

Sonoma Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency Board Meeting | Minutes

July 25, 2022

<http://sonomavalleygroundwater.org/>

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Gorin, called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. and asked Bill Keene, Administrator, to conduct roll call. **Directors Ding, Gorin, Rabbitt, Rogers** and **Sangiaco** were present. **Director Bruzzone** (Alternate for **Director Mulas**) arrived 4:05 p.m.

Bill Keene welcomed the Board and AC members, and members of public. He said he would be reaching out to all Board members in the coming weeks.

2. Consider Emergency Resolution 006-2022

Director Gorin explained that Governor Newsom's Executive Order for Emergency Meetings expired on September 30th. Since then, if the Board meets virtually, it needs to declare an emergency and pass a resolution which lasts for 30 days. The Board needs to pass Resolution 006-2022 to allow this meeting to take place remotely, as well as all meetings of Agency legislative bodies for the following 30 days.

Director Ding moved to approve Emergency Resolution 006-2022 which would allow today's meeting to occur remotely, as well as all meetings of Agency legislative bodies for the following 30 days as presented, **Director Rabbitt** seconded. Motion passed **6-0-0**.

Roll call Vote:

Director Ding – aye

Director Gorin – aye

Director Bruzzone – aye

Director Rabbitt – aye

Director Rogers – aye

Director Sangiacomo – aye

3. Public comment on matters not listed on the agenda but within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board

None.

4. Consent Calendar

a. **Approve Minutes of June 27, 2022**

b. **Approve Year-to-Date Financial Report**

No public comment.

Director Rabbitt moved to approve the Consent Calendar as presented, **Director Sangiacomo** seconded. Motion passed **5-0-1**. **Director Bruzzone** abstained.

Roll call Vote:

Director Ding – aye

Director Gorin – aye

Director Bruzzone – abstain, didn't receive minutes

Director Rabbitt – aye

Director Rogers – aye

Director Sangiacomo - aye

5. Directors/Subcommittee Report

No report, no public comment.

6. Advisory Committee Report

Fred Allebach, SV GSA AC Chair said there isn't much to report and mentioned an upcoming field trip for Advisory Committee members that would take place in August. A written report is in the packet. No questions, no public comment.

Director Gorin suggested that Bill Keene invite/include the Board on the field trip.

7. Information Items

a. Groundwater Sustainability Plan Implementation Update

Marcus Trotta, Plan Manager gave a brief update. Staff has been in transition mode and spent much time working on the Rate and Fee study. They are looking forward to starting work on implementation activities in the Plan. Many projects are related to the Prop 68 grant funding including deep well monitoring drilling in the three basins. The contractor completed work last week in the Santa Rosa Plain and will be moving to Petaluma Valley next. Drilling in Sonoma Valley is expected to begin in late September/early October. Staff is also working on scope for service agreement between Sonoma Water and the GSAs to start implementing some programs in the GSP. Together with the administrative team at West Yost, they are prioritizing GSP implementation items that the Board could put forward for the next round of SGMA grants. Staff will take the list to Advisory Committee members for input before the next Board meeting.

No questions, no public comment.

8. Action Items

a. **Secretary of the Board.** Consider Resolution appointing Bill Keene, SV GSA Administrator, as Secretary of the Board.

On July 1, 2022, Bill Keene, subconsultant of West Yost Associates, was hired to serve as Administrator for the Sonoma Valley GSA. The Sonoma Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) Board of Directors appoints the Board Secretary. With the recent addition of the new GSA Administrator, the Board needs to appoint a new Board Secretary. Bill Keene outlined duties of the Secretary of the Board.

No questions, no public comment.

Director Sangiacomo moved to appoint Bill Keene as Board Secretary for the Sonoma Valley GSA, **Director Rabbitt** seconded. Motion passed **6-0-0**.

Roll call Vote:

Director Ding – aye

Director Gorin – aye

Director Bruzzone – aye

Director Rabbitt – aye

Director Rogers – aye

Director Sangiacomo – aye

- b. Signatory of GSA Account.** Consider adding Bill Keene, SV GSA Administrator, as signatory of GSA account.

