

Friday, October 7, 2022 – 10:04 a.m.
Governing Board Regular Meeting
Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Authority
Pardee Lodge, Pardee Center, Valley Springs, CA 95252

Summary Minutes

ROLL CALL

Directors Terry Woodrow, Vice-chair, Jack Garamendi, Ed Gonzalez, Richard Farrington, Richard Blood, and Bill Patterson (EBMUD Alternate) were present. Director Brian Oneto joined the meeting at 10:10. Absent: John Coleman, East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) and Jeff Davidson, Calaveras County Water District. Also present were Executive Officer (EO) Richard Sykes, Authority Counsel Greg Gillott, Authority Secretary Lisa Gualco, Lorna Barfield, East Bay Municipal Utility District, and 10 visitors and presenters.

PUBLIC COMMENT – EBMUD’s Director Mellon bid good-bye to the UMRWA Board as he has decided not to run for reelection when his term ends December 31, 2022 and thanked the UMRWA Board members for the years of dedicated collaboration.

Calaveras County Water District’s General Manager Michael Minkler invited the UMRWA Board members to attend the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) event, ACWA Region 3: Water, Wildfire & Wine, taking place in Murphys, CA on October 20, 2022. The presentations and discussion will focus on wildfire/biomass projects and drought and wildfire impacts on the wine industry. Those wishing to attend can register on ACWA’s website.

AUTHORITY BUSINESS

1. Regular Meeting Minutes of July 22, 2022

The summary minutes of the July 22, 2022 meeting were provided to the Board for review.

Motion 17-22 to approve the regular meeting minutes of July 22, 2022 was made by Director Farrington, seconded by Director Gonzalez, and carried by voice vote: Yea 6 – Nay 0 – Abstain 0.

2. Treasurer’s Report –Third Quarter FY 2022

A copy of the Treasurer’s Report for the Third Quarter of Fiscal Year 2022, which ended June 30, 2022, was presented to the Board.

Motion 18-22 to accept the Treasurer’s Report for filing was made by Director Farrington, seconded by Director Blood, and carried by voice vote: Yea 6 – Nay 0 – Abstain 0.

Director Oneto joined the meeting at 10:10, changing the vote count to 7 for the remainder of the meeting.

3. Patrick Wright Presentation

Mr. Wright, the Director of the Governor’s Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force was invited to attend this meeting to discuss the Task Force’s goals regarding fuel reduction in the region and the CEQA exemption that expires December 31, 2022. He provided the UMRWA Board with an update on the Task Force’s recent activities and answered questions from the Board. There was significant discussion of the many barriers to implementation of large scale forest health actions including, lack of strategic planning and coordination, the lack of facilities to process wood and biomass, and long-term funding. Mr. Wright noted that block grants may be implemented by the state to help regions move more quickly on projects. He commended UMRWA for its work to date.

4. Forest Projects Report

The EO provided the Board with an update on the Authority's Forest Projects Plan initiative, Phases 1 and 2. Also presented were updates related to the Aspen Meadow Restoration Project and CalFire's \$5 million grant to UMRWA. The report concluded with a summary of UMRWA Forest Project Grants which have been awarded or are proposed.

Motion 19-22 to adopt Resolution 2022-02 related to preparing and submitting a full Forest and Watershed Health grant proposal to Sierra Nevada Conservancy for FPP Phase 2 planning funds, was made by Director Farrington, seconded by Director Gonzalez, and carried by voice vote: Yea 7 – Nay 0 – Abstain 0.

5. Proposed Joint Powers Agreement Amendments

The current UMRWA Joint Powers Agreement (the Second Amended Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement) was established on June 6, 2008. At the April 2022 meeting the Board established an Ad Hoc committee to review the UMRWA Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) to determine if updates are needed. The committee identified amendments which are reflected in the Third Amended Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement provided to the Board in the agenda packet. The EO described the changes suggested by the Ad Hoc Committee and the committee's recommendation to send the current draft to the UMRWA agencies for staff review to update member interest statements, project lists, and contacts.

Motion 20-22 to endorse the draft Third Amended Joint Powers Authority agreement and authorize staff to transmit the proposed agreement to Member Agencies for review and comment by December 1, 2022, was made by Director Farrington, seconded by Director Oneto, and carried by voice vote: Yea 7 – Nay 0 – Abstain 0.

6. Legislative Issues Update

The Board was updated on the status of AB 1717 which the Board had voted to oppose at its July meeting. On August 2, 2022, the Executive Officer transmitted oppose letters as instructed. On September 28, 2022, Governor Newsom vetoed AB 1717 indicating that it would slow down high priority work to protect vulnerable communities in the state.

The EO provided an update on AB 211, a budget trailer bill that includes language to extend the SB 901 CEQA exemption for specified forest health work. The Governor signed this bill on September 27, 2022. The CEQA exemption will extend another three years until December 31, 2025.

There was also discussion on HR 8168 (McCarthy) which was added at the request of Director Farrington during the July meeting. The Save Our Sequoias Bill was introduced on June 22, 2022, and the text has not yet been modified or amended. Michael Minkler noted that the CCWD board voted to support this legislation.

Motion 21-22 to endorse HR 8168 (McCarthy) and authorize the EO to submit a letter of support to the author, was made by Director Farrington, seconded by Director Garamendi, and carried by voice vote: Yea 7 – Nay 0 – Abstain 0.

Board Member Comments:

Director Farrington provided an update to the Board on his recent research into the 2004 Power Fire recovery funding and projects within the fire boundaries that could be accomplished under the FPP Phase 1. He indicated that some of this funding remains to be used but it is unclear how or if the Forest Service will allocate it to this portion of the watershed. He will continue his research.

Executive Officer Comments:

The Executive Officer updated the board on the status of the Blue Forest Conservation (BFC) Feasibility Study for a Forest Resilience Bond. BFC is working with EBMUD and PG&E to identify benefits to these organizations and their willingness to participate in a bond. The EO will bring BFC staff back for another presentation to the UMRWA Board after further progress occurs. He also provided the information that CPUD's Prop 1 Round 2 IRWM grant application for their backwash recycle project was submitted to DWR in September. He also brought the Board up to date on the DAC Drought set-aside to assist AWA in conservation activities and Foothill Conservancy with customer work.

ADJOURNMENT: Director Woodrow adjourned the meeting at 11:32 a.m. The next regular meeting will be held on January 27, 2023 at Pardee Center.

SUBMITTED BY:

Lisa Gualco, Authority Secretary

John Coleman, Chair of the Board
APPROVED: January 27, 2023