THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE NORTH KINGS GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES FOR JANUARY 16, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M. 2907 SOUTH MAPLE AVENUE – FRESNO, CA

TELECONFERENCE / IN-PERSON MEETING

AGENCIES – DIRECTORS / ALTERNATE DIRECTORS PRESENT
County of Fresno – Director Brian Pacheco
Bakman Water Company – Director Steve Pickens
City of Clovis – Director Matthew Basgall
At-Large Seat 7 (Fowler Packing) – Director Kyle Moeller
City of Fresno – Alternate Director Brock Buche
Fresno Irrigation District – Chairman Jerry Prieto, Jr.
Garfield Water District – Director Karl Kienow

BOARD SEATS ABSENT
None

MEMBER STAFF PRESENT
Executive Officer Kassy Chauhan
City of Clovis Representative – Scott Redelfs
Fresno Irrigation District Representative – DeAnn Stork
Fresno Irrigation District Representative – Bill Stretch
Fresno Irrigation District Representative – Adam Claes
Legal Counsel Dave Boyer – Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud, & Romo (via teleconference)

OTHERS PRESENT (who wanted to be identified for the record)
None

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Prieto at 6:03 pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Prieto led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Chauhan reviewed the teleconference procedures that needed to be adhered to since meeting attendance was being offered virtually to members of the public. Ms. Chauhan welcomed the participation from anyone participating from the public.

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3. **REVIEW AGENDA**
(Additional Agenda Items – Requires Majority Approval of Board - §54954.2(b)

No changes to the agenda.

4. **REVIEW OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Ms. Chauhan noted that due to the special meeting being held to facilitate the GSP review, the Regular Board meeting scheduled for next Thursday will be cancelled.

5. **PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS (for items not on agenda) – 3 Minutes Maximum Per Person, 10 Minutes Maximum Per Subject**

No public presentations.

6. **POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**
Any Board Member who has a potential conflict of interest may now identify the item and recuse themselves from discussing and voting on the matter. [FPPC §18705]

None stated.

7. **FINANCIAL MATTERS (Stork)**

   a. **Discussion / Possible Action – Approval of the Financial Statements as of November 30, 2024 (Stork)**

Ms. Stork presented the financial statements for November 30, 2024.

M/S/C (Moeller/Buche) That the Board of Directors approved the Financial Statements as of November 30, 2024, as presented by Staff, by the following vote: (Ayes – Pickens, Prieto, Jr., Kienow, Buche, Moeller, Basgall, Pacheco; Nays – 0; Absent – 0; Abstain – 0)

b. Discussion / Possible Action – Approval of the Expense Reports for October and November 2024 (Stork)

Ms. Stork stated that there were no out-of-the-ordinary expenses during October or November.

M/S/C (Buche/Kienow) That the Board of Directors approved the Expense Reports for October and November 2024, as presented by Staff, by the following vote: (Ayes – Pickens, Prieto, Jr., Kienow, Buche, Moeller, Basgall, Pacheco; Nays – 0; Absent – 0; Abstain – 0)

8. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

a. Discussion/Possible Action on Board Meeting Minutes – November 21, 2024

There were no corrections or suggestions to the November 21, 2024, meeting minutes.

M/S/C (Pickens/Kienow) That the Board of Directors approved the minutes of the November 21, 2024, Regular Board meeting, as presented by Staff, by the following vote: (Ayes – Pickens, Kienow, Prieto, Jr., Buche, Moeller, Basgall, Pacheco; Nays – 0; Absent – 0; Abstain – 0)

b. Kings Subbasin Coordination Update

- Each GSA has been asked to:
  - Approve Revisions to GSP
  - Address Changes to Coordination Agreement
  - 5 Year Periodic Evaluation Update
    - All due January 31, 2025, to DWR
- Domestic Well Mitigation Program ongoing
- Interconnected Surface Water (ISW) MOU with Madera Basin GSAs, FWA, USBR, SJRRPRA
- Bi-annual data submittal to DWR December 31, 2024
- Allocation Framework discussions starting in February 2025
- Annual Report for WY24 (10/1/23-9/30/24) due April 1, 2025
- Considering Lobbyist consultation services

Mr. Samuelian reported that the Domestic Well Mitigation Program is ongoing and encouraged everyone to visit the website mydrywell.org. It was noted that since the program's rollout in late October 2024, there has been only one inquiry, which did not meet the program's requirements. A Kings Subbasin Coordination Committee meeting is scheduled for tomorrow, during which the outreach team will discuss the plan for the first major outreach event, likely to take place in March, involving pump companies and well drillers.

