

**SEASIDE GROUNDWATER BASIN WATERMASTER (Watermaster)  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Via Zoom Teleconference  
May 5, 2021

**I. CALL TO ORDER** – The meeting was called to order at 2:20 p.m. after technical difficulties.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Coastal Subarea Landowner – Director Paul Bruno – Chair  
City of Seaside – Mayor Ian Oglesby  
Laguna Seca Subarea Landowner – Director Wesley Leith  
City of Sand City – Mayor Mary Ann Carbone  
California American Water (CAW) – Director Christopher Cook  
City of Monterey – Council Member Dan Albert – Vice Chair  
Monterey Peninsula Water Management District (MPWMD) – Director George Riley  
Monterey County/Monterey County Water Resources Agency – Supervisor Mary Adams

**Absent:** City of Del Rey Oaks – Council Member John Gaglioti

**Others Present**

Robert Jaques, Watermaster Technical Program Manager (TPM)  
Laura Paxton, Watermaster Administrative Officer (AO)  
Sarah Hardgrave, Policy Analyst, Office of Supervisor Adams  
Ed Ghandour, Security National Guaranty (SNG)  
Jonathan Lear, Water Resources Manager, MPWMD  
Vibeke Norgaard, Legal Counsel, City of Sand City  
Tim O’Halloran, Engineering Manager, CAW  
Aiko Yamakawa, Attorney, CAW  
Susan Schiavone  
Patrick Breen, Marina Coast Water District (MCWD)  
Melodie Chrislock, Public Water Now

**III. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS:** None

**IV. REVIEW OF AGENDA:** Item 9A. was moved next on the agenda.

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. Consider Action in Response to Water Quality Sampling Results from Security National Guaranty (SNG) Well**

Mr. Ed Ghandour, SNG stated he is already responding to detected high chloride levels (8,660 mg/L) from recent sampling of SNG well water and asked that this item be tabled. The well is scheduled to be videoed and assessed by a pump company and hydrologist and repaired as needed, conceivably within the next 60 days. The board concurred to receive the item as informational and await Mr. Ghandour reporting back on the outcome.

**V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: It was moved by Council Member Albert and seconded by Mayor Carbone to approve as presented the minutes of the Regular Board meeting held February 3, 2021. Director Cook – Aye; Council Member Albert – Aye; Mayor Carbone – Aye; Supervisor Adams – Aye; Director Riley – Aye; Director Bruno – Aye; Director Leith – Aye; Mayor Oglesby – Aye. Motion carried.**

**VI. CONSENT CALENDAR**

- A. Consider Approving Summary of Payments made January through March 2021 totaling \$91,921.65**
- B. Consider Approving Amendment No. 1 to Martin Feeney RFS No. 2021-01, and transfer \$10,338.50 from the Monitoring and Management—Operations Fund Contingency line-item to Collect Quarterly Water Quality Samples and Perform Sentinel Well Induction Logging Subtask I.2.b.3 to cover the cost of this Amendment**
- C. Consider Approving a budget transfer of \$35,000 from Monitoring and Management—Operations Fund Basin Management Subtask I.3.a.3. line-item to Technical Program Manager line-item**
- D. Consider Approving Fiscal Year 2020 Financial Reports through December 31, 2020**
- E. Consider Approving Fiscal Year 2021 Financial Reports through March 31, 2021**

Supervisor Adams requested Item C. be pulled for comment; Director Riley requested Item E. be pulled for question.

**It was moved by Director Riley and seconded by Supervisor Adams to approve consent calendar items A, B, and D as presented. Director Cook – Aye; Director Leith – Aye; Council Member Albert – Aye; Mayor Oglesby – Aye; Mayor Carbone – Aye; Supervisor Adams – Aye; Director Riley – Aye; Director Bruno – Aye. Motion carried.**

Supervisor Adams commented on Item C., that her chief of staff Sarah Hardgrave is involved with the Monterey Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) as is Mr. Jaques. Perhaps the Watermaster Board should discuss areas of needed collaboration between the Seaside Basin and the Monterey Subbasin in the near term, such as Hardgrave and Jaques partnering to develop a presentation on the Coral de Tierra management area. Director Cook supported Supervisor Adams' suggestion to receive presentations regarding surrounding basins, as Mr. Jaques feels is appropriate. Director Bruno noted the April 27, 2021 Budget and Finance Committee meeting discussion on Mr. Jaques' heavy workload and the need to be mindful of not overstressing him.

Staff responded to Director Riley's inquiry regarding Item E. whether the Total Available of \$352,763 at the bottom of the Operations Fund Report is a comparatively high balance, stating it is somewhat higher than in past periods but not significantly.

