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MERCED COUNTY

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FRIANT WATER AUTHORITY

MEMBER AT LARGE

STEVE WORTHLEY,
Director
SULTANA, TULARE COUNTY

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

July 3rd, 2019

FRESNO IRRIGATION DISTRICT OFFICE

2097 South Maple Avenue, Fresno

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the San Joaquin Valley Water Infrastructure Authority (SJWIA) was called to order at 9:07 a.m. on July 3rd, 2019, by President Buddy Mendes.

PRELIMINARY MATTERS

President Mendes asked Bernard Jimenez to call the roll. The following directors were present: President Mendes, Vice President Verboon, Directors Rogers, Silveira, Lopez, Preciado (arrived at 9:13 a.m.), Chedester, Michael, Worthley. Staff present: Executive Director Mario Santoyo.

Others present (*from roll signatures*): Jodi Devaurs, California Cotton Ginners & Growers Association; Jose Reynoso and David Estrada, office of the Fresno County Auditor-Controller; Christina Guzman, Bernard Jimenez, and Augustine Ramirez, Fresno County Department of Public Works and Planning; Jesse Alvarez, Malaga County Water District; Lacey Kiriakou, Merced County; Manuel Cunha, Nisei Farmers League; Ian Coolbear, Representative at Assemblyman Patterson's Office.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

Minutes of the June 14, 2019, regular meeting were considered. On motion of Director Rodgers, seconded by Vice President Verboon and carried unanimously, the minutes were approved as mailed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

President Mendes stated that at this time, members of the public could speak about any item of concern not appearing on the agenda, provided it was within the jurisdiction of the SJWIA. He said the total amount of time allocated for this public comment period would be determined by the Chair and each



individual would be limited to three minutes. It was noted that matters presented during this public comment period may not be discussed or acted upon by the board at this time. There were no public comments.

FINANCIAL

Jose Reynoso, office of the Fresno County Auditor-Controller (which serves as the JPA Treasurer), presented the financial report. As of June 30, 2019, the SJVWIA had received 2018-19 fiscal year administrative revenue in the amount of \$97,589 (30% of the \$321,000 in budgeted anticipations) and had administratively expended \$289,462 (91% of the \$318,403 in the administrative budget). The SJVWIA's cash balance as of June 30, 2019, was \$96,859, with total budgeted cash currently projected to remain on June 30, 2019, as \$31,076. *(A copy of the financial report is on file.)*

Mr. Reynoso continued onto the next item of discussion, the amendment to the 2019-20 fiscal year budget, approved on June 14, 2019. The amendment he presented reflected continuing Executive Director, Mario Santoyo's extended one-month salary with SJVWIA, as directed by the Board. Mr. Reynoso continued to explain that if Mr. Santoyo's employment was further extended those changes could be made with this amendment as well. The amendment increased the appropriations to \$60,900, with a change of \$17,000, to reflect salaries and benefits for Mr. Santoyo's extended employment. Thus, altering the cash carryover to align with the cash balance of the June 30, 2019, Treasurer Report, of \$96,859 with a remaining fund balance of approximately \$35,959.

Discussion followed. President Mendes sought authorization to create an ad hoc budget committee with participation from Vice President Verboon and any other interested members of the Board. Assistant Director of Public Works and Planning, Bernard Jimenez, suggested it would be good form to include in the committee the ability to retain an independent auditor. Mr. Jimenez continued to explain that once the amendment has been approved by each respective jurisdiction and the SJVWIA Board, then the opportunity to retain an independent auditor would arise. The Fresno County Auditor-Controller's office would assist in the process as it presents itself. Director Rodgers moved, seconded by Director Chedester, that the amendment covering the budget and ad hoc committee as presented be approved. Without objection, the motion carried.

President Mendes introduced the next item of discussion, the resolution to authorize President Mendes to terminate the SJVWIA Retirement Plan and 457 Plan. Mr. Jimenez noted that in the occurrence that the employment of external individuals was no longer deemed necessary, for example, the employment of Mr. Santoyo, the resolution would provide Mr. Mendes the authority to execute when necessary. Vice President Verboon moved, seconded by Director Silveira, that the resolution authorizing President Mendes to terminate the SJVWIA Retirement Plan and 457 Plan be approved. Mr. Mendes interjected, that for the record, Director Alvaro Preciado, the Mayor of the City of Avenal, had arrived. Without objection, the motion carried.

ORGANIZATION



President Mendes introduced the next item, finalization of the restated and amended SJVWIA Joint Powers Agreement. Mr. Jimenez reported, that one of the outstanding topics was properly identifying the signatories of the document. Mr. Jimenez noted, an attachment to the Agenda packet included a list of signatories and those signatories undetermined. He further explained that once all signatories were identified then a copy of the JPA could be circulated to be taken to each respective jurisdiction for approval and adoption. Mr. Santoyo then joined the discussion and explained that once the list is completed then the document can be routed out for signature by each respective body. This was followed by Mr Jimenez reviewing the list and verbally confirming with each member of the Board the appropriate signatory for each of their respective jurisdictions. Director Silveira noted that the JPA would have to be taken to his respective board for approval. Mr. Santoyo confirmed that notion was correct and that each party would have to act accordingly to each respective jurisdiction.

