

Redwood Valley County Water District
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Approved B.O.D. 3/19/15

Board of Directors - Regular Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 19, 2015

Directors: Granville Pool, Pamela Ricetti, Ken Todd, Jeff Basili
Staff: General Manager Bill Koehler

Call To Order: 6:00 P.M.

1. Roll Call

Present:

Granville Pool, President
Pamela Ricetti, Director
Ken Todd, Director

Absent:

Jeff Basili, Director

2. Hearing of Comments or Questions from the Attending Public

None.

3. Consider Hearing of Urgent Items Received Since the Agenda Was Posted

None.

4. Acceptance of Agenda

Motion: Accept the agenda with Item 8.e. moved up

Motion by Ricetti, second by Dir Todd

In favor: Unanimous

Absent: Dir Basili

Presentation by Luhdorf & Scalmanini:

Bill Gustafson begins by introducing L&S who have been around since 1980 and does groundwater projects. They've worked all over California on both large and small water projects. They were contacted by GM Koehler to look for a groundwater source. They did the geophysical investigation and followed it up with a test hole and a monitoring well. They are here tonight to talk about the results of the groundwater tests and provide some recommendations as to subsequent action.

Scott Lewis does a recap about the investigation. They started with a few suggestions for locations from GM Koehler; the two main ones being down on East Road by Road A and on the other side of the river behind the winery (Barra). Based on their review of the geology, they decided the eastern site would be better to look at. One reason is that the site is more in the center of the alluvium that runs through the valley and a thicker alluvium has better potential for water. A test hole was drilled at the site to characterize the lithology and a monitoring well was designed based on those findings.

He then hands out copies of the report and explains some of the figures. Some of the things he was looking for was isolating clay layers and layers that would prevent river underflow from entering into the well. They figured 500 feet deep was a good depth because anything deeper than that has less chance of water. The monitoring well contains multiple separate 2-inch pipes in the same borehole which allows collection of water for analysis from three different layers of water. The shallow piezometer was above the confining clay layer to collect information on what river underflow water looks like. The deeper didn't have favorable water quality with high TDS [total dissolved solids], manganese, arsenic, and others that were too high to work with. The middle zone, from about 182-230 feet down, had much more favorable water quality; a little bit of manganese, but nothing else.

Before samples were taken, the well was developed by cleaning it with clean water and pulling water in from the formation. During development of the deeper well, they found that it didn't produce much water at all and never really cleared up. It stayed turbid [dirty] despite a lot of effort to clear it. The middle layer cleaned up well and produced water much better. Dir Todd asks how they would determine how much a well would produce at this site. He responds that they need to construct a well and then test it. When the monitoring well was constructed, it was sealed with concrete to prevent any contamination from the surface. It would be cheaper to drill a new well and set it up for production than to convert the monitoring well to a production well. The monitoring well would still be useful for monitoring how the production well is changing the water table and collect samples. Dir Todd asks for a guess as to what a well like that would produce. Mr. Lewis says that it's very variable and a lot of the data they have is old and varies a lot by season. The report says from 100-200 gallons per minute (GPM), but it's very hard to tell.

Calpella's well is screened at the same interval (180-230 feet approximately) but he believes that the radius of influence of a well in this area is very small.

Tom Ellison continues that this zone is separate from the river and is a groundwater source. It is not ambiguous. The Masonite well has a clay layer at about 30 feet and that has already been agreed upon as a barrier. So a clay layer even deeper at this site is a very good argument. This well is not expected to perform as well as Masonite and may yield about 100 GPM, which is more consistent with wells in this area. The idea may be to develop two or three wells and at 100 GPM each, it would add up. And if you try to build a production well and it just doesn't produce, that answers the question for sure about whether or not there is groundwater to be had in this area. Dir Pool asks about trying another monitoring well on the Barra site. Mr. Ellison responds that the best case in doing that would be another well like this one, but over there you probably wouldn't have the well-defined clay layer to prove it's not underflow. So the best course of action is to install a well here and see what yields can be had.