**It was moved by Director Riley and seconded by Supervisor Adams to approve consent calendar items C. and E. as presented. Director Cook – Aye; Director Leith – Aye; Council Member Albert – Aye; Mayor Oglesby – Aye; Mayor Carbone – Aye; Supervisor Adams – Aye; Director Riley – Aye; Director Bruno – Aye. Motion carried.**

**VII. ORAL PRESENTATION:** None

**VIII. OLD BUSINESS:** None

- A. Consider Action Regarding MPWMD Water Supply Committee Meeting Agenda Items 1) Ability of Pure Water Monterey to provide protective well levels in the Seaside Basin, and 2) Update on Seaside Well FO-09 and seawater intrusion. Watermaster Board Members Riley and Adams are on the MPWMD Water Supply Committee.

Mr. Jaques reviewed his transmittal on this item. Supervisor Adams foresaw the need to use all replenishment water available from any and all of the water supply projects to be able to restore Basin health. Whatever approach is taken, clarity is needed on the availability of replenishment water from any of the projects. The Decision has not provided the guidance that the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act now provides on achieving sustainability. She felt that now is an opportune time, as the Monterey Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan is developed, to garner direction on achieving protective groundwater levels in the Seaside Basin.

Council Member Albert stressed the need to precisely calculate protective groundwater levels, and the amount of replenishment water that needs to be added annually to the Basin to achieve them, and whether MPWMD uses that calculated amount in its dealings. Mr. Jaques responded that protective groundwater levels were determined in 2013 by Watermaster's hydrogeologic consultant, HydroMetrics, and that an update is planned per board direction. He knew of no other protective level information that MPWMD uses besides what is in the HydroMetrics report.

Director Cook questioned "excess water" from the Pure Water Monterey (PWM) and PWM Expansion (PWMX) projects, as CAW would be purchasing all of the anticipated water supply from those projects leaving no excess. He saw the Watermaster role as not one of purchasing, but of accounting for the disposition of the CAW-purchased water, such as into what reserves water supply over demand would be stored, and tracking CAW over-pumping payback. He felt Watermaster does not need to consider financing replenishment water at this point.

Director Bruno stated that replenishment water from any source remains years away and Watermaster has no financing authority. He felt that determining realistic Natural Safe Yield and concomitant production levels were Basin protection measures that could be addressed now.

Susan Schiavone, a member of the public stated her desire that the PWMX be fast-tracked for completion prior to 2023 using federal grant funding assistance if available. This should be combined with a concrete plan with Basin water users to reduce draw to address overdraft of the safe operating yield, and continued research into intrusion [high chloride level] occurrences. She expressed that the thought of losing the Basin to seawater intrusion is heartbreaking to her.

Director Riley urged substantial policy-related discussion by the Watermaster board on a funding mechanism for replenishing the over-drafted basin to protective groundwater elevations. He requested the issue be placed on the next board meeting agenda, with discussion of his criticisms of the Replenishment Fund calculations – the inconsistent weighting of project costs in

calculating the Replenishment Assessment Unit Cost, and the need to replace estimated costs with real costs of the PWM project since it is now operational. Director Riley felt the Replenishment Fund should be completely restructured with an aim at purchasing excess water that becomes available. Chair Bruno stated the Replenishment Fund is structured according to the requirements of the Decision, is a calculation of the amount of wet water to be returned to the Basin by Standard Producers that have over-pumped designated yields, and has no actual monetary basis; attempting to redesign the fund to attribute replenishment funding viability would not be time productively spent by the board, especially since there is no replenishment water source available to purchase for years. Director Cook felt the topic was discussed in depth at the last Budget and Finance Committee meeting and that other topics take precedence at this time.

Regarding the second item the Water Supply Committee considered, Supervisor Adams noted the monitoring wells were the only wells in the boundary area of the Monterey Subbasin/Seaside Basin, and are on the edge of the seawater intrusion line of the 180/400' aquifer. Both the Watermaster and Marina Coast Water District (MCWD) through its Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) definitely need continued monitoring in the area. It seems continued monitoring would be important to MPWMD also with regard to the Aquifer Storage and Recovery and PWM projects. Even though the basins may not be threatened by seawater intrusion in the near term, the nearby water projects make monitoring necessary. Supervisor Adams strongly encouraged staff to work cooperatively with both MPWMD and MCWD to continue monitoring in this area. Director Cook supported collaboration with all surrounding basin management efforts.

**It was moved by Supervisor Adams and seconded by Council Member Albert for staff to send a formal letter to Marina Coast Water District requesting their participation in monitoring the boundary areas between the Seaside Basin and the Marina Ord management area of the Monterey Subbasin; and encourage collaboration with Monterey Peninsula Water Management District for a workable solution to the need for continued monitoring. Director Cook – Aye; Director Leith – Aye; Council Member Albert – Aye; Mayor Carbone – Aye; Supervisor Adams – Aye; Director Riley – Aye; Director Bruno – Aye. Motion carried. (Mayor Oglesby lost connection to the meeting during the vote.)**

**B. Consider Board Actions Concerning Possible Detection of Seawater Intrusion (SWI) in Monitoring Wells FO-9 and FO-10 Shallow**

Mr. Jaques reviewed his transmittal on this item and responded to Director Riley's questions regarding high chloride levels in FO-09 well and groundwater flow direction and velocity, and Director Cook's questions regarding FO-10 chloride levels and data integrity. Director Riley requested implementation costs be assigned to contingency actions contained in Section 4 of the Seawater Intrusion Response Plan.