On July 1, 2022, Bill Keene, subconsultant of West Yost Associates, was hired to serve as Administrator for the Sonoma Valley GSA. Pursuant to Section 3.1 of the GSA Bylaws, the Administrator duties include managing the Agency’s financial operations; expend budgeted funds in compliance with Chapter 2, Article V of the Sonoma County Code of Ordinances; authorize purchases of up to and including \$50,000 in conformance with the annual Board-approved budget; execute time and cost change orders; and solely sign Sonoma Valley GSA checks and/or claims requests in the amount of \$25,000 or less. Staff is requesting the Board consider adding Bill Keene, Sonoma Valley GSA Administrator, as signatory of the GSA account.

No questions, no public comment.

Director Rabbitt moved to authorize adding Bill Keene, Sonoma Valley GSA Administrator, as signatory of the GSA account pursuant to Section 3.1 of the Agency’s Bylaws, **Director Sangiacomo** seconded. Motion passed **6-0-0**.

Roll call Vote:

Director Ding – aye

Director Gorin – aye

Director Bruzzone – aye

Director Rabbitt – aye

Director Rogers – aye

Director Sangiacomo – aye

- c. GUIDE Program Approval.** Consider authorizing the Administrator to finalize preparations to launch the GUIDE Program in late summer 2022.

SGMA requires some form of regulation to assess fees based on groundwater use on *de minimis* groundwater users (i.e., most rural residential groundwater users). SGMA does NOT authorize the GSA to meter *de minimis* users.

The Groundwater User Information and Data Exchange (GUIDE) was launched by Santa Rosa Plain

GSA in 2021, following its 2019 adoption of a fee based on groundwater use. GUIDE is a simple, free (to registrants), one-time registration program that will allow the GSA to verify basic information about groundwater use and could provide important information about wells and areas that may benefit from future programs.

Since 2019, the Sonoma Valley GSA has included funding in its budget to allow staff to assist in the development of the GUIDE program, with the understanding that the same program would eventually be launched in the Sonoma Valley Basin. Advisory Committee members in Sonoma Valley are currently testing the program. If GUIDE is approved as part of the fee ordinance, implementation would follow the process used by Santa Rosa Plain GSA and would launch in late August or early September.

Bill Keene mentioned highlights of the program.

Staff recommends authorizing the Administrator to coordinate with member agency staff and finalize preparations for launching the GUIDE Program in late summer 2022 following completion of the outreach map and survey.

Board Questions/Comments

Director Rogers – How much money has already been spent on GUIDE program and what did we get for the money?

DuBay – We are lucky that Santa Rosa Plain developed the program first, Sonoma Valley can piggyback on that development. GUIDE is part of Prop 68 funding received from DWR; much of the staff work has been paid through the grant.

Director Rogers – There seems to be a disconnect of information that is mandatory from GSA aspect, and that which is voluntary. Wording doesn't seem strong enough around that.

Director Gorin – Probably 75% of people in the county don't know about registering a well. Will there ever be enough information?

Keene – Doesn't Permit Sonoma have the well information on locations already?

DuBay – Permit Sonoma has some information built into their database, but not everything. The GUIDE program is the least intrusive way of regulating groundwater users. To charge de minimis users, they need to be regulated. The GUIDE program was developed with the idea of being an opt out type of program. People can review existing information and change and/or add information as required. The language is "friendly", it is an unobtrusive registration process and program.

Director Gorin [to Director Sangiacomo] – You are on the outreach committee. How is our outreach doing?

Director Sangiacomo – The committee hasn't met in a while. We are reaching out to as many people in the ag community and North Bay Water District as possible; there are lots more questions than we have answers. The community-at large know the GUIDE program and a fee is coming; it has been met with a variety of responses.

Director Gorin ([to Director Rogers]) – How are you as the Valley of the Moon (VOM) Water District sending information out to the public about the program?

Director Rogers – We haven't sent any information out yet specifically on this. When we get questions, we say it is to save the aquifer. VOM is willing to pay for water that we pull out of the aquifer.

Director Gorin [to Director Ding] – How are you communicating with residents of the City of Sonoma?

Director Ding – We only have a handful of wells. We think it is everyone’s responsibility to save water for the future. The City of Sonoma has \$25,000 budgeted for FY22-23.

Public Comment

Fred Allebach – I see in the report that de minimis users are 14% (for years the Advisory Committee thought 30%) of groundwater use, I assume they are rural residential users. Is the difference due to industrial users? If de minimis users use more than their two acre-feet, is there a way for the GSA to see that by way of aerial imaging?

