



**Estrella-El Pomar-Creston Water District (EPCWD)**  
**Estrella-El Pomar-Creston Groundwater Sustainability Agency (EPCGSA)**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday August 21, 2024**

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

**ITEM 1: CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 3:00PM by Dana Merrill

Directors Roll Call:

Dana Merrill – present

Lee Nesbitt - present

Jerry Reaugh – present

Hilary Graves – absent

Ryan Scott - present

Others present:

Alan Doud

Guests (in person and by teleconference)

**ITEM 2: REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES OF JUNE 26, 2024 REGULAR MEETING**

MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES OF JUNE 26, 2024 REGULAR MEETING made by Jerry Reaugh, seconded by Lee Nesbitt, voice vote:

Motion passed 4-0.

**ITEM 3: PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment was presented.

**ITEM 4: CONSIDER A MOTION TO REMOVE AL WEBSTER AND INCLUDE RYAN SCOTT AS SIGNERS ON THE DISTRICT CHECKING ACCOUNT.**

MOTION TO REMOVE AL WEBSTER AND INCLUDE RYAN SCOTT AS SIGNERS ON THE DISTRICT CHECKING ACCOUNT made by Lee Nesbitt, seconded by Jerry Reaugh, voice vote:

Motion passed 4-0.

**ITEM 5: CONSIDER ACTION REGARDING THE RFP FOR THE MULTIBENEFIT LAND REPURPOSING (MILR) PROGRAM.**

Jerry Reaugh opened the discussion by describing the recently released RFP for the MILR program. A version of the MILR Program was presented to the Paso Robles Wine Country Alliance in June. However, the MILR Program has not been presented to the PBCC Committee or the PBCC Staff and consequently, there has been little public discussion or vetting of the Program. Comments of Board members and others indicate that there is little common understanding of the program. The program is not clearly defined in the RFP. The contract must be completed by April 1, 2025 or funding will be lost, approximately \$350-\$380K. The RFP includes 20 meetings between the contractor and various groups (GSAs, stakeholders, etc) before the end of the contract. Are other GSAs using a MILR program or something similar? One consequence of using the MILR program could be

increased urbanization as a land use requiring less water. What impact could there be on land under Williamson Act contract?

Jerry Reaugh suggested that the District consider writing a letter to the PBCC requesting that when the contract is awarded, contract language would include a request to follow the follow these initial steps: 1) The PBCC Committee would appoint a select committee to meet with the contractor and develop to a clear definition of the MILR Program. This process could take 3-6 weeks with intensive meetings between the select committee and the contractor; 2) Once consensus is reached by the select committee, the Program would be sent to the PBCC Committee for public discussion and approval by the PBCC Committee; and 3) After PBCC Committee approval, the contractor would develop the program accordingly and it would then return to the PBCC for consideration and approval.

Kathleen March asked for clarification on what the program would do, which Dana Merrill explained would be to reduce pumping based on repurposing land to a less-intensive use. Randy Record expressed concern over the creation of bureaucracy the program could engender, which could use up available funds instead of their being used for actual land repurposing. Also, what about habitat loss with such a program?

MOTION TO WRITE A LETTER ON BEHALF OF THE DISTRICT TO THE PBCC AND THE COUNTY SUMMARIZING TODAY'S DISCUSSION AND REQUESTING REDEFINING THE PROGRAM AS PER THE 3 ITEMS ABOVE made by Lee Nesbitt, seconded by Ryan Scott, roll call vote:

Dana Merrill - yes

Jerry Reaugh – yes

Lee Nesbitt – yes

Ryan Scott - yes

Hilary Graves – absent

Motion passed 4-0.

At this point, a request was made for the board and in-person attendants introduce themselves.

## **ITEM 6: UPDATE ITEMS**

### **a. Groundwater Levels Monitoring**

#### **1) EPCWD Groundwater Monitoring Network**

August readings occurred last week and the last readings for the year will take place in November.

#### **2) Comments on County's letter to landowners about Groundwater Level Monitoring**

Jerry Reaugh described the letter sent to the 151 owners with wells on the list to ask if they would be interested in joining the County's monitoring network.

#### **3) EPCWD/GSA Real-time Groundwater Monitoring Program (Continuous Monitoring Devices)**

The EPCWD/GSA has three continuous monitoring wells signed up for the EPC Continuous Monitoring Program. Several more wells should be signed up in the next few weeks. EPCGSA will be submitting a proposal to the PBCC to fund installation of continuous groundwater level monitoring devices in six or more wells in the next few weeks.

**b. SLO County Board of Supervisors meetings**

No comments on past meetings, but Jerry Reaugh reported that Blaine Reely is going to be bringing the budget item that was not passed by the Supervisors back for reconsideration in a September Board of Supervisors meeting.

**c. Paso Basin Cooperative Committee**

**1) PBCC Staff report**

No report presented

Dana Merrill gave a short report on the State Water recharge project and described a recent presentation by Provost & Pritchard which updated the progress on the project.

**2) Blended Water Project**

Steve Carter reported that there is an upcoming meeting to update the project.

**d. PBCC Rate Study and Governance Meeting August 15, 2024**

Jerry Reaugh reported that the time available was taken up completely by discussion of governance. Another meeting to discuss the Rate Study is scheduled for August 22, 2024.

**e. Outreach efforts**

Staff reported that the kick-off call with Tripepi-Smith has taken place with action items including sharing email and contact lists for T-S to begin outreach efforts. A second meeting is planned for September 3, 2024.

**ITEM 7: TREASURERS REPORT**

**a. Monthly Financial Status Report**

Assessment invoices were mailed in mid-July with increases required due to the 5-year review of the Water Plan. The total amount invoiced is approximately \$270,000, and to date, \$90,000 collected (correction from \$135,000 reported in meeting).

**ITEM 8: NEW BUSINESS**

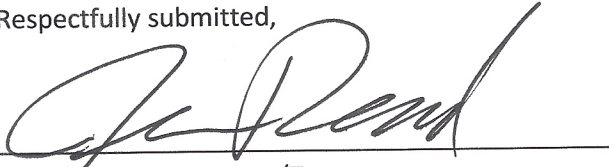
Dana Merrill asked what it would take for the Board of Supervisors to change the offset ordinance to replace the 5-year lookback to another, longer, date so people wouldn't feel forced to irrigate when they don't want to in order to preserve their right to pump.

**ITEM 9 SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING – SEPTEMBER 11, 2024**

**ITEM 11: ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION TO ADJOURN made by Lee Nesbitt, seconded by Jerry Reaugh, voice vote, motion passed 4-0 . Meeting adjourned at 4:24 PM.


Respectfully submitted,



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Jerry Beaugh, Secretary/Treasurer

Accepted:



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Dana Merrill, President

10/9/24

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Date