

MINUTES

County of Inyo WATER COMMISSION

November 7, 2018

The Chairperson called the Water Commission meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Jill Kinmont Boothe School, George Lozito conference room, Bishop, CA. Commissioners in attendance were Chairperson Mike Prather, Vice Chairperson Teri Red Owl, Mike Carrington, and Randy Keller. Present from the Water Department were Bob Harrington, Laura Piper, Aaron Steinwand and Keith Rainville.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Prather led the pledge of allegiance.

2. Public Comment

Expressions of gratitude were extended from the Board and public to Dr. Harrington for his many years of service. Ms. Moxley provided information on an article with reference to local ranches and water issues.

3. Approval of minutes from the August 29, 2018 meeting

The Chairperson continued this item to the next meeting.

4. Commissioners' reports

Commissioner Prather stated the recent field trip was a success which covered Owens Lake, the Owens River Water Trail area, and the overlook above the islands. He also stated a letter was received from GBAPCD to the Commission regarding Owens Lake. Commissioner Red Owl shared her attendance at the October 8 Indigenous Peoples Day in Los Angeles. She stated people from the Owens Valley participated in the parade, had a booth, and shared the Owens Valley water issues. She also stated the tribes held a 3 day land and water summit in Crowley Lake with a professional facilitator to discuss the future of the homelands as well as water issues.

5. Update on Sustainable Groundwater Management Act: Owens Valley Groundwater Authority Groundwater Sustainability Agency status and Groundwater Sustainability Plan

Dr. Harrington provided a brief presentation on the SGMA to include; transfer of the DWR grant from Inyo to OVGA, selection of a contractor for the GSP; Starlite CSD's request to be excluded from the basin; DWR's proposal to move Owens Valley from a medium priority to high priority basin; OVGA's application to DWR for technical services; the OVGA's development of bylaws; and the ongoing process to include associate and interested parties. Sally Manning asked how much DWP land is in the basin in Mono County. Dr. Harrington provided a brief explanation.

6. Water Department annual report

Aaron Steinwand provided an in depth presentation on the Water Departments annual report with an emphasis on the evaluation and monitoring of type E lands. He stated there are a total of 328 type E parcels and provided detailed information on irrigated/ non-irrigated/ partially irrigated parcels; the data sets; and aerial photography used to reach these conclusions. He stated there are 33 monitoring sites total, 22 sites with wells, 8 control sites, and 3 that aren't linked to wells but in wellfields. Sally Manning asked a few questions regarding the decline in vegetation cover/water levels, Aaron Steinwand provided an explanation. Sophia Borgias asked with regard to flood irrigated parcels if the data matches what the ranchers state is a problem in areas of concern. Aaron Steinwand stated this is a new effort. Daris Moxley stated Aaron Steinwand provided an excellent and very thorough presentation and thanked him.

The Chairperson called a break at 7:50pm and reconvened the meeting at 7:55pm.

7. Update on operational testing of well W385

Dr. Harrington provided a brief update on the operational testing of well W385. He provided a brief history of the well and issues surrounding both well W385 and W386. Daris Moxley asked where the water will go that will be pumped in December/January, Dr. Harrington stated the Owens River. Sally Manning stated the MOU parties agreed these wells would be permanently shut down.

8. Public Comment

Sally Manning inquired if Inyo County filed any comments on the Mono Ranch lease project. Mr. Tothorh stated the County did not. Daris Moxley inquired when the Technical Group meeting would be held, Dr. Harrington stated the last week of November. Commissioner Prather stated LADWP Water Commissioner Laura Vasquez came to the Owens Valley and held office hours to meet with locals regarding their concerns. He encouraged the public to reach out to her regarding their concerns.

9. Schedule next Water Commission meeting

The next Water Commission was tentatively scheduled for January.

10. Adjourn

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 8:24 p.m.