Keene – I assume it was crop cover or lidar data that was used.

Trotta – A couple reasons for differences of 30% versus 14%. 30% was calculated by using groundwater modelling and different sets of assumptions. The Fee study took a more granular parcel specific approach to estimate demands. Also, we added in industrial and commercial users; it changes overall percentages of all classes. Estimating groundwater demands is one of the bigger data gaps we have in the Groundwater Sustainability Plan.

Jerry Bradshaw, SCI – Rural residential parcels do not appear on crop maps; we default to Assessor Use Codes. Changes would show up in future years when we review data.

Director Ding moved to authorizing the Administrator to coordinate with member agency staff and finalize preparations for launching the GUIDE Program in late summer 2022 following completion of the outreach map and survey, **Director Rabbitt** seconded. Motion passed **5-0-1**. **Director Bruzzone** abstained.

Roll call Vote:

Director Ding – aye

Director Gorin – aye

Director Bruzzone – abstain

Director Rabbitt – aye

Director Rogers – aye

Director Sangiacomo – aye

- d. **Groundwater Reporting and Fee Ordinance.** Consider adoption of "An Ordinance Requiring The Registration Of Groundwater Use Facilities, Establishing A Method Of Calculating Groundwater Use, And Authorizing The Update And Adoption Of Groundwater Sustainability Fee."

Jerry Bradshaw, SCI Consulting provided a background for Items 8 d-h, and followed with an overview of the “Groundwater Reporting and Fee Ordinance” including the legislative process. All groundwater users in Sonoma Valley basin will become registered with the GSA through the GUIDE program. Registration means owners of parcels using groundwater have been asked to review information such as name and address, description of groundwater extraction equipment, and location of groundwater facility. Through the GUIDE program, groundwater users can review parcel-specific information and provide additional or corrected information. The Ordinance is modeled after a similar ordinance in Santa Rosa Plain GSA (in place since 2019) and establishes a groundwater sustainability fee structure.

Staff recommends the Board consider adoption of "An Ordinance Requiring The Registration of Groundwater Use Facilities, Establishing A Method of Calculating Groundwater Use, And Authorizing The Update And Adoption of Groundwater Sustainability Fee.

Board Questions/Comments

Director Bruzzone – This vote is about the procedure?

Bradshaw – Yes, it authorizes the establishment of a fee and give the definition of the categories and how it will be calculated.

Director Bruzzone – Could you define super majority?

Director Gorin – Must be at least four members (out of six).

Director Rogers – The idea that municipals are treated differently than other groundwater users – we aren't going to stop anything now, but if it is still in place next year, we would vote against it. Assumption that Municipal water/cities have extra money or don't have to account for money, is a misnomer. We wish to be treated the same as the rest of the basin.

Keene – I will follow this up with you when we meet.

Director Ding – How can we make an amendment to the process, if/when necessary?

Bradshaw – You come back to the Ordinance process and do a first and second reading. Santa Rosa Plain has just revised it for a second time, they are on their third version.

Public Comment

Allebach – To clarify, if this is good for five years, and there is a two-year period where the fees will be reduced and the county will be funding the GSAs, what happens after the two years? Is the fee at the full rate?

Bradshaw – The Ordinance is not just for five years; it is durable until you want to change it. The rates would be good for two years and will be considered in the next action item (Resolution).

Director Ding moved to accept adoption of "An Ordinance Requiring The Registration Of Groundwater Use Facilities, Establishing A Method Of Calculating Groundwater Use, And Authorizing The Update And Adoption Of Groundwater Sustainability Fee", **Director Rabbitt** seconded. Motion passed **6-0-0**.

Roll call Vote:

Director Ding – aye

Director Gorin – aye

Director Bruzzone – aye

Director Rabbitt – aye

Director Rogers – aye

Director Sangiacomo – aye

- e. **SCI Consulting Group (SCI) "Sonoma Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency Rate and Fee Study"**. Consider Acceptance and Approval of Report to be used to as a basis to establish a groundwater sustainability fee as authorized by Water Code section 10730 and pursuant to Agency Ordinance No. 22-01.

Generally, public agencies must adopt regulations by ordinance. Under section 4.02 of the Joint Powers Agreement for the Agency, the Agency exercises its powers in the same manner as the County of Sonoma. The process for a county to adopt an ordinance is set forth in Government Code section 25120 et seq. Water Code section 10730 sets out the requirements for the adoption of a fee.