Mr. Samuelian noted that the Interconnected Surface Water memorandum of understanding (MOU) is nearing completion. The MOU will serve to demonstrate to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) that the Kings Subbasin and Madera Subbasin are actively collaborating with affected parties to identify issues and potential interactions between surface water and groundwater along the San Joaquin River.

Mr. Samuelian stated that there is ongoing consideration within the basin for engaging a lobbyist focused specifically on GSA-related work, rather than relying on a surface water lobbyist. It was explained that SGMA-specific needs often require a more targeted approach aligned with the interests of a GSA or the basin, which may not always align directly with surface water interests or priorities.

Mr. Samuelian reviewed the following items currently under consideration by each of the GSAs, all of which are due by January 31, 2025.

1. Approve Revisions to GSP
    - Not formal Plan Amendment, these are revisions to the approved GSPs
    - Revisions made to address the Recommended Corrective Actions from August 4, 2023, DWR Approval Letter
    - Public comment periods conducted in October-December 2024

2. Modifications to Exhibit B of the Coordination Agreement
    - Data and methodology changes were made as part of addressing DWR Recommended Corrective Actions
    - Exhibit B intended to be evergreen, so future changes in data / methodology addressed in annual reports /periodic evals
        - One significant change was to the base period used for the water budget, initially from 1997 to 2011, it is now from 2009 to 2022
    - Coordination Agreement developed to follow DWR requirements and not changes planned to body of agreement

3. Period Evaluation
    - Submitting one Periodic Evaluation for the entire basin
    - Will submit revised GSPs and revised Exhibit B to Coordination Agreement with Periodic Evaluation

- Remaining Efforts to Finalize GSPs for Kings Subbasin GSAs:
    - Add in comment letters received and reference to it in Section 2.5 of GSP
    - Add draft MOU with USBR/FWA/SJRRP and GSAs to GSP
    - Add Possible Funding Source to Project Table in Chapter 6
    - Various Grammatical Edits and Corrections

Ms. Chauhan noted that the Board would need to consider approval of the public draft version of the GSP, including the above revisions that will be made between now and its submission to DWR, to meet the January 31, 2025, deadline.

c. Advisory Committee Update

Mr. Claes noted that, as vice chair of the Advisory Committee, he had the honor of filling in for Mr. Redelfs during the January 10, 2025, committee meeting. The committee held discussions on the following recommended actions and recommends that the Board approve them.

Recommended Actions:

- Approval of Financial Statements as of November 30, 2024
- Approve Expense Reports for October and November 2024
- Approve Updated GSP including Additional Ministerial Updates Noted
- Approve Amended Exhibit B of Kings Subbasin Coordination Agreement
- Approve MOU with USBR/FWA/SJRRP/GSAs for ISW Work
- Approve ICARP Sub Recipient Agreement with CSUF – Fresno Foundation

d. Discussion / Possible Action – Approval of the Revised GSP for the North Kings GSA

Ms. Chauhan stated that staff recommends the Board approve the revised GSP, with the understanding that ministerial changes will be made before the final document is submitted to DWR. Once finalized, the GSP document will be shared with the Board and posted on the NKGSA website.

M/S/C (Buche/Kienow) That the Board of Directors approved the Revised GSP for the North Kings GSA, as presented by Staff, by the following vote: (Ayes – Pickens, Kienow, Prieto, Jr., Buche, Moeller, Basgall, Pacheco; Nays – 0; Absent – 0; Abstain – 0)

e. Discussion / Possible Action – Approval of Exhibit B of the Kings Basin Coordination Agreement

Ms. Chauhan noted that the full agreement, along with the revisions to Exhibit B, were included in the packet. It was highlighted that both the Advisory Committee and legal counsel have reviewed the revisions to Exhibit B, and that the Advisory Committee and Staff are recommending approval of Exhibit B. The changes were made to ensure the methodology described in the revised GSP matches what is stated in Exhibit B of the coordination agreement.

