

Special Meeting
October 11, 2021
5:00 pm

Meiners Oaks Water District
202 W. El Roblar Drive
Ojai, CA 93023-2211

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Board President, Mike Etchart, at 5:00 pm via teleconference.

2. Roll Call

Present: Board President, Mike Etchart, Board Directors: James Kentosh, Diana Engle, Loni Anderson and Christian Oakland. Staff Present: General Manager, Justin Martinez; Board Secretary, Summer Ward. Attorneys: Stuart Nielson and Greg Jones (closed session only).

Absent: None.

3. Approval of the Minutes

No minutes to approve.

4. Public Comments

Ms. Von Gunten joined the meeting at 6:38 pm, provided statement of attendance. Ms. Von Gunten tried joining the meeting at 6:00 pm, but was placed in the “waiting room.” Director Etchart explained the open session started at 5:00 pm and the Board was just coming out of closed session. Ms. Von Gunten expressed concern regarding the number of special meetings held in the past year. Director Etchart stated the District is being mindful for time and cost related to meetings, unfortunately due to deadlines, personnel matters and lawsuits, the special meetings were necessary.

5. Board Discussion and/or Action

a) **Discuss grant funding opportunities from the Ventura Watershed Instream Flow Enhancement, Water Resiliency Regional Framework and Department of Water Resources Urban and Multi-benefit Drought Relief Grants. (Etchart/R.Hirsch)**

Director Etchart introduced Regina Hirsch, Executive Director of Watershed Progressive. Ms. Hirsch assisted the District with the Nitrate Grant award, through the Ojai-Ventura Water Partnership. Ms. Hirsch reviewed three grant opportunities, the Land Resilience Partnership, VRIF block grant and the DWR 2021 Urban and Multi-benefit Drought Relief Grant Program. Ms. Hirsch noted that if a VRIF planning grant triggers CEQA, then it would require a standalone grant submission, it cannot be included in the block grant. Ms. Hirsch added that most well drilling would be exempt,

unless it is in a sensitive area. The VRIF block grant, which includes both planning and implementation, requires submission of a concept proposal by October 18, 2021. Director Engle asked for clarification on the logistics of submitting a concept proposal prior to obtaining permits. Ms. Hirsch explained that the proposal should be implementation ready within one year, with the award expected in April 2022, implement by April 2023, and would need to have permits by full proposal in January 2022. Director Engle noted that the UVRGA will review and comment on any well permits, for example the bedrock well permit requested for a lot on La Luna. The UVRGA is not regulating bedrock wells, at this time. Director Anderson asked if the grant would fund land purchase. Ms. Hirsch responded that the WCB fund would but would be a harder sell, and would require appraisals; the US Bureau of Reclamation would be better suited for assistance with land purchases. Directors Engle and Kentosh expressed support in the District seeking grants and agree to have Ms. Hirsch to assist. Director Etchart stated that the Executive Committee will meet with Ms. Hirsch to review the grant opportunities further and put together a plan.

****The Board went into closed session at 5:57pm****

****G. Jones joined meeting at 6:00 pm****

6. **Closed Session: The Board of Directors held a closed session to discuss litigation, pursuant to the attorney/client privilege, as authorized by Government Code Sections §54957 & 54956.8, 54956.9, and 54957.**

- Meiners Oaks Water District v. Moll, Ostling and Ojai Vista Farms 56-2018-00515474-CU-OR-VTA/

****G. Jones left the meeting at 6:35 pm****

****The Board adjourned closed session at 6:38 pm****

Attorney S. Nielson stated that the Board discussed pending litigation and no actions were taken.

7. **Meeting Adjournment**

There being no further business to conduct at this time, Board President, Mike Etchart adjourned the meeting at 6:44 pm.

Board Secretary

Board President