

**BOARD OF BEAR VALLEY BASIN**  
**GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**February 16, 2023**

**OPEN SESSION**

A meeting of the Bear Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency Board of Directors was called to order at 5:00 p.m. on February 16, 2023, by Vice-Chair Green at 41972 Garstin Drive, Big Bear Lake, CA 92315.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

John Green, Vice Chair  
Craig Hjorth, Treasurer  
Jim Miller, Secretary  
Steve Ludecke, Director

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Steve Ludecke, Director

**PUBLIC FORUM:**

No comments from the public.

**1. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**1.1 Approve Minutes of Board Meeting Dated June 21, 2022**

*Motion made by Secretary Miller, seconded by Treasurer Hjorth, and carried 3-0 to approve the Consent Calendar.*

*AYES: Green, Hjorth, Miller*

*NOES: -*

*ABSTAIN: - Ludecke*

**2. ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT CALENDAR**

None

**3. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS**

**3.1 Agreement with Thomas Harder & Co. to Prepare the Bear Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan Annual Report**

Vice-Chair Green asked if we have prepared the Bear Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Annual Report previously. Reggie Lamson, Administrator and General Manager for the City of Big Bear Lake, Department of Water and Power (DWP) responded that the Bear Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) was adopted by the Board in June 2022, and this is the first annual report due to the Department of Water Resources. Secretary Miller asked if Tom Harder was an on-call consultant or if his services are approved by project. Reggie responded that it is the pleasure of the Board on how they desire to work with Tom. Reggie added that Tom prepared the GSP and that if the Board prefers an on-call agreement, we can budget for that at the June Board meeting.

Director Ludecke stated his understanding that costs should be lower for future annual reports once the templates are prepared. Tom Harder responded that is correct and some of the work can be prepared by staff after the templates are available. Tom added there is some analytical interpretation and calculations, and the report must be signed off by a professional geologist. Reggie stated that the DWP and the CSD provide groundwater level information to CASGEM and

that this data can be used for the annual report. Director Ludecke asked if the information includes well levels. Reggie responded that the information includes the volume of water pumped out of the wells.

*Motion made by Director Ludecke, seconded by Secretary Miller, and carried 4-0 to award an agreement with Tom Harder to prepare the GSP 2021/22 Annual Report contingent upon concurrence of approval by the member agencies, that will be responsible for reimbursing the BVBGSA, and conditional approval of the attached budget adjustment.*

*AYES: Green, Hjorth, Ludecke, Miller*

*NOES: -*

*ABSTAIN: -*

### **3.2 Appointment of Officers**

*Motion made by Vice-Chair Green, seconded by Secretary Miller, and carried 4-0 to appoint John Green as Chair, Jim Miller as Vice-Chair, Craig Hjorth as Treasurer, and Steve Ludecke as Secretary.*

*AYES: Green, Hjorth, Ludecke, Miller*

*NOES: -*

*ABSTAIN: -*

### **3.3 Authentication of Claims Payments**

Chair Green asked if there has been smooth transition from Union Bank to US Bank. Reggie responded that it has been challenging but that we are working on it. Vice-Chair Miller stated that he hoped the banking fees will be less.

*Motion made by Director Ludecke, seconded by Vice-Chair Green, and carried 4-0 to authenticate the claims payments from June 15, 2022 through February 13, 2023.*

*AYES: Green, Hjorth, Ludecke, Miller*

*NOES: -*

*ABSTAIN: -*

### **3.4 Future Board Meetings**

*Motion made by Secretary Miller, seconded by Director Ludecke, and carried 4-0 to revised the time of future BVBGSA Board meetings to 9:00 a.m.*

*AYES: Green, Hjorth, Ludecke, Miller*

*NOES: -*

*ABSTAIN: -*

### **3.5 Replenish Big Bear Update**

David Lawrence, General Manager of the Big Bear Area Regional Wastewater Agency (BBARWA) stated the pilot test has started and the first piece of equipment is on site. Director Ludecke asked what is I&I? David responded that inflow and infiltration. David stated that currently BBARWA is experiencing inflows of 2.5 million gallons of water per day, and it should only be about half that amount. David added that BBARWA is experiencing inflows of 4.5 million gallons a day on weekends. David stated that this has been an unusual season and colder than normal. David continued to say that a couple of additional pieces of pilot equipment are expected to arrive by the end of next month. BBARWA has determined it is more cost effective to ship the treated brine to Israel for testing.

Director Ludecke asked if there is somewhere in the United States for us to test the treated brine. David stated that we researched it and to rent the equipment from Chili it will cost

\$350,000 and it will cost an additional \$200,000 to get the equipment UL rated. The cost of shipping the treated brine to Israel is \$10,000 each batch and we plan to send three shipments. The purpose of shipping 55-gallon containers of the treated brine to Israel for testing is to determine if we can minimize the space needed for evaporation ponds. David added that currently we have space if the equipment is 97% efficiency or better. David stated that it will cost \$375,000 to do the pilot testing but if the company performing the testing becomes the supplier of the equipment, the piloting cost will be free. If the piloting fails, there is a potential to be on the hook for \$375,000. There is no guarantee the funding agencies will accept sole source purchasing policies and we would have to get a waiver for Buy America.

David also stated that BBARWA recently closed a \$3.4 million short-term finance loan with Capital One to bridge the funding gap until we receive the WIFIA loan from the federal government. Director Ludecke inquired into the cost to the residents. David responded that they are working up costs based on (1) O & M funding agreements with partner agencies; (2) without agreements with partner agencies; and BBARWA plans on implementing the costs over a five-year period. Vice-Chair Miller asked if the costs take into consideration grants. David responded that we are only including grants that have been approved by the funding agencies.

In regard to permitting, we have submitted a draft operations plan with specific guidelines, and we are waiting for approval of the plan. Director Ludecke asked if the piloting will satisfy the permit requirements. David responded yes; the basic objectives are set with targets, and we will need to prove the efficiencies. Vice-Chair Miller stated that with the technology we are proposing, if it can't be done, then current technologies cannot meet the proposed permit requirements. David agreed and stated that we are using the latest and greatest technology for the project.

Reggie added that we have completed the environmental impact report comment period. Chair Green asked about the Unarmored Three-Spine Stickleback. David responded that we are monitoring the cost to maintain the Stickleback and looking into the most cost-effective options. Chair Green asked if all the partners have signed agreements. Reggie responded that the team is getting there. Chair Green stated there is a need to know if everyone is on board. Treasurer Hjorth stated that he would like to see the operation of the pilot equipment. David responded yes; that he will schedule a field visit for the Board to observe the pilot testing.

### **3.6 Management and Board Members Discussion**

Vice-Chair Miller asked if the Board will need to approve the draft of the GSP Annual Report. Tom responded that he has already received data from DWP and CSD and in the next couple of weeks plan to submit a draft of the annual report for review which we can achieve by emails and formal Board approval is not required.

### **ADJOURN**

No additional business came before the Board. At 5:58 p.m., Chair Green adjourned the meeting.