



# **Regional Water Management Group**

LOCATION: Online (ZOOM)

## **MINUTES**

Monday, January 22, 2024, 1:30 pm

### **1. The meeting was called to order at 1:32 pm, by Bobby Macaulay, chairperson.**

Those present included:

Al Solis – SEMCU	Jacinta Cabral – Madera County
Amy Siliznoff – Madera/Chowchilla RCD	Jack Rice – MAWA
Becky Horn – Triangle T WD	Jacob Roberson – RWMG Coordinator
Bobby Macaulay – Madera County	Jeannie Habben – Madera County
Carl Janzen – Madera ID	Jenny Nunez-Rodriguez – Madera County
Celeste Wheeler – Indian Lakes	Jon Cottingham – Coarsegold RCD
Clyde Wheeler – Indian Lakes	Keith Helmuth – City of Madera
Daniel Aguayo – North Fork Rancheria	Kimberly Sandoval – Madera County
Dina Nolan – Madera ID	Mira Dick – USDA NRCS
Don Roberts – Gravelly Ford WD	Nicole Rivera – North Fork Rancheria
Emily Garcia – Madera County	Phil Janzen – MAWA / Madera WD
Fahed Mosleh – Madera County	Preston McGill – Yosemite Lakes Park
Gretchen Heisdorf – Root Creek WD	Stephanie Anagnoson – Madera County

### **2. Review & Approval - Agenda & Minutes**

- A motion to approve the December minutes and January agenda was made by Gretchen H; Celeste W second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.

### **3. Public Comment**

- Items of interest were mentioned by Jacob R (for more information, reach out to Jacob):
  - CAL OES has made the 2023 State Hazard Mitigation Plan available online on their website.
  - The California Data Collaborative has launched the Urban Water Use Objective Easy Report, and it is free for every urban water supplier to use.
  - The next Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program Stakeholder Meeting will be on Wednesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>.
  - CAL FIRE has announced up to \$8 million in funding available for the Wildfire Resilience Block Grants, which support private forestland owners.

### **4. Discussion & Action - Financial Report/Warrant Approvals**

- January 2024 Financial Report
  - Jacob R reported that no financial transactions have taken place for this month since we are still working on a member organization or an outside agency taking on the accounting functions for the group. We started the month with \$24,560.50 and ended the month with \$24,560.50.
  - A motion to approve the January financial report was made by Gretchen H; Jack R second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.

## **5. Discussion & Action – Madera RWMG 2024 Officer Elections**

- Jacob R mentioned that the yearly officer elections are held for the group during the January meeting. Currently, Bobby Macaulay is the Chairperson for the group and Phil Janzen is the Vice Chair. Jacob did not receive any emails or communication about nominations for either of the positions. Nominations can be made today or the group can make a motion and vote on keeping the officers as is.
- A motion to approve keeping Supervisor Macaulay as the Chairperson and Phil Janzen as the Vice Chair was made by Jack R; Gretchen H second; all voted; Motion passed unanimously.

## **6. Discussion – Madera RWMG Accounting Functions**

- Jacob R reported that he looked into opening a bank account with Central Valley Community Bank. There are a few things needed to open an account with them, and one of those things being a Tax ID. In order to get a Tax ID number from the IRS, we need to have employees which we do not have. Jacob's position is a contract position. Jacob is not sure if this is the route for the group to take. Best route to take would be for a member agency to take on the accounting functions for the group like Madera ID did in the past for a number of years, or reach out to an outside organization to handle the functions for us. MAWA showed interest, but Jack R was waiting to bring this to MAWA's Board and get their thoughts on it. The Madera County Farm Bureau (MCFB) handles the accounting for MAWA.
  - Jack R commented that Christina B with the MCFB has been on vacation so they have been unable to speak with her about the MCFB handling the accounting functions for the group. After speaking with Christina, Jack R will then take it to the Board for MAWA.
- Jacob R asked if any member agency would be willing to take on the accounting functions for the group. There are about 20 incoming checks per year and about 18 – 20 outgoing checks written. We do have our monthly website payment that needs to be made but that can be done online.
- Clyde W added that it is possible to get an EIN from the IRS with no employees since he has done it in the past but he was in New Mexico at that time. Clyde is not sure if it's a California rule or a new rule stating that employees are required to get an EIN from the IRS. Bobby M added that he was unclear about this as well. From what Bobby understands is that when opening up a new business and filing for an EIN or Tax ID from the IRS, you or the business owner would be considered an employee for the business. In this instance where we have a board and a contracted helper or coordinator, there is no employee or real owner for the Madera RWMG. The easiest thing to do is probably partner with MAWA and perhaps the MCFB to handle the accounting functions. Bobby is willing to chat with Christina and anyone else to discuss what the group is looking for when it comes to handling the accounting functions. Hopefully we will have an action item on the agenda next month so we can wrap up the accounting functions and move forward.
- Bobby added that this group is important for the County of Madera even though there has not been a lot going on this past year. After speaking with State

