

**Estrella-El Pomar-Creston Water District (EPCWD)**

**Regular Meeting Minutes**

**April 14, 2021**

Windfall Farms Conference Room, 4710 Flying Paster Lane, Paso Robles

**ATTENDANCE**

Directors Present:

Dana Merrill (by videoconference)  
Lee Nesbitt (by videoconference)  
Jerry Reaugh (by videoconference)  
Hilary Graves (by videoconference)  
Herb Rowland (by videoconference)

Others present:

Paul Sorensen, GSI  
Stacie Jacobs, Solterra Strategies  
Mike Dawson, Solterra Strategies  
Alan Doud  
Guests (by phone and videoconference)

**ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 3:04PM by Dana Merrill.

**ITEM 2: REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF MARCH 10, 2021 MEETING**

MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES made by Jerry Reaugh, seconded by Hilary Graves, roll call vote:

Dana Merrill - yes  
Jerry Reaugh - yes  
Hilary Graves – yes  
Jerry Reaugh – yes  
Lee Nesbitt – yes

Motion passed 5-0.

**ITEM 3: PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comments submitted.

**ITEM 6: UPDATE ON SOLTERRA STRATEGIES ECONOMIC STUDY WORK (TAKEN OUT OF ORDER)**

Mike Dawson of Solterra Strategies updated the Board on the dissemination of the Study including outreach to a list of 141 local officials and community influencers. Recent press coverage includes New Times, Maven's Notebook, and The Vintage Report. The authors presented a seminar on the study and its conclusions. Mike suggested considering development of an "Ambassador Program" with recruitment of local voices to spread the study results.

**ITEM 4: UPDATE ON WRAC MEETING APRIL 7, 2021**

Hilary Graves reported that there is an at-large vacancy for an agricultural representative currently on the Water Resources Advisory Committee. The State Water Project subcommittee now has only two members in place. At the meeting, Christine Mulholland reiterated her concern that activities for the Paso Basin are

being paid for by County General Contingency Funds. Paavo Ogren has been appointed to the WRAC. Hilary Graves further brought up the idea of the County selling remainder allocation rather than letting it sit unused and non-income generating in San Luis Reservoir. Dana Merrill participated in a Central Coast Water Authority joint meeting with the County where the mechanics of the delivery system were discussed, and suggested District participation in future such meetings.

**ITEM 5: UPDATE ON BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETINGS MARCH 16 AND APRIL 6, 2021**

The Supervisors approved changes to the proposed replacement ordinance for the expiring Water Neutral New Development ordinance, which include a 25AF/Y de minimis per site exemption and two the three suggested “tiers” regarding new plantings. Hilary Graves indicated the magnitude of the impact the increase from 5AF/Y to 25AF/Y could be large and could cause an undesirable result, in turn endangering the GSP. Jerry Reaugh reported that the WNND ordinance has been extended to June, 2022.

**ITEM 7: UPDATE FROM PAUL SORENSEN ON THE SKYTEM REPORT**

Paul requested moving this item to the May agenda as the report is being presented to the Board of Supervisors on April 20, 2021.

**ITEM 8: UPDATE ON PASO BASIN COOPERATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MARCH 17, 2021**

There was a SkyTEM presentation at the PBCC meeting. At the meeting, Debbie Arnold asked about the Shandon-San Juan Water District’s applications to the State Water Resources Control Board for excess stormwater from Lake Nacimiento and Santa Margarita Lake. SSJWD will present information at the next PBCC meeting.

**ITEM 9: UPDATE ON GROUNDWATER LEVEL MONITORING NETWORK PROJECT**

Jerry Reaugh reported that more wells are being added with the total now at 22. The first measurements are in process.

**ITEM 10: DISCUSSION REGARDING CANNABIS GROWERS’ OFFSET AGREEMENT FOR FUNDING IRRIGATION IMPROVEMENTS AND POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES/CONCERNS FOR DISTRICT MEMBERS**

Dana Merrill described the program which funds irrigation efficiency improvements in exchange for any water savings accruing to benefit cannabis growers’ offset needs. The credit could not be claimed in the future by the agricultural user. Recognizing the savings might be difficult. Interested parties may contact the District Administrator for more information. The District did not take a position to support or oppose the program.

**ITEM 11: CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT THE COUNTY CONTRACT TO ACCEPT PAST DUE ASSESSEES’ DELINQUENT ASSESSMENTS AND FINANCE CHARGES FOR COLLECTION THROUGH THE COUNTY PROPERTY TAX SYSTEM, AND RESOLUTION TO SUBMIT SUCH CHARGES FOR COLLECTION**

This item was tabled until the May meeting.

**ITEM 12: TREASURER’S REPORT**

Jerry Reaugh gave a report on the work on the preliminary budget which may include a slight reduction in assessment levels. Dana Merrill suggested adding in funds for consultant expertise on State Water and supplemental water.

**ITEM 13: NEW BUSINESS – REQUESTS FOR ITEMS TO BE PLACE ON NEXT AGENDA**

Items requested for the next meeting included the final Budget, a discussion on LandIQ weather stations, a potential presentation by Jerry Lohr, consideration of the WNND ordinance replacement comments to the Board of Supervisors, consideration of comments to the Board of Supervisors regarding the lack of implementation progress on the GSP.

**ITEM 14: SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING**

The next regular meeting is scheduled for May 12, 2021.

**ITEM 15: ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION TO ADJOURN made by Hilary Graves, seconded by Jerry Reaugh, roll call vote:

Dana Merrill – yes

Hilary Graves – yes

Lee Nesbitt – yes

Jerry Reaugh – yes

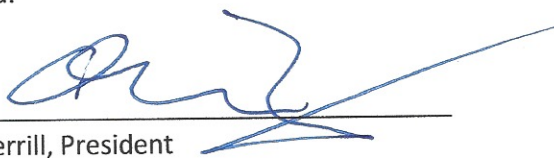
Herb Rowland – yes

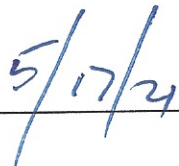
Motion passed 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 4:33PM

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Jerry Reaugh, Secretary/Treasurer

Accepted:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dana Merrill, President

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date