A single ordinance is proposed, requiring groundwater user registration, and authorizing the Agency to impose the fee by resolution. The Board may, at the same or a later meeting, adopt the resolution setting the fee, provided that the fee will not take effect until the ordinance becomes effective. The purpose in using a resolution to set the fee is that it may be more readily changed by the Board, if necessary, since only one meeting would be required to change the amount of the fee by resolution.

Jerry Bradshaw said this is the item that will act as a basis for any legislation to establish a groundwater sustainability fee. Bradshaw explained the Rate Study, costs and revenue requirements, groundwater extraction estimates, the rate calculation, and examples of fees by sector.

Staff recommends the Board consider acceptance and approval of report to be used as a basis to establish a groundwater sustainability fee as authorized by Water Code section 10730 and pursuant to Agency Ordinance No. 22-01.

Board Questions/Comments

Director Gorin – A hypothetical question about treating municipal users differently – if the county subsidy went away or we treated every class equally, we would probably have a deficit. How would that factor into our calculation in the future and what does it mean for the GSA?

Bradshaw – At the baseline, the difference of \$40 to \$73 an acre-foot for Valley of the Moon is not a big amount (about \$3,000), since they aren't a big pumper. How it goes in future years, will be a task for Bill Keene and the Board when they review the budget every year. It is a simple math equation that will include other revenues. The county Assessor would like to have a fresh resolution every year.

Director Gorin – We have asked Ann DuBay to reduce the budget as much as possible. There may be a need to increase the budget at some stage because we can't always operate on the minimal budget of this year. Will the bottom line stay constant and only the top line will have changes?

Bradshaw – We hope there aren't a lot of adjustments, there is a built-in adjustment factor. GUIDE is the vehicle, and the appeals process in the Ordinance is the structure for getting changes done. I expect it to stay the same, and it would take some years for several corrections to surface.

Director Ding – How many residents of the City of Sonoma pay \$73 versus \$40?

DuBay – There are 19 owners that will pay as urban groundwater pumpers within the City of Sonoma and Valley of the Moon in total.

Director Ding – I thought there were only two in City of Sonoma, can you verify that?

Bradshaw – I can get that number to you later today. The City of Sonoma users would be charged at the \$40 rate. VOM would pay \$73 under this structure.

Director Rogers – There is no economic analysis of the impact of rates on various sectors, in your report. Do you have plans to incorporate that? If not, why not?

Bradshaw – There are no plans to include that. Impacts would be different for vineyards and various kinds of crops. The information wouldn't be reliable.

Director Rogers – I think we need the information to accurately determine what the impact of the rate is on the users.

Bradshaw – One of the problems we ran into is the gross receipts versus the net profit side. The profit margin might not be as luxurious as appears on the outside.

Director Rogers – Why don't you strip out value judgements from the report? It is meaningless without that information. What are other people paying across the state in ag areas? Is \$120 a normal rate?

Director Gorin – How many other counties are subsidizing fees? Seems to be many of them, but there is no information on the amount of subsidy or the impact on rate -payors.

Director Ding – The subsidy from the county comes from the General Fund, it affects everyone. We should consider the interests of low-income, especially elderly, residents.

Director Rabbitt – It is about equalizing costs across the basins. It is an unfunded state mandate and unfair that Petaluma Valley pay five times more than Santa Rosa Plain to turn in the same paperwork to Sacramento. We have two years of reprieve. I think we need to consolidate; it won't bring the overall budget down by much but will equalize administrative costs county-wide. Every billing company can decide what they charge. This was done at the county given our time restriction.

Director Gorin – I think **Director Rabbitt** is right but, I do also share the concerns of **Director Ding** and **Director Rogers**. The people in VOM and City of Sonoma are a small percentage of the equation because they use less groundwater than some other users.

Director Bruzzone – Thank you to **Director Ding** about the comment regarding people on fixed incomes, it needs to be taken into consideration. Also, those that are in animal production in the ag industry, they are on limited funds too. How was the format for the study and information on acre-footage done for animal ag? Was it established on acre-footage from other GSAs or only from our GSA?

Bradshaw – Animal ag is built into the pasture category, common to all three GSAs. It is consistent with information in the Rate study done in 2018.

