

Summary Minutes

ROLL CALL

Directors John Coleman, Terry Woodrow, Jack Garamendi, Richard Farrington, Richard Blood, and Ed Gonzalez were present at the meeting. Director Oneto arrived after agenda item 3. Absent: Director Jeff Davidson. Also present were Executive Officer (EO) Richard Sykes, Administrative Officer Rob Alcott, Authority Secretary Lisa (Stuart) Gualco, and 17 visitors and presenters.

PUBLIC COMMENT – none.

AUTHORITY BUSINESS

**1. Special Meeting Minutes of October 1, 2021**

**Motion 01-22** to approve the special meeting minutes of October 1, 2021, was made by Director Woodrow, seconded by Director Farrington and carried by roll call vote: Yea 6 – Nay 0 – Abstain 0.

**2. Treasurer’s Report –Fourth Quarter FY 2021**

A copy of the Treasurer’s Report for the Fourth Quarter of fiscal year 2021, which ended September 30, 2021, was presented to the Board.

**Motion 02-22** to accept the Treasurer’s Report for filing was made by Director Farrington, seconded by Director Garamendi and carried by roll call vote: Yea 6 – Nay 0 – Abstain 0.

**3. Forest Projects Report**

This Forest Projects Report included a status update on the Authority’s Forest Projects Plan (FPP) initiative. The EO noted that the FPP the final boundary of the FPP area as not been finalized yet as staff are still working with the El Dorado and Stanislaus National Forest staff to determine what constitutes an appropriate buffer around the Mokelumne Watershed. The EO discussed meetings with USFS, SNC and others that identified that there are significant gaps in forest health planning on the USFS immediately north and south of the Mokelumne Watershed. The Board agreed that it is important that the FPP include areas beyond the Mokelumne Watershed boundary as this makes sense to protect the watershed and the local communities. The EO noted that the boundary may be the Amador Calaveras Consensus Group coverage area, or the USNF appropriate Potential Operational Delineation (POD) boundary or planned or future fire/fuel breaks. Maps will be provided at the next Board meeting. The EO provided an update on forest project grant opportunities. The EO also gave a brief summary of CalFire’s Wildfire Prevention Planning Grant program and its potential application to addressing wildfire risks to area water and wastewater infrastructure. The report concluded with what constitutes the final report on UMRWA’s just-completed forest treatment work.

Board members requested that the EO confirm with UMRWA counsel that it can spend money on the FPP and/or other forest health work outside of the UMRWA boundary when that work furthers the interests of UMRWA. The EO will provide this information at the April meeting.

**Motion 03-22** to authorize staff to submit grant applications for the FPP and forest health project implementation under CalFire’s Fire Prevention and Forest Health Grant Programs,

and under SNC's Wildfire and Forest Resilience Directed Grant Program was made by Director Farrington seconded by Director Woodrow and carried by roll call vote: Yea 6 – Nay 0 – Abstain 0.

Director Oneto joined at this time, changing the vote count to 7 for the remainder of the meeting.

#### **4. MAC Plan Update: Project List and Grant Opportunities**

The Mokelumne-Amador-Calaveras (MAC) Plan was last updated in 2018. A primary purpose for that update was to bring the plan into conformance with revised state standards and thus be eligible for future Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) program grant funding opportunities. Also performed at that time was a streamlined review by the stakeholder Regional Participants Committee (RPC) of the MAC Plan Project List.

As authorized by the Board on January 24, 2020, a process administered by Woodard & Curran to update the MAC Plan implementation projects list has just been completed. The update process, which was guided by the Regional Participants Committee (the RPC is the MAC Plan stakeholder group) involved a series of steps including: a call for projects, an analysis of project readiness and benefits, the scoring and ranking of projects, and preparing an updated project list incorporating the new projects. The RPC met in October and December 2021 and January 2022 to perform this work and recommend projects for funding under DWR's IRWM Round 2 Grant solicitation and DWR's Multi-benefit Drought Funding Solicitation. Approximately \$500,000 is available to the MAC region under each of these funding opportunities.

During the discussion of this item Director Farrington requested that the EO investigate the ranking of Project 18 to determine if it should have a higher priority ranking. The current ranking is "medium" priority. The Board requested that the EO invite Patrick Wright, Chair of the California Wildfire & Forest Resilience Task Force, to attend the next UMRWA meeting regarding their actions to address the forest health challenge.

**Motion 04-22** to approve the updated MAC Plan Project list as an addendum to the MAC Plan and to authorize staff to develop and submit applications for funding for 1) the Calaveras Public Utility District Jeff Davis Water Treatment Plant Backwash Recycle Project (with the Amador Water Agency Ione Canal Water Conservation Project as the back-up project) for the IRWM Round 2 Grant solicitation, and 2) the AWA Lake Camanche Water Service Replacement Phase IV and the Foothill Conservancy (FC) Amador Household Water Efficiency Project for the Multi-benefit Drought Funding Program was made by Director Farrington, seconded by Director Garamendi and carried by roll call vote: Yea 7 – Nay 0 – Abstain 0.

