

Galena Groundwater District Meeting April 6, 2021

Hybrid: Sun Valley City Hall Meeting Room and via zoom
April 6, 2021

Call to Order: 11:02am

In attendance: Pat McMahon (Board), Judd McMahan (Board), Chuck Matthiesen (Board - interim), Erick Powell (Brockway), Zack Latham (Brockway), Heather O'Leary (GGW counsel), Lisa Davitt (GGWD bookkeeping), Corey Allen (SVCo), Jim Laski (GGW counsel), Dave Bell (GGWD website), Zach Hill (ECO Sciences), Jim Speck, Marybeth Collins.

The meeting was called to order at 11:02am at the Sun Valley City Hall public meeting room, with quorum being established.

Pat immediately proposed an update to the agenda, in that Agenda Item #4 (Ecosystem Science Presentation) will involve more information given conversation in the last few days around the larger BWGW Committee conversations, and as a result, be an action item for today's meeting.

MOTION: To update to an agenda action item related to Ecosystems Sciences presentation was proposed by Judd. The motion was seconded by Pat and passed unanimously.

Proof of notice was confirmed as Dave had posted the agenda on the GGWD website and Pat had posted an agenda at City Hall's and SV Post Office public bulletin boards.

Minutes:

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the March 2, 2021 meeting was proposed by Judd. The motion was seconded by Pat and passed unanimously.

EcoSystem Sciences

Zack Hill was onsite via zoom related to a presentation of a study for the Wood River Valley, with specific emphasis on the South Valley groundwater distribution. The presentation referenced review of data culled from the last few years with recent emphasis on a WaterSmart grant in conjunction with the Bureau of Reclamation. One of the items addressed initially is that the South Valley Groundwater District has offered to partner with the Galena Groundwater District, related to this grant application, so that EcoSciences may conduct a larger study which would provide both Galena and South Valley Groundwater Districts information in timely format related to groundwater levels, use, locations, etc. Mr. Hill's presentation represented information reporting, and is not intended to define modelling or forecasting. Its data does provide some increased ability to evaluate trends, given that the information collected has occurred consistently over four years. Among the primary purpose of the studies underway by EcoSciences in the local area is to understand the existing conditions, to improve the management of these conditions and to adapt such management in changing conditions. EcoSciences utilizes a variety of equipment to monitor, in real-time, water levels in multiple locations. This real time aspect is of strong usefulness given the IDWR solid, but time delayed process of information distribution. Drought was an active reference in the reality of current conditions.

Two items discussed during the presentation were (a) Galena Groundwater contracting with EcoSciences to develop a similar study process for its own area of oversight, to include a baseline report, review of the fitness of the data, mapping, irrigation data and data gap analysis. The turnaround timeframe for such would be relatively quick, and there were be some equipment expenses at start up of such project. In response to Pat's inquiry of estimated expense to GGWD, Zack estimated around \$10,000 separate from equipment. Ongoing labor might involve not only EcoSciences team members,

but also GGWD volunteers. These funds are separate from the Brockway items, although there would be some expense when both parties are collaborating on data gathering.

The second item discussed was the partnership with South Valley Groundwater Management District and the Bureau of Reclamation grant, where 50% of the costs of the larger EcoSciences study would be shared by SVGWD and GGWD.

The US Geological Services have not yet seen the SVGWD reporting, and there was pragmatic conversation about the timing and response to information versus historical information sources. Such timely reporting would allow for nuanced understanding, in lieu of the historic single annual total that many are familiar with.

MOTION: Pat proposed to approve the Bureau of Reclamation 'WaterSmart' grant participation agreement with South Valley Groundwater District, where GGWD and SVGWD will match funds for 50% of total costs to conduct this study. The motion was seconded by Judd and passed unanimously.

Pat will follow up with EcoSciences related to contracting for GGWD specifically, related to creation and maintenance of ongoing local study.