Trotta – There was a study done on dairy in the Santa Rosa Plain to estimate water usage for dairies. It was applied to a pasture rate, approximately .04 acre-foot of use per acre.

Director Bruzzone – Will there be a possibility to appeal?

Bradshaw – Yes, there is an appeal process.

Director Sangiacomo – Do you think the denominator might grow rather than shrink?

Bradshaw – We have allowed for 5% shrinkage. If we shrink by only 3%, it will affect the bottom line and will be bigger than what we have estimated at this time. If we don't get many appeals, it might go up in future years.

Director Sangiacomo – Santa Rosa Plain is ahead of us in the GUIDE program. Have there been any appeals there?

Bradshaw – Santa Rosa Plain experience hasn't provided an estimate of what to expect yet. There haven't been fees to appeal until now because the county was covering the cost.

Public Comment

Fred Allebach – It seems like after the first few years, we should be making a deal on how we can survive on \$120 acre-foot per year. Is it by the basin or by the county? Should we modify our assumption? If we have lots of dry years, more groundwater will be used, and it depends on climate. We need to look at this on a conservation basis. Is the lean and mean budget going to affect the GSP?

Bradshaw – We have two years to work on how to face the \$123 rate. It has been the intent by the Board to consider before the end of two years. County funds gave a two-year window. At this point, we aren't measuring actual groundwater use; we are still modeling on irrigation patterns. As far as why the City of Sonoma is treated differently, they are outside the basin.

Trotta – The approach to reduce the budget this year means we are deferring work that needs to be done, to subsequent years. Sonoma Valley has its share of challenges to comply with SGMA. We do need to report to DWR every year.

Keene – In order for us to work on the projects, we need funds from the GSA to match grant funding.

Trotta –The upcoming grant opportunities for implementation funds do not have match-fund requirements but, you get extra points.

Director Gorin – Thank you to Ann DuBay for discussing this with Senator McGuire to talk about the needs of the GSAs to get some funding.

DuBay – We should continue to pursue that avenue. We need to bring this to the attention of our legislative delegation.

Director Ding – Is it possible to set up the program with favorable fees for lower/limited income people?

Director Gorin – Today's action is about approving the report, not a specific fee, but it would be a good conversation to have, maybe we can discuss with legal counsel and add it to the agenda of our upcoming meeting.

Director Rabbitt moved to accept and approve the Sonoma Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency Rate and Fee Study to be used as a basis to establish a groundwater sustainability fee as authorized by Water Code section 10730 and pursuant to Agency Ordinance No. 22-01, **Director Bruzzone** seconded. Motion passed **5-1-0**.

Roll call Vote:

Director Ding – aye

Director Gorin – aye

Director Bruzzone – aye

Director Rabbitt – aye

Director Rogers – no, not without economic impact in the report, messaging is wrong, decrying money rather than promoting the value of the money for saving the aquifer.

Director Sangiacomo – aye

- f. **Resolution Establishing a Groundwater Sustainability Fee.** Consider adoption of a resolution to establish a groundwater sustainability fee as authorized by Water Code section 10730 and pursuant to Agency Ordinance No. 22-01.

The Sonoma Valley GSA was established in 2017 and funded for five years by contributions from member agencies (through June 2022) and through grants. Member agency contributions totaled \$1,574,000 and grants and technical assistance from DWR totaled approximately \$2.2 million.

The GSA's Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement (JPA) anticipated that the GSA would become self-funded between July 1, 2019, and June 30, 2022, by adopting a rate and fee structure, during which time a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) would be developed and adopted.

The core objective of the proposed groundwater sustainability fee is to develop a fair and efficient funding mechanism, using the best available information and industry practices, to create a financially independent Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Sonoma Valley. The funding mechanism is intended to incorporate the unique characteristics of the Agency's jurisdiction while meeting SGMA and other legal requirements.

Jerry Bradshaw explained these aren't Prop 218 fees. In Prop 26, the fees are required to be proportionate to the service. We are hamstrung to offer low income or senior discounts/credits for these types of fees. They can be offered by other sources of funds. I have worked with cities that have used General Funds to give discounts. So, there are opportunities for credits/discounts, but not with the fees. Bradshaw then described the rate resolution which sets actual rates, expands on Appeals process, and meets county auditor's requirements for property tax bill inclusion.