Director Cook stated CAW is planning redundancy for larger production wells, especially along General Jim Moore Boulevard. Redundancy gives more options for pumping re-distribution, especially should it be needed in the event of seawater intrusion.

Supervisor Adams stressed the need for the board to consider a regional approach to the water supply issue for not only the Seaside Basin and the Peninsula, but for Marina and northern Salinas Valley also. This could be work closely coordinated with additional analysis and recommendations coming from the Monterey Subbasin GSP, MCWD Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA), and Salinas Valley Basin GSA. It is time to look globally instead of myopically. She suggested a Gantt chart of actions by the Watermaster coordinated and timed with the efforts of the work coming out of the SVBGSA.

Director Bruno did not agree that negotiations with CAW/MPWMD/M1W to establish project replenishment water terms and conditions should include the Watermaster board, but should be worked out amongst the three agencies.

**It was moved by Supervisor Adams and seconded by Council Member Albert to:**

- 1. Start Board-level negotiations with both California American Water (Cal Am) and MPWMD/M1W to establish terms and conditions under which replenishment water could be provided by the Desalination Project or the PWM Expansion Project, respectively.**
- 2. Direct Staff to:**
  - a. Determine how the cost to install a new monitoring well to replace the existing Monitoring Well FO-9 Shallow can be funded.**
  - b. Obtain scope-of-work and cost proposals from Montgomery & Associates to:**
    - i. Update the 2013 groundwater modeling to provide a more accurate indication of current replenishment water needs.**
    - ii. Update the SIRP to provide site-specific indicators of SWI (e.g., chloride threshold levels) for additional wells.**
    - iii. Develop flow direction and flow velocity maps.**
  - c. Research financial consultants that could develop a plan to finance the cost of obtaining such replenishment water for the Basin and provide recommendations to the Board.**

**Mayor Oglesby – Aye**

**Director Bruno – No**

**Director Riley – Aye**

**Mayor Carbone – No**

**Supervisor Adams – Aye**

**Director Cook – No**

**Council Member Albert – Aye**

**Director Leith – Abstain**

**Motion carried.**

## **IX. NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. Consider Action in Response to Water Quality Sampling Results from Security National Guarantee (see beginning of meeting).**
- B. Consider Action Regarding MPWMD Contracting Issues**

Ms. Paxton reviewed the item transmittal. Mr. Jaques responded in the affirmative to Director Riley's inquiry whether there are potential replacement consultants to perform MPWMD services to Watermaster. Director Bruno felt it important for Watermaster to review options although continuing with MPWMD would be more efficient. Supervisor Adams felt it reasonable for MPWMD to update the 2008 Watermaster contract and that Watermaster should negotiate to retain MPWMD services.

**It was moved by Director Riley and seconded by Director Oglesby to direct staff to concurrently seek to (1) Negotiate a resolution to MPWMD's issues of concern regarding their contract with the Watermaster, and (2) Investigate the potential benefit of having another party take over MPWMD's Monitoring and Management Program work for the Watermaster. Director Cook – Aye; Mayor Oglesby – Aye; Council Member Albert – Aye; Mayor Carbone – Aye; Supervisor Adams – Aye; Director Riley – Aye; Director Bruno – Aye; Director Leith – Aye. Motion carried.**

**X. INFORMATIONAL REPORTS:**

- A.** Minutes from the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meetings held February 10 and March 10, 2021, and draft minutes from the meeting held April 14, 2021
- B.** Watermaster Report of Production of the Seaside second quarter Water Year 2021 (January 1, 2021 – March 31, 2021)
- C.** Watermaster correspondence to Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)
- D.** Report on the MPWMD LAFCO Filing and Discussion with the General Counsel of MPWMD to the Seaside Basin Watermaster

**XI. DIRECTOR'S REPORTS:** Director Bruno, Supervisor Adams, and Council Member Albert were in favor of resuming in-person meetings as Covid restrictions are lifted, possibly by the July board meeting.

**XII. STAFF COMMENTS:** It will be determined after the May 12, 2021 TAC meeting whether a June Watermaster board meeting is necessary.

**XIII. NEXT MEETING DATE:** The next meeting of the Watermaster board is scheduled for Wednesday, June 2, 2021.

**XIV.** There being no further business, Chair Bruno adjourned the meeting at 3:43p.m.