

Indian Creek-Westridge Community Services District
Special Board Meeting
October 8, 2019
Christian Science Church, West Line Street and Grandview Drive, Bishop, CA

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Board Chairperson Luis Elias. Present were Directors Jeffrey Anderson, George Batchelder, Ted Williams and Dave Mappus; District Manager Terry Tye; District Operator Don Buser; Secretary Stephanie Sheltz.

This special meeting was held to decide whether or not to continue the current level of participation and funding of the Owens Valley Groundwater Authority and the development of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan as required by the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

Mr. Elias presented the following information. He handed out the agenda for the October 10, 2019 OVGA meeting, when OVGA will determine member interest in future participation. The Ground Water Authority recently changed our basin's status to "low," which does not require a ground water authority. OVGA has not invoiced us (Indian Creek-Westridge CSD) for the second of three \$22,634 payments we agreed to. If we stay, we will have to pay the two remaining installments. After the October 10 meeting, it will be a lot harder to leave OVGA, which will most likely continue, even if some of the current groups withdraw. If we leave the OVGA, we will not be required to pay the two installments mentioned above. However, if OVGA continues without us, its members could make decisions that affect us without our input. OVGA has regulatory power. A plan for the sustainability of the groundwater basin was developed. If water management problems arise, there will be regulations to address them.

Mr. Batchelder asked if the OVGA can be dismantled. Mr. Tye explained that an OVGA board member could make a motion to disband. The motion would pass given enough votes. Mr. Tye stated that the management plan does not address DWP, whose rights were decided by the courts. With the exception of the Owens Lake, DWP is not required to abide by the Sustainable Ground Water Management (SGMA) Act.

In response to Mr. Batchelder's inquiry about the possibility of keeping the plan and going back to the days before OVGA, Mr. Elias explained that the plan was developed as a requirement when our basin was designated as "medium" and "high" priority. Our current status of "low" does not require a plan, but it is recommended by the state agency. If we remain in the OVGA, the fees we paid and will pay in the future will be used to administer the agency. Due to OVGA's voting structure, if we remain along with only the larger partners (City of Bishop, Inyo County, Mono County), our vote will carry little weight. Mr. Tye noted that eliminating the OVGA would be a waste of the \$300,000 spent so far.

Mr. Mappus said that there are a lot of unknowns, and wondered whose decisions we might have to live with in the future. If we leave the OVGA, we will have no voice in the future. If the Community Service Districts stay together, it would help keep the larger participants in line. If we are the only CSD, we will be overpowered.

Mr. Tye mentioned that last year our customers' rate was increased in order to participate in the OVGA. He estimates that after the three years of payments to the OVGA, we will be charged approximately five or ten thousand dollars per year, depending on how many groups stay in.

Mr. Batchelder said he does not want government involvement. Mr. Williams responded that bureaucracy is going to stay, we told our customers about OVGA participation, and the hard work is done. Furthermore, he wants us to have a place at the table, and we have the income to handle the costs of staying in the OVGA. Mr. Williams added that having the study will give us a better understanding of the hydrology. This knowledge could be helpful if we have to confront DWP. Mr. Elias believes OVGA will continue with or without us.

Mr. Buser asked who will pay the costs. Mr. Tye answered that we might not have to pay more than the three \$22,634 payments.

Mr. Tye noted that DWP is worried about OVGA and the law. OVGA has already sent letters to DWP regarding water levels close to areas not controlled by DWP. In recent years, Inyo County has succeeded in challenging DWP. Mr. Tye said it is better to be a victim with a voice. After our agreed-upon share is paid to OVGA, new fees will probably be more equitable and voting might have to be restructured. There are alternative ways to fund the agency.

Mr. Elias wondered if the amount we haven't paid to the OVGA yet can be used for other projects. Mr. Tye responded there isn't anything pressing. If we don't get the USDA grant, we can still replace the fire hydrants without falling short. We are bringing in more than we have to spend. Staying in the OVGA would not keep us from improving and replacing the aging infrastructure. The board and customers were informed about the need for \$200,000 (\$100,000 for SGMA, \$100,000 to contribute to the grant we are requesting).

The board unanimously agreed to continue our involvement in Owens Valley Groundwater Authority as we have until now (moved Williams, seconded Anderson).

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Stephanie Sheltz, approved by _____

Owens Valley Groundwater Authority

**Bishop City Council Chambers
301 West Line St.
Bishop, Ca
October 10, 2019 2:00 PM**

Board of Directors Meeting Agenda

All members of the public are encouraged to participate in the discussion of any items on the Agenda. Members of the public will be allowed to speak about each agenda item before the Board of Directors takes action on it. Any member of the public may also make comments during the scheduled "Public Comment" period of this agenda concerning any subject related to the Board of Directors or the Owens Valley Groundwater Authority.

Public Notice: In Compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting please contact Laura Piper at (760) 878-0001. (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title II). Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the County to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting. Should you because of a disability require alternative formatting of this agenda, please notify Laura Piper 72 hours prior to the meeting to enable the OVGA to make the agenda available in a reasonable alternative format. (Government Code Section 54954.2).

OPEN SESSION (With the exception of timed items, all open-session items may be considered at any time and in any order during the meeting in the Board's discretion.)

1. Pledge of allegiance.
2. Public comment.
3. Introductions.
4. Approval of minutes from the August 8, 2019 OVGA Board meeting.
5. Board Member Reports.
6. OVGA staff reports
 - a. Financial Report.
 - b. Report on Indian Wells Valley Groundwater Authority activities.
7. Termination of Keeler CSD participation in the OVGA.
8. Implications of DWR reprioritization of the Owens Valley Groundwater Basin.
9. Determination of member interest in future participation in the OVGA.
10. Members' annual financial contribution and continued progress on the GSP.
11. Discussion regarding future agenda items.
12. Set next meeting.
13. Adjourn.