Staff recommends the Board approve Resolution SV-07-2022 to establish a groundwater sustainability fee as authorized by Water Code section 10730 and pursuant Agency Ordinance No. 22-01 in the amount \$73.20 per acre-foot annually.

Board Questions/Comments

Director Bruzzone – Are we 'on the clock' for setting the rate or else the state will intervene?

Director Gorin – Yes.

Director Bruzzone – I am assuming if you have an alternative water source such as rainwater, there will be a formula where you get an offset? Do you have to register the offset?

Bradshaw – It will be up to Marcus Trotta and Bill Keene to set. We have the information subject to correction.

Scott Morris – We need to be careful of terminology here. What Jerry Bradshaw is calling an offset, isn't a monetary offset, it is a way of calculating actual water use. If we make an assumption on water use by class and someone can prove "X minus 10 acre-feet because they are getting other water", that isn't a financial offset. Courts have interpreted Prop 218 and 26 to say that one can only be charged a fee based on extraction. You hear of cities that have a program to help people that need financial help, but it can't be out of the fee that is raised.

Public Comment

Fred Allebach – What is the hamstring factor for offering waiver discounts to seniors?

Bradshaw – The basis for not including discounts for seniors or low income in the fee study would mean slightly higher costs for others, that isn't allowed in Prop 218. All user classes need to pay the same rate, except for the money from the county. The rate in the fee study needs to stand on its own and meet requirements of Prop 26 and 218.

Director Ding moved to approve Resolution SV-07-2022 to establish a groundwater sustainability fee as authorized by Water Code section 10730 and pursuant to Agency Ordinance No. 22-01 in the amount of \$73.20 per acre-foot annually, **Director Rabbit** seconded. Motion passed **6-0-0**.

Roll call Vote:

Director Ding – aye

Director Gorin – aye

Director Bruzzone – aye

Director Rabbitt – aye

Director Rogers – aye

Director Sangiacomo – aye

- g. Contract with Sonoma County Assessor’s Office.** Consider authorizing the administrator of the Sonoma Valley GSA and the GSA legal counsel to negotiate a new agreement with Sonoma County Assessor’s Office for fee implementation services. The item would also authorize the Chair to sign the agreement.

The Sonoma Valley GSA was established in 2017 and funded for five years by contributions from member agencies (through June 2022) and through grants. Member agency contributions totaled \$1,574,000 and grants and technical assistance from DWR totaled approximately \$2.2 million.

The GSA’s Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement (JPA) anticipated that the GSA would become self-funded between July 1, 2019, and June 30, 2022, by adopting a rate and fee structure, during which time a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) would be developed and adopted.

Based on an average annual budget over the next five years of \$1,137,000 reduced by an annual average grant funding amount of \$284,200 (approximately 25% of total budget), the average annual revenue requirement from a regulatory fee structure is \$852,800. The total groundwater extraction for the Sonoma Valley subbasin is estimated to be 7,107.3 acre-feet per year. Based on a skeleton Year 1 budget, the recently completed Rate and Fee Study recommends a rate of \$73.20 per acre foot/year as the basis to establish a groundwater sustainability fee as authorized by Water Code section 10730 and pursuant Agency Ordinance No. 22-01. With contributions from the County of Sonoma for FY 22-23 and FY 23-24, as allocated during the Board of Supervisor’s budget hearings during the week of June 13, the rate collected from groundwater users would be \$40 per acre-foot/year.

To efficiently collect and implement the proposed groundwater sustainability fees, the Sonoma Valley GSA is seeking to enter a contract with the Sonoma County Assessor’s Office. Under the draft agreement, the GSA agrees to notify the Auditor-Controller on or before the 10th day of August of each fiscal year of the Assessor’s parcel numbers and amount of each fee.

Jerry Bradshaw explained how the contract would work. The county charges agencies for direct charges on tax bills (0.85% of fees collected, approximately \$2,200 for the first year). It is the most efficient method of collection as it avoids printing and postage costs. There are also less delinquencies, and even if property taxes aren’t paid, under the Teeter Plan, the GSA will still get its money, and the county takes on the responsibility of going after the funds.

Staff recommends authorizing the Administrator of the Sonoma Valley GSA and the GSA legal counsel to negotiate and sign a new agreement with Sonoma County Assessor's Office for fee implementation services.