M/S/C (Moeller/Basgall) That the Board of Directors approved Exhibit B of the Kings Basin Coordination Agreement, as presented by Staff, by the following vote: (Ayes – Pickens, Kienow, Prieto, Jr., Buche, Moeller, Basgall, Pacheco; Nays – 0; Absent – 0; Abstain – 0)

f. Discussion on the Kings Basin Periodic Evaluation

What is Periodic Evaluation

- Required submittal to DWR every 5 years - First Periodic Evaluation for Kings is due January 31, 2025
- Periodic Evaluation is not an Update to the GSP
    - But any revisions to the GSP should be mentioned in the Periodic Evaluation
    - Periodic Evaluation is a separate document that is intended to be "GSA's honest and detailed interpretation of how implementation is taking place"... listing successes and challenges, and how the GSA's plan to overcome those challenges
- DWR has provided a template format to follow
- DWR will review Periodic Evaluation, and determine if basin will stay "Approved" or be deemed "Incomplete" or Inadequate"

- Regulations list that DWR will review:
  - If any minimum threshold exceedances or failure to meet interim milestones and likelihood to reach sustainability
  - Whether projects and management actions are being implemented
  - Whether or not data gaps are being addressed and level of uncertainty being reduced
  - Were submittals made on time, and is GSP still complete, coordinated, addresses corrective actions

Mr. Samuelian noted that the NKGSA has not exceeded any minimum thresholds for water level; however, some interim milestones on water levels have been exceeded due to the drought between 2020 and 2022. Mr. Samuelian also stated that over 25 projects have been completed since SGMA began, and over 140,000 acre-feet of correction have been made to address the problem, which is significant for the Kings Subbasin.

Mr. Samuelian noted that data gaps are being worked on, highlighting the Interconnected Surface Water data gap study and the Confined Aquifer study, and emphasized that significant work is still needed to be done around these studies. A single periodic evaluation is being prepared for the Kings Subbasin and captures the efforts of all seven GSAs in the Kings Subbasin.

g. Discussion/Possible Action – Approval of Entering into the Memorandum of Understanding with USBR, FWA, Madera County GSAs, McMullin Area GSA and NKGSA for Coordination and Efforts on Interconnected Surface Water Evaluations on the SJR and Authorizing Executive Officer to Execute Said MOU

Ms. Chauhan stated that based on the Advisory Committee's recommendation, staff is recommending the approval of the MOU and granting the Executive Officer the authority to sign the document on behalf of the NKGSA. It was also mentioned that the MOU has been reviewed by legal counsel.

M/S/C (Buche/Pickens) That the Board of Directors approved Entering into the Memorandum of Understanding with USBR, FWA, Madera County GSAs, McMullin Area GSA and NKGSA for Coordination and Efforts on Interconnected Surface Water Evaluations on the SJR and Authorizing Executive Officer to Execute Said MOU, as presented by Staff, by the following vote: (Ayes – Pickens, Kienow, Prieto, Jr., Buche, Moeller, Basgall, Pacheco; Nays – 0; Absent – 0; Abstain – 0)

h. Discussion/Possible Action – Approval to Enter Into Agreement with CSUF – Fresno Foundation as Sub Recipient for the Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program Grant for the Climate Resiliency through Regional Water Recharge in the San Joaquin Valley Project and Authorizing Executive Officer to Execute Said Agreement

Tasks:
1 – Mapping
2 – Education for Recharge Basin Developers and Rural Communities
3 – Development of Recharge Response Team
4 – Determine Key Recharge Areas that Could Take Excess Flood Water
5 – Development of Regional Recharge Response Team

TOTAL: $37,500.00 for NKGSA Efforts

Ms. Chauhan stated that Fresno State is seeking to collaborate with districts and GSAs with successful recharge programs to develop a plan for replicating those programs in rural communities, focusing on utilizing surface water during exceptionally wet years.

Director Buche noted that many rural communities rely on individual wells and septic systems, which can lead to groundwater impacts from nitrates. Director Buche asked if the evaluation for recharge would address such challenges. Ms. Chauhan confirmed that the evaluation would include water quality impacts, separation considerations, and first-flush conditions during initial recharge. Director Buche also inquired if stormwater runoff capture would be included, and Ms. Chauhan confirmed it would be part of the evaluation.

Ms. Chauhan also clarified that California State University Fresno – Fresno Foundation is the entity that California Water Institute works under.