TEMPERANCE FLAT RESERVOIR AUTHORITY

Executive Director Santoyo reported on the status of the final Federal Feasibility Report which would not be completed until June of 2020, due to bureaucratic delays. He continued on that though the report has been delayed it would still meet the January 2021 deadline for the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act grant funding. This was followed by the status of the SJVWIA Water Storage Investment Program (WSIP) reimbursement request to TFRA. Mr. Santoyo reported that he attended the last TFRA meeting and for the TFRA to reimburse the SJVWIA for activities associated with the WSIP application, TFRA was awaiting early funding from the grant. Mr. Santoyo continued that in speaking with TFRA representative Aaron Fakuda, Mr. Santoyo learned that TFRA had encountered some minor delays due to water rights licensing, however steps were being taken to resolve the issue. Once TFRA receives the reimbursement, Mr. Santoyo reported, the next step would be to determine the amount the SJVWIA would receive.

Next President Mendes reported on the TFRA June 26, 2019, Board meeting noting that it was a short meeting and Mr. Santoyo's reporting had covered it.

U.S BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Executive Director Santoyo reported on the status of the termination of the SJVWIA-USBR Cost Share Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). He explained the request to the Bureau to terminate the MOU. The termination would allow the TFRA to enter into a new MOU with the Bureau. He continued to explain that the Bureau has a final MOU prepared for the TFRA, however it cannot be executed until the Authority's contract is terminated. Mr. Santoyo explained that the termination was based on the Authority's submittal of quarterly financial reports to the Bureau. He explained, the reports were based on information from TFRA, however the Authority did not receive the appropriate information, thus delaying termination of the MOU as they did not meet the level of acceptability by the Bureau. In speaking with the TFRA representative Aaron Fakuda, Mr. Santoyo learned that TFRA is in the process of gathering the correct information needed to move forward with a goal of executing the new MOU with the Bureau



in August. Mr. Santoyo assured the Board the delay would not have an effect on receiving early funding for the State grant as the two were unrelated.

Mr. Santoyo introduced the next item for the Board to consider a resolution authorizing the submittal of a formal study proposal for USBR “Water Management Pilot Program” in partnership with UC Merced. The Sierra Nevada Research Institute will be performing the research and is an organization out of UC Merced. The partnership would explore alternative forest management options to increase snow runoff into the reservoirs in the San Joaquin River Basin. He continued to explain the benefits of the research such as, public safety, air quality, forest health, and economic benefits; in addition to broader social impacts. He continued to explain UC Merced’s involvement in similar studies and their vast experience and knowledge studying the hydrology within the valley and neighboring basins. Mr. Santoyo explained the Board had previously expressed interest and took action to pursue the pilot. A letter of interest was submitted, and Reclamation has invited SJVWIA to formally make a proposal, due July 10, 2019.

Mr. Santoyo introduced Safeeq Khan, Assistant Professional Researcher for the Sierra Nevada Research Institute and Assistant Adjunct Professor at the UC Merced School of Engineering, to present an overview of the proposal being prepared. Mr. Khan began his presentation, titled, San Joaquin River Basin Water Management Options Pilots (WMOP) Study. The focus of the study will be the upper San Joaquin River Watershed and the role of forest management and how it effects water runoff and storage. The presentation continued for approximately twenty minutes and concluded with an overview of the costs associated with the project.

Mr. Santoyo followed up further explaining the cost share portion of the study. It requires a 50-50 matching share. Under the proposed study, potential partnerships would be sought with hydroelectric power producers) Southern California Edison Company and Pacific Gas and Electric Company), stakeholder water agencies and the U.S. Forest Service (through the Sierra National Forest). The non-Federal cost-share would be approximately just over half a million dollars (\$510,487). In-kind services would be allowed in reaching that total amount, with UC Merced already meeting approximately one third of the total non-Federal cost-share. The costs would cover the three year span of the study. Mr. Santoyo continued to recommend to the Board, if they were to move forward with the study, to restart the Technical Advisory Committee. The committee would be comprised of individuals that are knowledgeable in their field of study as it relates to the study. In addition, in-kind services could be charged to meet the cost-share match. Director Worthley supported the idea. SJVWIA would need to seek the sponsors before September (USBR Study approval date) to ensure the cost-share would be met before moving forward with study, if accepted by the Bureau. Mr. Santoyo continued to emphasize the benefits of the study, not only from a water standpoint, but a quality of life issue for the people of the valley. It was stated that the SJVWIA is not committing to any further funding for the study. Director Rodgers moved, seconded by Director Worthley, to consider resolution authorizing the submittal of a formal study proposal for USBR “Water Management Pilot Program” in partnership with UC Merced. Without objection, the motion carried.



OTHER BUSINESS

Member of the Public, Manuel Cunha from the Nisei Farmers League addressed the Board. He stated that the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) of California may be interested in the pilot study as a potential cost-share partner.

Executive Director Santoyo stated that a template for a 'Letter of Support,' had been drafted and transmitted via email to the Board and would be sent to each of the water agencies, cities, and counties for each respective body to provide and attach to the final proposal to the Bureau.

UC Merced Professor Khan stated that he is aware of two other projects and that the location of the proposed project along with public and local agencies support, there is a good possibility the proposal will be accepted for funding. Director Mendes noted that a support letter from a State legislator would help propel the support forward.

DIRECTORS REPORTS

President Mendes addressed the Board asking if there was anything further to report on. With no response from the Board, President Mendes moved on to the next item.

NEXT MEETING

The Board then discussed the next meeting. President Mendes stated that it is to be determined and will not likely occur before September.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the meeting, a motion to adjourn was made by Director Rodgers, seconded by Director Worthley. The same was carried without objection and the meeting was adjourned by President Mendes at 10:26 a.m.