No questions, no public comment.

Director Rabbitt moved to authorize the Administrator of the Sonoma Valley GSA and the GSA legal counsel to negotiate and sign a new agreement with Sonoma County Assessor's Office for fee implementation services, **Director Bruzzone** seconded. Motion passed **6-0-0**.

Roll call Vote:

Director Ding – aye

Director Gorin – aye

Director Bruzzone – aye

Director Rabbitt – aye

Director Rogers – aye

Director Sangiacomo – aye

- h. SCI Consulting Group (SCI) Contract Amendment.** Consider authorization to amend the contract with SCI for Data Review, Fee Analysis, and Rate Setting services for the GSA from June 30, 2022 to December 31, 2022.

This item would authorize the Administrator to extend the contract with the SCI Consulting Group to December 31, 2022, negotiate a scope of work and fee for groundwater sustainability fee implementation support, and execute an Amendment to the Professional Services Agreement.

Bill Keene provided background and fiscal information.

Board Questions/Comments

Director Rogers – It is up to December of this year? What about next year?

Bradshaw – We are working through getting data to tax collector and first appeals process.

Director Rogers – So you need \$50,000 to finish what you are doing? I suggest we need more information for the Board to understand what we get for the money.

Keene – This is to extend the contract until the end of the year and complete current work; the money to finish the work this year is in the budget. We could come back to the Board to discuss future work of SCI.

Director Rogers – Where does the \$50,000 come in?

Keene – It is about \$7,000 to finish the work of getting fees to the Assessor's office.

DuBay – This would be asking for a contract extension so SCI can submit the data to the Assessor's office, the amount would be maximum \$7,500 for that. The \$50,000 was budgeted for work next year, this is just one task of the overall project.

Director Ding – Unintelligible comment.

DuBay – There is currently an agreement with SCI. What we have asked SCI to do that wasn't in the original budget is to take the data and submit it to the Assessor's office, and then to deal with some of the issues that might arise from that.

Director Gorin – Even if we are talking about \$50,000 in the budget, it will be less than \$10,000 for this work. The contract expires at the end of this month, and we need to get the data to the Assessor’s office by August 10.

No public comments.

Director Rogers moved to authorize the Administrator to extend the contract with the SCI Consulting Group to December 31, 2022 for an amount not to exceed \$10,000 to negotiate a contract with the Assessor’s office, **Director Bruzzone** seconded. Motion passed **6-0-0**.

Roll call Vote:

Director Ding – aye

Director Gorin – aye

Director Bruzzone – aye

Director Rabbitt – aye

Director Rogers – aye

Director Sangiacomo – aye

9. Legal Counsel, Plan Manager and Administrator Report

Bill Keene reiterated he would be reaching out to each of the Board members to meet with them one-on-one. He also mentioned, that on August 9, the county will be considering a proposed well Ordinance, and changes to a well ordinance – its impact, and drilling and regulations of wells.

Director Gorin – Please reach out to this Board but also Executive Directors of Resource Conservation Districts, and a subset of the Board, etc. When the ordinance is published, please send a link to the Board when available.

Trotta – We have been coordinating with the county and legal counsel to come up with a way to address the Governor’s drought order and a way to respond to that. We will bring forward something to the next Board meeting.

Scott Morris said it had been a pleasure working with staff on this.

No public comment.

10. Adjournment

The next Board meeting is *tentatively* planned for September 26. **Director Gorin** thanked staff for their work and adjourned the meeting at 6:27 p.m.

Other Meeting Attendees

Bill Keene, Sonoma Valley GSA Administrator

Ann DuBay, former Sonoma Valley GSA Administrator

Marcus Trotta, Plan Manager

Indigo Bannister, GSA staff

Andrea Rodriguez, Outreach

Simone Peters, GSA Administrative Aide (recording minutes)

Jerry Bradshaw, SCI Consulting

Ryan Aston, SCI Consulting

Scott Morris, Legal Counsel
Andy Rodgers, Santa Rosa Plain GSA Administrator
Sandi Potter, Petaluma Valley GSA Administrator
Fred Allebach, Sonoma Valley GSA Chair
Bob Anderson, Santa Rosa Plain GSA Chair
Tim Parker, Parker Groundwater
Oriana Hart – City of Sonoma