Engineering Update:

Zack had no major update for this meeting. Erick noted that IDWR had released observations around the middle of March for review. This 11-page report, which concluded that there is a relationship between the surface water and groundwater in a given area, was reviewed and Brockway contributed 6 pages in response to this initial discussion. The IDWR report suggested that a call on the Big Wood Valley would result in a futile call, that the water sought for relief could not be sourced from the Big Wood, given water movement, however a call on Silver creek would have benefit to South callers. The report utilized data from the 2002, 2014 and estimated information for the 2021 seasons, and estimated the impact benefit for senior callers in the south. One of the items noted by Brockway is that IDWR has been clear from the beginning that data is not intended for administrative decision, and yet – administrative decision occurred in the March 2021 report. There was also review of the management of the Big Wood canal and magic Reservoir, and deliveries. Erick noted that at the end of the report, there was still no idea of what the actual injury for the senior users might be, and that such injury is the direct responsibility of those users to define. They have not yet. And, even without this information, the Director suggests that he has enough information to make a decision. Nebulous to the regular reader, to say the least.

Chuck requested a copy of the IDRW report, and Pat confirmed that he would put the information in front of Chuck today.

Big Wood Groundwater Management Committee

Pat, a Committee member for this larger water management conversation, referenced several recent in person meetings with south committee members, with the goal of making clear what the need really is, and what the items are that the south committee members genuinely seek from the north. In highly simple reference, the south seeks a \$50,000 funding, which they hope to use for both water purchase and infrastructure repairs & system improvements. Carl Pendleton, of BW Canal Co, has submitted application for funding a study of the north Shoshone canal system (much of which has been left in disarray), a study estimated to run about \$10K. This project has been submitted to the Water River Collaborative for approval and funding, but a decision has not yet been received. Pat suggested that the cities would receive benefit from such study, and understanding of what is and what is possible for this area.

An offer of solution has been made to south callers, Tim (IDWR) took notes and the IDWR Director will most likely be defining some decisions shortly. It is accurate that several of the north senior

water right holders are as willing to be called on if there is lack of support for solutions proposed, and turn to legal conversation to determine they outcome.

Dave Bell inquired as to where the funds were sourced from, at the WR Water Collaborative, in relation to the Shoshone north canal study application. The general perception suggested grant funds were the tool.

Jim Speck inquired about any IDRW response received as yet, to the response sent. There does seem to be general agreement about the futility of water to Magic Reservoir by curtailment to the WR Valley. Erick confirmed the extremely porous nature of the area between the lower Big Wood and Stanton Crossing.

There is a public meeting, part of the regular meeting process, for the Big Wood Groundwater Management committee, tomorrow – Wednesday, April 7, 2021.

Financials

Lisa provided information for three invoices to the Board members present in person, totaling \$19,618.80. This included: Mtn Express [Board seat notice] \$268.80; Davitt Bookkeeping \$648.75 and Lawson Laski \$18,699.25 [this total is the sum of legal costs at 1,491.75 and Brockway at \$17,207.50 for Jan & Feb].

MOTION: To approve the bills presented at the meeting was proposed by Judd, seconded by Chuck, and passed unanimously.

No updates on annual audit schedule, as yet.

Idaho Department of Water Resources

Heather noted that Counsel had received notice that IWRB confirmed GGWD motion to strike, and the protest filed. They referenced a few talking points. Counsel will follow up on these technicalities. The IDWR also provided permission on the GGWD petition to intervene on water right 37-23110, but status remains pending. Counsel will follow up on both details to IDWR.

Additional Legal Items

A petition for the Mid Valley Board / Middle District seat was circulated for signature.

Public comments.

None.

Executive Session.

The Board discussed going into executive session at approximately 11:48am.

MOTION: To commence Executive Session was proposed by Judd, seconded by Pat, and passed unanimously.

MOTION: To complete Executive Session at 12:22pm was proposed by Pat, seconded by Judd, and passed unanimously.

No follow up discussed.

Next Meeting Date

The Board confirmed Tuesday, May 4, 2021.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:24pm.

DRAFT