Some questions come up about Forsythe Creek and how it would flow through the area by Barra and if that creek would help recharge an aquifer in that area. Mr. Ellison explains that the creek flows through a narrow path and through largely impermeable layers that would prevent accumulation of groundwater. The person asking the questions introduces herself as Emily Luscombe and she is from the Coyote Valley Reservation and is interested since they are working on a groundwater source and have both Forsythe Creek and the Russian River flowing through the reservation.

The decision before the Board now is if to continue and install a test well. GM Koehler suggest the first action is to turn the current well into a monitoring well. Dir Todd asks if there is funding for these projects. GM Koehler says there was money from the Emergency Drought Fund, but we haven't seen a nickel yet. Dir Pool asks if there is a possibility of putting two wells close together. Discussion ensues and is answered when Mr. Ellison says that with low-yield wells like these, they would ideally be one-quarter to one-half a mile apart since the radius of influence in so small. But that largely depends of availability of space. The main problem will be boron in the water. The limit is about 2-3 parts-per-million (ppm); the deep zone of this well was at 1.5 and the middle zone is about 0.17. Emily asks about the boron since they're having problems with arsenic in their water. They seem to be hitting it at 250-300 feet down.

If the water isn't good enough for potable water, it could be used on vineyards or pumped up to the treatment plant. If there's a lot of iron and manganese, those are pretty standard for removal.

The Luhdorf & Scalmanini guys leave.

The talk moves to the test well and the Board favors the idea. Trying to add more wells to the system later may be a problem since most people with land and a well on it would be very hesitant to let another well be drilled on their property. But the Board will work on that when/if the test well proves successful.

Emily speaks up about a recent report that is predicting a 40-year drought in California with us being in the 4th year right now. If that's the case, it's best to get as many options as possible. Sonoma County is working on new methods with small swales and such to catch water. Dir Pool brings up the JPA and a possibility of a recharge area and/or additional water supply and lines. Especially if the rain comes in short intervals every few years, getting that into the ground via recharge wells would be very prudent.

5. Approval of Consent Calendar

Motion: Approve the consent calendar

Motion by Dir Ricetti, second by Dir Todd

In favor: Unanimous

Absent: Dir Basili

6. Approval of Minutes as Presented

There were some corrections to the minutes by the staff but they were pretty quick because of the time crunch. Dir Pool points out a few more typos.

Motion: Accept the January 15th Regular Meeting minutes as corrected.

Motion by Dir Todd, second by Dir Ricetti

In favor: Unanimous

Absent: Dir Basili

7. Directors and Staff Reports and Discussion of Non-Action Topics

Items are either not relevant or will be discussed later.

8. General Manager's Report and Action Items

a. District Operations

We are doing pretty well and still adjusting to the new inertia.

b. Trucks

We'll be needing to buy new trucks soon. The only ones that are in decent shape are pretty high mileage. The maintenance agreement with Willow may help. They aren't making Ford Rangers anymore, but they are making improvements to the F-150. Dir Pool suggests the Chevrolet Colorado. GM Koehler is just saying that this decision is coming up soon.

c. Election

Dir Pool, Ricetti, and Basili are all up for election. GM Koehler will put out a sign for the Director position. Dir Ricetti asks if Chuck Vau will be applying again since he didn't file on time last election.

d. Committee Appointments

GM Koehler runs through the various appointment positions. They decide to wait until Dir Basili is present. Dir Pool says that in any case, he'll be going to meetings of Russian River Flood Control and Willow.

e. Well Report

Already covered.

f. Coyote Valley Reservation

The bulk of this has been covered already and we're very excited to be working in conjunction with the CVR to develop groundwater options. If they get a high-producing well, they'd be able to sell some of that to RVCWD and then they would be able to get their water through a "master meter" like the Redwood Valley Rancheria. Also, if they gave up some of their services, would those be able to be used for other places in Redwood Valley. But of course, all of this is speculation until they get water. Also, what if their well fails? Emily clarifies that while the tribe would be willing to share water from a well, they would not want to give up their services in case of a 40-year drought.