M/S/C (Buche/Basgall) That the Board of Directors approved to Enter Into Agreement with CSUF – Fresno Foundation as Sub Recipient for the Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program Grant for the Climate Resiliency through Regional Water Recharge in the San Joaquin Valley Project and Authorizing Executive Officer to Execute Said Agreement, as presented by Staff, by the following vote: (Ayes – Pickens, Kienow, Prieto, Jr., Buche, Moeller, Basgall, Pacheco; Nays – 0; Absent – 0; Abstain – 0)

i. Water Conditions Update

Mr. Claes presented the Tulare Basin 6-Station Precipitation Index for the 2024-2025 Water Year, which began in October 2024. The data indicated no precipitation in October, above-average precipitation in November, below-average precipitation in December, and no precipitation recorded so far in January.

Mr. Claes presented a map of California from the California Department of Water Resources website illustrating the percent of average precipitation for the date received so far. The map indicated that our region is approximately at 60% of average.

Mr. Claes presented a chart comparing the snow water content in the Southern Sierra to previous wet and dry years. The data showed that the statewide snow water content is at 40% of the April 1st average and 84% of the average to date, and 56% of the average for this time of year for the Southern Sierra.

Mr. Claes also presented a graphic from the California Department of Water Resources website depicting Sierra Nevada snow water content, indicating that the current levels are ahead of those recorded at the same time in 2024.

j. ACWA JPIA President's Special Recognition Award

Ms. Chauhan presented the ACWA JPIA President's Special Recognition Award received by NKGSA for maintaining a complaint-free record, highlighting the effectiveness of the program and the resulting low rates.

k. Well Registration Update (Chauhan)

Well Registration Tool

- Launched – March 2024
- Portal Accessible on NKGSA Website Home Page
- Email Blast Via NKGSA and FID email distribution lists
- Coordination with Fresno County White Area Landowners – Re-engagement - Mailer
- Batch Upload Option
- 89 Entries
- Continue Campaign

Ms. Chauhan noted that next month, efforts will focus on the well registration portal, including implementing additional requirements and engaging the Technical Work Group to discuss ways to improve program participation. Additionally, all of Fresno State's wells have now been registered.

I. Well Permitting Update (Chauhan)

Well Permits Issued in 2024

January	21 (Agricultural 4; Domestic Private 16; Soil Boring 1)
February	9 (Agricultural 2; Domestic Private 7)
March	18 (Domestic Private 16; Domestic Public 2)
April	21 (Agricultural 4; Cathodic 3; Domestic Private 14)
May	29 (Agricultural 3; Domestic Private 23; Monitoring 2; Soil Boring 1)
June	29 (Agricultural 3; Domestic Private 23; Monitoring 3)
July	23 (Agricultural 2; Cathodic 1; Domestic Private 20)
August	17 (Agricultural 3; Domestic Private 14)
September	13 (Agricultural 2; Domestic Private 9; Monitoring 1; Soil Boring 1)
October	24 (Agricultural 4; Domestic Private 16; Domestic Public 2; Monitoring 1; Soil Boring 1)
November	10 (Domestic Private 8; Domestic Public 2)
December	15 (Agricultural 3; Domestic Private 12)
2024 Total:	229

Well Type	Count
Agricultural	30
Cathodic	4
Domestic Private	178
Domestic Public	6
Monitoring	7
Soil Boring	4
2024 Grand Total	**229**

- 2023: 293 permits were issued

2025 to date:

Well Type	Count
Agricultural	2
Domestic Private	2
Domestic Public	1
2025 Total	**5**

Ms. Chauhan stated that all well permit applications received are reviewed, and efforts are made to ensure that no additional shallow wells are drilled, to avoid future mitigation. Ms. Chauhan noted that the number of well permits received in 2024 was significantly lower than those received in 2023.

9. EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT (Chauhan)

a. SGMA Implementation Projects Update

Ms. Chauhan reported that the City of Kerman has completed the Lions Park Recharge and Meter project and presented the project's highlight sheet. Ms. Chauhan shared photos from the ribbon-cutting event at Lions Park, where Supervisor Director Pacheco, Mr. Stretch (speaking on behalf of FID), and Ms. Chauhan (speaking on behalf of the NKGSA) all made remarks. Ms. Chauhan noted that both outgoing and incoming City of Kerman council members attended the event. Ms. Chauhan mentioned that a short video from the ribbon-cutting is available on the website and encouraged everyone to watch it.

b. Outreach / External Affairs Update

- Social Media
  - Staying active on social media
- Website
  - ADA Compliance feature has been added to the website
- Email Distribution List
  - Continue to encourage the public to sign up to our email distribution list
- Speaking Engagements
  - December 5th – ACWA Fall Conference – Panel Discussion