representatives, they are hopeful about future funding becoming available for IRWM and getting projects funded for local jurisdictions.

## **7. Discussion – RCDs Joining as DACs**

- Bobby M commented that what we are looking for is waiving the annual fee for our RCDs in Madera County. Both the Madera/Chowchilla RCD and the Coarsegold RCD are interested in joining the group but neither have money for this type of activity. They are entirely grant funded and are continually working on securing grants to keep their RCD funded. Bobby sees the RCDs helping out as the group continues moving forward with some possible plan revisions for the group in the future and local collaboration on projects.
  - Clyde W is in favor in letting the RCDs join without paying the yearly membership due. They would be included in the one collaborative vote that the DACs or the agencies/organizations have which do not pay yearly membership dues. This would be advantageous for both the RCDs and the Madera RWMG.
  - Jeannie H also agrees since the RCDs have a lot of benefits for the group with their connections and knowledge. Jeannie worked for RCDs in the past and understands the financial constraints they deal with. At one point, the group did vote in the Madera Valley Water Company who is neither a DAC, non-profit, or Tribe and they were voted in as a DAC.
  - Celeste W added that RCDs will add synergy to the group. The more people you have working on something together, the better the outcome is.
- Bobby asked if this needs to be an action item on the agenda next month for the group to vote on and make it official, and Jacob R commented that he does not think that is needed. Having this as a discussion this month is good enough. The RCDs will just need to complete a DAC membership form and get it turned in so the group can formally vote them in as a member for the group.
  - Amy S and Jon C both expressed having the Madera RWMG voting on this as an action item during the next meeting. Jacob will add this as an action item for February's meeting. Keith H added that this could be done just with a head nod, since the group cannot vote on allowing agencies or organizations joining the group without having an application submitted for the group members to review prior to voting. Jacob asked if the RCDs would be OK with having the minutes to bring to their Board showing the Madera RWMG is OK with having them join the Madera RWMG with the dues waived. Jon mentioned his Board will probably be OK with it. Amy mentioned this will probably work for her Board as well.
  - Gretchen H asked if the application specifically states that RCDs are exempt from the DAC status for the Madera RWMG, and Jacob mentioned that it does not state that. The DAC status is that a group needs to either be a DAC or represent a DAC, using Self Help Enterprises as an example in that they work with DACs and speak on their behalf on different matters that the group discusses. Bobby added that it may be best to state in the Madera RWMG's bylaws that RCDs and DACs do not need to pay member dues if they wish to join the group.
  - Carl J added that adding this as an action item for next month's meeting to make it official and then voting on the RCDs joining as a group member

during our meeting in March will not have an effect on how we function as a group.

- Keith added that if there are any other RCDs in the County that have inquired in the past about joining the Madera RWMG without paying membership dues, they should be contacted and informed that policies are changing so that everyone has an equal chance of joining the group without paying membership dues. Jeannie added that Columbia RCD has inquired in the past. Jacob will reach out to Columbia RCD.

## **8. Discussion – Draft Bylaw Updates**

- Jacob R commented that the updates remain the same. We are waiting on review and comment from the Attorney General's office. Bobby M is not sure if we should push the Attorney General's office for an answer since we may not like the answer that we get. This will remain as an agenda item until we get an answer from the Attorney General's office.
- Keith H added that he thinks the rules have changed to where we can meet remotely indefinitely. Jacob asked if Keith is referring to the AB 557 update he mentioned last month, and Keith mentioned it's either that one or a more recent update. From the City Council's stand point, we can move forward with having our meetings virtually. Jacob will keep this agenda item for next month and do some research about meeting virtually under the Brown Act before the group's next meeting in February.