GM Koehler has also been talking with their engineers, LACO Associates, about the well options. Emily says that the well is their main focus and then they will hopefully start working with some kind of recycled water program.

g. Intertie

The intertie has been in operation since January 8. Since then, we've been drinking Millview water. The pricing structure still hasn't been worked out, but it's rather irrelevant since it's our only option right now. We're getting about 300 GPM from both interties. So, it's working well and we're really happy with it.

In order to use this water in a non-emergency basis, Millview has to conclusively prove that this is percolated groundwater. If they can do that, we can look at using this water on a much longer timeline. There's also the Masonite property which can be used to recharge the groundwater in times of rain. The Central Valley is already having problems with the ground surface lowering because of all the water that is being pulled out.

h. EPA Climate Change Program

Their site visit is on the 4th and 5th and the presentation of the Upper Russian Managers meeting is on the 5th, so they will be coming to that. Sonoma County has spent a large amount of time and money studying the reliability of Lake Mendocino which is tied to climate change. They won't be able to provide any new information, but having their opinion to submit with grants would be very helpful.

i. JPA

The next JPA meeting is on the 5th, probably at 5pm. Dir Todd asks if there are any topics that this Board wants to be discussed at the JPA meeting. GM Koehler says there will be a lot of housekeeping stuff like elections. They will also talk about if they are going to attempt the aggregate their contracts. They would all add together their anticipated requirements and then come as one to RRFC and put in an "order". Then it can be used and one entity could assist another if needed.

GM Koehler brings up the case were RVCWD is annexed into RRFC, which would allow Redwood Valley residents to be voted onto the RRFC board. In order to sign a contract with the JPA, the annexation would have to be done. And aggregation of water needs probably isn't a good idea right now but should wait until the dust settles on negotiations between RVCWD and RRFC.

j. Operations Contract with Willow

The meetings will begin next week to hammer out what it will look like. It's possible for the JPA to take over operations at a later date with the way things are going.

k. Water Supply

At the latest meeting the RRFC board decided to lift their drought curtailment effective February 21st. That means that on the 21st, RVCWD is back in business as a surplus customer. We're going to fill our reservoir on Monday and our crew is going to go out and

test valves for functionality. It's important to make sure everything is working before the frost season. We'll also be placing signs announcing that the Ag water is back on. Now we have to work with the people to whom we owe water. Staff has calculated a roughly \$30,000 to \$50,000 hit in the future.

10. LAFCO

There's still language in the annexation/dissolution that says that this action will lift the moratorium. Sean White says he didn't put it in there, and GM Koehler sure didn't, so it is in the rewriting process right now. There is a bigger push now for RRFC to put an actual amount on the water that they will supply RVCWD. These issues with contracts and water amounts are coming to the surface.

GM Koehler was on the phone with the Bureau of Reclamation where they discussed the main questions of what counts as an event that would trigger repayment, can the debt be carried by the zone of benefit, and what's the procedure for reevaluation of the debt. The triggering event is us going to the BoR and saying that we want to repay the loan; they'll agree to pretty much anything. They also said that the terms of the loan repayment are all negotiable but only after we have shown ability to pay. The problem is that Redwood Valley hasn't increased its ability to pay at all since the last evaluation. If this loan were to be paid off in 30 years, it would increase every domestic customer's fee by about \$20 per month and roughly double the meter fee for Ag customers. And that's just not viable in this area. There would be a pretty significant reduction in overall payback amount because of the lower interest rates today, though.

The biggest question that was asked was about what would trigger a repayment, and the answer is that they would wait until we say we can pay.

12. Mendocino County Russian River Flood Control

There was a lot of waffling around but it came down to a number of 600 acre-feet, based on the assumption that they have 7,000 acre-feet under contract. So they're comfortable giving Redwood a 600 af contract, holding 400 af in reserve, and most likely the City of Ukiah will roll over their 800 af. So there could be as much as 1,400 acre-feet available.

One of the ways that they could free up more water is with a recycled water program. This would save water because of the required dilution factor for release into the river and would make things easier without having to deal with the state for water.