Ms. Chauhan mentioned that she spoke on a panel at the ACWA Fall Conference in Palm Springs on December 5, 2024. The panel focused on SGMA, outreach and engagement, and the importance of involving stakeholders when implementing the changes required by SGMA.

c. Representative Monitoring Network Update

- Long Term
  - Telemetry – Add HOBO OnSet Units at Additional Sites
    - Up to 13 sites identified – In Progress
  - Add Up to 48 New Dedicated Monitoring Wells to the Network
    - FY 2024/2025: $200k initial investment
    - USBR Monitoring Wells – Evaluation
    - DWR TSS Well – Spring 2025?

Ms. Chauhan stated that 13 additional HOBO telemetry units have been purchased. A single unit was tested on a well and it has been functioning well. The new units are expected to arrive tomorrow and will ideally be installed before the spring measurements. Ms. Chauhan added that the installation sites have already been identified.

Ms. Chauhan stated that, with Board approval, they have permission to proceed with the conversion and establishment of a dedicated well monitoring network. Wells have been identified, and efforts will be made to complete as many as possible this year within the $200,000 budget approved by the Board.

d. Miscellaneous

- Form 700 Reporting Changes for GSA Board Members
- SGMA Legislation and Lobbying Efforts
  - MORE SGMA GW Legislation
    - Valley Ag Water Coalition
    - California Groundwater Coalition
- Looking Ahead
  - 2025 Goals and Priorities – February 2025

Ms. Chauhan requested legal counsel, Dave Boyer, to explain the recently passed legislation concerning 700 Forms and its implications for public agencies.

Mr. Boyer explained that there was an amendment to the Government Code under the Political Reform Act, which introduced two key changes. The first change increased the gift limit from $590 to $630. The second change mandates that all GSA board members and its executive officer file Form 700. These forms must now be submitted online with the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC).

Ms. Chauhan stated that as additional SGMA and groundwater legislation is introduced, it may be beneficial for the GSA to stay more informed about emerging legislation. Potential options include collaborating with the Valley Ag Water Coalition or the California Groundwater Coalition. More research is needed before a recommendation can be made to the Board.

Ms. Chauhan noted that the next probationary hearing is scheduled for the Kern Groundwater Basin on February 20, 2025. These hearings are closely monitored to stay informed about developments involving entities recommended for probation.

Ms. Chauhan stated that, as mentioned at the last meeting, Director Pickens' Seat Three was up for reassignment. Conversations were held with the City of Kerman; however, Kerman indicated that they do not have the capacity to take on this responsibility and are pleased to have Director Pickens remain on the Board for another two years.

10. DIRECTORS REPORT

Director Pickens – nothing to report

Director Kienow – inquired about the Punjabi American Growers Group (PAGG) group, which has been featured in the media over the past couple of months. Ms. Chauhan explained that PAGG is a fairly large group whose primary concern is that there has not been enough stakeholder outreach and engagement, leaving them unaware of the changes resulting from SGMA. PAG successfully organized a meeting with State Board leaders and DWR at the Tulare World Ag Center in early December to advocate for more time and additional information. Ms. Chauhan noted that NKGSA has intentionally conducted outreach to PAGG, ensured all materials are translated into Punjabi, and has established a strong connection with the group.

Director Prieto – nothing to report

Director Basgall – inquired about the potential for any repercussions that could impact the NKGSA due to public sentiment blaming the farming community for Los Angeles not having sufficient water to combat wildfires. Ms. Chauhan explained that, as of now, no such concerns have been raised, at least in the local area.

Director Moeller – nothing to report

Director Pacheco – nothing to report

Director Buche – stated that the city's water production for 2024 has been finalized. Prior to the Northeast Plant coming online in 2004, along with the T3 facility and the Southeast Surface Water Treatment Plant (SWTP), 100% of the city's water demand was met through groundwater. Currently, 60% of the city's demand is being met through surface water treatment plants, while the remaining 40% is from groundwater. In 2024, the city pumped 46,117 acre-feet from the aquifer—the lowest amount pumped since 1955. This marks a significant milestone worth sharing.

11. ADJOURNMENT

With nothing further to discuss, Chairman Prieto adjourned the meeting at 7:24 pm.

Submitted by,

Kassy D. Chauhan

Kassy Chauhan, Executive Officer-Secretary/Treasurer