## **9. Discussion – Proposition 1 Disadvantaged Community Involvement Funding**

- San Joaquin Valley
  - Chowchilla Nitrate Control Program / Chowchilla Management Zone – Projects 12 and 13
    - Becky H reported that well testing inquiries have increased over the past month. The next mailer they will be sending out is offering a monetary incentive for the first 10 – 20 applicants to have their domestic well tested. The incentive would be a grocery gift card or a check for \$50 to encourage people to have their wells tested. Sarah W with CMZ is going to host a Zoom call to introduce CMZ and the CV-SALTS program to give attendees a background and information about CMZ and the direction needing to be taken for compliance with CV-SALTS.
    - Bobby M asked if there were any flyers available for advertising the incentive for having domestic wells tested, and Becky mentioned no. They just recently spoke about doing this, and they want to make it eligible only to residents in the CMZ boundary. It'll just be some wording that they add to the existing flyer for the domestic well testing.

## **10. Discussion – Proposition 1 IRWM Implementation Funding**

- Mountain Counties and San Joaquin Valley Counties
  - Indian Lakes and Parkwood
    - Fahed M reported that the Indian Lakes portion of the project is almost complete. There are 9 meters that still need to be installed. The locations for these meters were either missing a shutoff valve

or needed a reducer. For the Parkwood project, the installation company has moved on with starting meter installation. They started on January 9<sup>th</sup>. They have been installing about 26 meters per week. They are about 13% complete for Parkwood. They are coordinating with the City of Madera and Aquametrics on some of the meters which are in peoples' driveways or under concrete. They are seeing if they can replace the lids for the meters instead of replacing the entire box housing the meters due to the new meters being larger.

- Keith H added that for Parkwood, as soon as the County completes installing the meters, the Parkwood water system will be annexed into the City of Madera's system.
- City of Madera
  - Keith H reported that project DW31 has been under construction and is about 90% complete. There are about 44 meters in this project and they are larger meters. The design for the other project that includes 300 smaller meters is about 80% – 90% complete. They are getting closer to advertising the smaller meter project.
- City of Chowchilla
  - No updated provided.

#### **11. Discussion – SGMA Implementation Grant**

- Gretchen H reported that the grant administration continues. A formal amendment has been requested in order to update the budget for project 4 (Root Creek WD) in order to utilize the remaining funds and close out the project. For project 2, the groundwater model update is ongoing. For project 3 (Madera WD), they are currently waiting for permits to be approved prior to moving forward with finalizing plans/specifications for construction bidding. For project 4 (Root Creek WD), the project is complete and they are working on closing out tasks. For project 5 (Madera County), no new information to report.

#### **12. Discussion – Drought Working Group**

- Jenny N commented they have applied for grant funding under SB 552 to develop the rules for the Madera Subbasin's Domestic Well Mitigation Program and to support the installation of a monitoring well. The funding is up to \$125,000. DWR is reviewing the application they submitted for this funding. Their next drought work group meeting will be held on March 8<sup>th</sup> on Zoom.
  - Jack R asked if Jenny could expand on the domestic well mitigation program a little more. Jenny mentioned they are looking to hire a facilitator to help Madera County develop the rules for this program.

#### **13. Discussion – IRWM Round 2 Application**

- Kim S reported that on December 11<sup>th</sup>, the funding was awarded to MD-58 which is for the Sierra Highlands Community. Kim is working with the Madera County Public Works' Special District Utility Manager to understand their schedule for maintenance so they can get ahead as much as possible for the installation of a water treatment system that will be done under this project.

#### **14. New/Suggested Members for the Madera RWMG**

- Bobby M commented that it sounds like we may have 2 or 3 potential members looking to join the group. Jacob R mentioned that Yosemite Lakes Park is one of the potential members. They are looking to get the application signed by their president. Bobby added that he spoke with them a few weeks ago and they are going through some changes right now with the Property Owners Association. They may be working through some of that before getting the application completed and submitted.

#### **15. Future Agenda Items**

- Jacob R mentioned adding an agenda item about meeting in-person sometime in late winter or early spring to discuss potential collaboration on future projects.

#### **16. Next Meeting**

- Next meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 26, 2024, at 1:30 pm on Zoom.

#### **17. The meeting was adjourned at 2:12 pm.**