Another thing is the problem of the permit with the Division of Drinking Water. They can't control Ag water and Ag is a big part of the financial stability of this district. Getting a new permit is nearly impossible and we would lose our permit in the event of dissolution. All in all, this seemed to shift discussion away from dissolution by pointing out all the ways it can't work.

Recently, the Rancheria has come to RVCWD saying that they are working for the money to drill a well and don't like the idea of administrative action that may be taken against them. Specifically, how the State would come to RVCWD and tell them to shut the reservation off since they aren't a part of our use area. The petition to change the place of use and the other petition where lumped together by the State and it's been a losing battle to get them to separate them again. Dir Pool and

GM Koehler met with the State Water Board and they were offered a deal where RVCWD gets 122.8 acre feet on the license which has a face value of 4,900 acre feet, because that's the most that was used before 2002 (when the petition expired). Then they will work on the change of place of use if they agree to the first part. It may not be in the best interest for RVCWD to accept this offer. If they don't, GM Koehler has just talked with the Rancheria and they agreed to try their channels of influence to separate the petitions. Even then, it could be years before anything gets going.

Dir Pool brings up the fact he'd like to have some provisions of the permit changed since a lot of the original ones were set up by Fish and Game. There is a lot of discussion about whether or not to accept the State's offer and various possible implications. They decided to wait until they can talk to their lawyer, Paul, about what may happen with this deal.

9. Financial Report

There is some talk about costs and savings for pumping water from Calpella rather than running the plant. We will probably save money from not running the plant, but using more pumps does eat up the electricity. Also, a check came from the state which covers about 60% of the cost of the intertie. But the paperwork involved is horrendous.

Motion: Approve the financial report

Motion by Dir Ricetti, second by Dir Todd

In favor: Unanimous

10. Local Agency Commission of Mendocino County (LAFCO)

Already discussed.

11. Mendocino County Inland Water & Power Commission (IW&PC)

Dir Pool attended the meeting. One thing that came up was that Districts that maintain their own websites need to either post the salary of officials or provide a link to the attorney general's site that details what the salary is for officials. They're going to wait until better instructions come out on who counts as an official. There also needs to be a better cost/benefit analysis for the Lake so that they can make it more of a priority. All talks with the Army Corps need to be transcribed as soon as possible.

There was also talk about the new groundwater regulations that will be coming and the JPA would be a good way to address that with all the Districts as one voice.

12. Mendocino County Russian River Flood Control & Water Conservation Improvement District (RRFC)

Dir Pool and Dir Basili both attended this meeting. Judy Hatch is against the dissolution/annexation as long as RVCWD is looking to be a part of the JPA. A lot of these things were talked about earlier with regard to how dissolution just won't work out. Then the RRFC board started throwing out conflicting numbers as to what they could sell to RVCWD that ranged from 600 to 1,400 acre feet. Shoemaker tried to offer 900 acre feet, but that got shot down, and then Judy changed it to 500 acre-feet. The final motion was for 600 acre feet to Redwood Valley with the expectation to increase to 1,400 acre feet and was approved by all except Judy, who came up with that offer in the first place and Lee had gone home.

The 600 af isn't much at all and RVCWD still has the stipulated judgment which entitles them to water that is not put to beneficial use - it has nothing to do with water that is under contract.

13. Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA)

Nothing.

14. Other Meetings

Some of them went to the Board of Supervisors meeting but there's nothing to report from that. The SWRCB has already been talked about. GM Koehler went to the Farm Bureau meeting a few days ago. There will be a focus on the West Branch which serves a lot of Redwood Valley and those areas, since they haven't been very involved so far.

There is also some talk about who will represent this area for the groundwater preservation talks. The only agents that can do it are either RRFC or the County. And so far, neither one seems to be interested in doing it.

Items 16-18

Ethics training is coming up soon for the Board.

Motion to adjourn.

Motion by Ricetti, second by Dir Todd

In favor: Unanimous

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Minutes submitted by Jeanette Wise

Approved: Board of Directors

Date Approved: _____

Signed: _____