#### **5. Mokelumne Watershed Routine Maintenance Project (Presentation)**

East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) routinely performs maintenance activities within the Mokelumne Watershed. These routine maintenance activities are subject to California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) jurisdiction under Fish and Game Code Section 1602. Accordingly, the District must periodically obtain a new Routine Maintenance Agreement (RMA) for continuation of maintenance work performed within CDFW jurisdictional areas. Completion of CEQA is required as a condition for receiving a new RMA. On November 23, 2021, the EBMUD Board of Directors adopted the Final Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Mokelumne Watershed Routine Maintenance Project. Michelle Workman, EBMUD's Manager of Fisheries and Wildlife, provided a presentation on the RMA to the UMRWA Board.

#### **6. Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) Review**

At the invitation of UMRWA Director Gonzalez, staff made a presentation on November 17th to the Calaveras-Amador Mokelumne River Association (CAMRA) on the history of UMRWA and the Authority's recent and ongoing projects. During the discussion following

the presentation, UMRWA staff was asked by Director Gonzalez and fellow Director (and CAMRA board member) Garamendi to include an UMRWA January Board meeting agenda item that allows discussion of the current JPA agreement.

UMRWA Board members expressed an interest in reviewing the JPA to determine if an update is needed. It was last updated in 2008, to reflect then current issues and areas of concern such as the new Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and irrigation supply considerations by some agencies such as JVID. It was noted that the current JPA is available on UMRWA's website ([www.umerwa.org](http://www.umerwa.org)) and requested that a link be included in the April agenda packet. Directors Coleman, Garamendi and Gonzalez volunteered to form an ad hoc committee to review and recommend updates to the JPA and requested that the item be added to the April agenda to formalize the committee. The Board requested that the EO obtain clarification from UMRWA counsel regarding 1) the maximum number of board members that can be on an ad hoc committee, and 2) can UMRWA perform or fund work outside of the UMRWA boundary for UMRWA related work. The Board noted that the General Managers of the UMRWA agencies should be involved in the JPA update.

## 7. Legislative Issues Update

Last year UMRWA supported three bills and recommended that Governor Newsom veto one bill. In October 2021, staff submitted a memo to the board on the fate of each of those bills. There are about 1,500 bills still active in the current state legislative session and an expected 2,000 bills to be newly introduced this year. UMRWA staff are awaiting the deadline for new bills to perform a review of what might be of interest for UMRWA. Certainly, an area of key interest will be funding for UMRWA's programs that might be available in upcoming state and federal budgets.

SB 901 (Dodd) which passed in 2018 provided a CEQA exemption for specified forest fuels management work on federal lands if that work had undergone NEPA review. That exemption expires at the end of 2022. This exemption has been utilized for several UMRWA projects which has allowed these projects to proceed more quickly and at less cost. UMRWA staff have determined that Senator Dodd is not planning to introduce new legislation to extend that exemption. Staff are exploring whether other legislators have an interest in authoring legislation to extend the exemption. Director Coleman noted that Senator Glazer might be a possible exemption bill sponsor.

The Board requested that Patrick Wright be invited to the April UMRWA meeting to discuss his goals regarding fuel reduction in the region and the CEQA exemption that has been helpful to UMRWA and others.

### **Board Member Comments:**

Director Gonzalez wanted to acknowledge the completed meadow restoration work he saw recently in Onion Valley, but also expressed his concerns regarding access to watershed areas mainly via forest service roads. Citing windfall and culvert damage that has left some roads barely negotiable by foot, he feels that access should be made a higher priority. Director Oneto echoed these concerns, since cleaning up roads and culverts is critical for access for fighting fires where access becomes crucial. He included an example of roads shown on maps were completely inaccessible when fire staff needed to use them to fight fire and build fire lines.

Director Farrington thanked the EO and staff for aggressively going after grants. He also shared that UMRWA is developing a good reputation regarding the project work that's been completed to date and expressed his appreciation.

It was confirmed that the UMRWA Board members prefer the earlier start time of 10:00 a.m. over the previous 1:30 p.m. and going forward, all meetings will begin at 10:00 a.m.

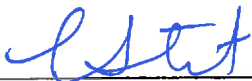
**Executive Officer Comments:**

The EO provided an update on the DAC needs assessment report which was received and forwarded to the steering committee – Larry McKinney and Brad Arnold – and he will report on this at the April meeting. The EO also extended his thanks and appreciate to all the staff for their hard work since the October UMRWA meeting, as well as to Richard Farrington and Chuck Iley of Amador County.

He updated the Board on UMRWA’s COI policy which was just updated to include UMRWA Administrative Officer position, reminded Board members that UMRWA Form 700’s were going to be due at the end of March and that anyone leaving their positions, also need to complete an UMRWA Form 700 Leaving Office statement.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Director Coleman adjourned the meeting at 11:43 p.m. The next regular meeting will be held on April 22, 2022, with the location to be determined.

**SUBMITTED BY:**



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Lisa Stuart, Authority Secretary



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John Coleman, Chair of the Board

APPROVED: April 22, 2022