applications, process the rebate payments, provide quarterly reporting to the GSA and track participation and cost by program.

Comments/Questions

- Member Bertsch – So the total on the landscape rebate is 2625 sq feet amongst all the projects?
 - Pollard – Yes, per site it is 500 sq ft maximum.
- Member Bertsch – Is this currently active?
 - Pollard – It is not currently active. All programs are already available through other means through Sonoma Water but will now be made available to well owners.
- Member Furch – Is this the same as the program that was available to replace up to two toilets including installation?
 - Pollard – No, that was the drought funding through Prop 84. This funding is to allow expansion.
- Member Scott – This could be a good tool to vet who has a well. Sonoma Water is making funds available to this new category? Does this need Board approval?
 - Pollard – No Board approval is required. It is true this could help with registration data.
- Member Burke – Regarding urban residential well users, will only the landscape rebate apply?
 - Pollard – We can set it up however you want it to be.
- Member Potter – In Windsor we don't allow grant funds for people irrigating with recycled water.

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- Member Furch – Would it include shared wells?
 - Pollard – Yes.

Pollard welcomed comments as she would like to get outreach going for the 2019 Sonoma County Fair. The Sonoma-Marin Saving Water Partnership has an un-manned booth during the Fair. The booth will contain resource cards for each partner listing rebates, and resources currently available. A card is also being developed to advertise resources for well users.

- Member Soiland – Is this only available to the SRP GSA?
 - Pollard – Yes.

Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) Development

Marcus Trotta gave an overview of the subsection of the GSP focusing on current and historical groundwater conditions, including six groundwater conditions' requirements: groundwater elevation; change in storage; seawater intrusion; groundwater quality; land subsidence; and interconnected surface water. He also gave a preview of the groundwater flow model and the water budget section of the GSP. He requested verbal feedback at the meeting, and any written feedback, by Aug. 7.

Comments/Questions

- Member Anderson – What does the water budget include?
 - Trotta – It needs to account for both surface water and groundwater. We need to include both the watershed-wide water budget and, also report the basin specific watershed.
- Member Mikus – There is a stark change from 1990 to 2007 in groundwater levels in the vicinity of Santa Rosa Creek and the Laguna. Any idea why that might be?
 - Marcus – Yes, there was an increase of area with lower water levels. Sonoma Water was using three wells in the basin, it could be what is showing up.
- Member Bertsch – The same issue exists in Sebastopol, it would be good to describe in writing about the declines in the west county and if the trend is continuing.
- Member Hayden – There seems to be more categories on the maps than explanations. It is also difficult to line the colors up because of the transparency that has been applied to the map but not the explanation. Another point, there is a difference in water levels in confined and unconfined aquifers. I think there is a misunderstanding about this, a little explanation wouldn't hurt.
 - Trotta – Good point, thank you.
- Member Hayden – Regarding figures 3-10a and b – Get point across how deep the water is – mainly for the shallow groundwater system.
 - Trotta – We are developing that kind of map for interconnected surface water.
- Member Bertsch – Regarding map 3-10 – We are splitting some maps by shallow and deep. Is that using the 200 ft line from the old basin setting?
 - Trotta – Yes, it is following how we define aquifers in section 3.1. The shallow and deep aquifers are based on the geologic model we have, generally about 200 ft where the transition occurs.
- Member Bertsch – There are a couple decreases/declines but aren't called out as counter to the trend. It would be interesting to have details.

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- Member O'Connor – Regarding 3-10 a and b. I observed the water elevations are more similar than deep in general.
 - Trotta – Part is due to data gaps. We will add some additional information on vertical gradient and how it varies in the basin.
- Member Furch – What defines a well of interest?
 - Trotta – Wells that have long-term data to look at data over time.
- Member Potter – When the County General Plan and the GSP Plan are not consistent with language it might be helpful for the County planners to go back to the County General Plan, see what the trends were, and comment on the status of those.
- Member Furch – In a couple of places you list things that will be done. Maybe you should add a bullet for land use and intensity of land use. Those kinds of uses could impact the Santa Rosa Plain.
- Member O'Connor – One advantage you have with the presentation is that you have PowerPoint slides.
 - Trotta – We can get you the slides.
- Member Bertsch – Can we add a legend to the maps for production wells?
- Member Furch – Arsenic is naturally occurring. If it says Arsenic, it must be clear and acknowledge Arsenic is dangerous.
- Member Bertsch – I agree, even though naturally occurring, extraction can increase the concentration of Arsenic.
 - Trotta – SGMA requires the GSAs to set sustainable criteria for degraded water quality caused by groundwater pumping or recharge. It will become more important when we get into sustainable management criteria.
- Member Furch – Andy Rodgers can help with ensuring the General Plan is consistent with language on surface water/groundwater requirements.

Lastly, Trotta mentioned they are currently working on the water budget and a sub-consultant is evaluating the USGS model and how best it can be used to develop the water budget.

Meeting Attendees

Advisory Committee Members (present)

Agriculture, Bob Anderson
City of Cotati, Craig Scott
City of Santa Rosa, Jennifer Burke
City of Sebastopol, Henry Mikus
Environmental, Sebastian Bertsch
Sonoma RCD, Wayne Haydon
Environmental, Rue Furch
Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, Maureen Geary
Gold Ridge RCD, Matt O'Connor
Sonoma Water, Carolyn Dixon

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Town of Windsor, Sandi Potter
Rural Residential, Marlene Soiland

Advisory Committee Members (absent)

Agriculture, David Long
Business, Joe Gaffney
City of Rohnert Park, Mary Grace Pawson
County of Sonoma, Mark Grismer
Independent Water Systems, Chris Bates
Rural/residential, Doug Beretta

Staff

GSA Administrator, Andy Rodgers
Sonoma Water, Marcus Trotta
GSA Administrative Assistant (minute taker), Simone Peters

Facilitator

Rich Wilson, Sacramento State University – Consensus and Collaboration Program

Public

Approximately 10 members of public