

**South San Joaquin Groundwater Sustainability Agency
Regular Meeting
Manteca, California
January 15, 2025**

The Governing Board of the South San Joaquin Groundwater Sustainability Agency (SSJGSA) met in regular session in person at the South San Joaquin Irrigation District (SSJID) Board Room at 9:00 a.m., with public access provided via the online Zoom meeting platform. Chairman de Graaf called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m., and led the flag salute.

Upon roll-call the following members were noted present:

PRESENT: Daniel de Graaf, City of Ripon
Jaylen French, City of Escalon
Robert Holmes, South San Joaquin Irrigation District
Billy Van Ryn, South San Joaquin Irrigation District
Mike Weststeyn, South San Joaquin Irrigation District

ABSENT: NONE

Also present were SSJID General Manager Peter Rietkerk, SSJID Water Resources Coordinator and SSJGSA Secretary Brandon Nakagawa, and SSJID Clerk of the Board Danielle Barney.

Public Comment – None

ACTION CALENDAR

Item #1 – Approval of the Special Board Meeting Minutes of December 18, 2024

MOTION: A motion was made by Director Holmes and seconded by Director Weststeyn to approve the minutes as submitted.

The motion passed 5 to 0 by the following vote:

AYES: de GRAAF FRENCH HOLMES VAN RYN WESTSTEYN
NOES: NONE
ABSTAIN: NONE
ABSENT: NONE

Item #2 – Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of December 18, 2024

MOTION: A motion was made by Director Weststeyn and seconded by Director Holmes to approve the minutes as submitted.

The motion passed 5 to 0 by the following vote:

AYES: de GRAAF FRENCH HOLMES VAN RYN WESTSTEYN
NOES: NONE
ABSTAIN: NONE
ABSENT: NONE

Item #3 – Appointment of SSJGSA Board Officers, and Representatives to the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority

Mr. Brandon Nakagawa, SSJID Water Resources Coordinator and SSJGSA Secretary, addressed the Board regarding appointment of the SSJGSA Board Officers, and representatives to the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority (ESJGWA). He stated that the SSJGSA Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement (JPA) provides for the election of Officers for a term of two (2) years, with the current Officers having been appointed by the SSJGSA on February 15, 2023.

Mr. Nakagawa clarified that the JPA specifies that the Chair and Vice-Chair be Directors of the SSJGSA, and explicitly designates the SSJID General Manager as the SSJGSA Administrator. The remaining positions need not be Directors of the SSJGSA, and staff recommended that the Board re-designate Mr. Nakagawa as the SSJGSA Secretary, and SSJID Finance and Administration Manager Sonya Williams as the SSJGSA Treasurer.

Mr. Nakagawa explained that the SSJGSA is also entitled to seat one (1) Director, and one (1) Alternate Director to the ESJGWA; one (1) primary and one (1) alternate representative to the ESJGWA Steering Committee and the newly formed ESJGWA Ad Hoc Executive Committee. Currently, the ESJGWA has SSJGSA Director Bob Holmes and Mr. Nakagawa listed as the primary and alternate representatives, respectively, for all ESJGWA assignments upon appointments of the SSJGSA Board of Directors.

MOTION: A motion was made by Director Holmes and seconded by Director Weststeyn to extend the terms of Director de Graaf as SSJGSA Chairman, and Director Weststeyn as SSJGSA Vice-Chair for 2025-2026; and reappoint Mr. Nakagawa as SSJGSA Secretary, SSJID Finance and Administration Manager Sonya Williams as SSJGSA Treasurer, and Director Holmes and Mr. Nakagawa as the SSJGSA primary and alternate representatives, respectively, to the ESJGWA Board, Steering Committee, and Ad Hoc Executive Committee.

The motion passed 5 to 0 by the following vote:

AYES: de GRAAF FRENCH HOLMES VAN RYN WESTSTEYN
NOES: NONE
ABSTAIN: NONE
ABSENT: NONE

Item #4 – Quarterly Presentation of Financial Statements through December 2024

Ms. Sarah Bloom, SSJID Assistant Finance and Administration Manager, addressed the Board and gave a quarterly oral presentation of the South San Joaquin Groundwater Sustainability Agency Financial Statements through December 31, 2024. She stated that the financial statements are preliminary pending outstanding 2024 invoices, and that a final 2024 Financial Statement and amended budget would be presented to the Board at the March or April board meeting.

Ms. Bloom provided detailed descriptions of the balance sheets, cash balances, accounts payable, bank reconciliation, statement of changes in net position, statements of members’ capital, and expense reimbursements to the South San Joaquin Irrigation District. She noted a new line item listed on the Balance Sheet, titled Prepaid Expenses, in the amount of \$24,324.00 explaining that the expense was paid to the ESJGWA for the SSJGSA 2025 membership dues, though not yet deducted from the 2025 budget.

Mr. Nakagawa added that staff would be proposing an increased budget for legal and consulting services, in the 2025 budget approval process.

Item #5 – Discussion and Adoption of the Proposed 2025 Annual Budget

Mr. Nakagawa addressed the Board and stated that the proposed SSJGSA 2025 budget was presented at the December 18, 2024 board meeting with directive for Directors to take the preliminary budget back to their respective agencies for review.

Mr. Nakagawa referenced agenda Item #5 Staff Report, Table titled “Adopted 2024 and Proposed 2025 SSJGSA Budget,” which provided a comparison of the Adopted 2024 Budget versus the Proposed 2025 Budget, and identified 2025 budget requests and/or increases for staff time; banking fees; taxes, licenses and permits; ESJGWA member dues; legal fees; and technical consultant fees for a proposed 2025 budget of \$361,000.00. He noted the probability for a \$25,000.00 budget amendment for additional legal fees towards SSJGSA’s active litigation: *California Sportfishing Protection Alliance v. Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority et al.*

Board discussion included recommending a budget amendment as needed; to increase the legal budget by \$25,000.00 now during the 2025 budget approval process; and transparency demonstrated with budget amendments as needed. The Board requested an SSJGSA Accounts Payable Detailed Report be included with the quarterly Financial Statements to which Ms. Bloom concurred. Ms. Sonya Williams, SSJID Financial and Administration Manager and SSJGSA Treasurer, stated that staff was currently working on a Master Fee Schedule.

MOTION: A motion was made by Director Weststeyn and seconded by Director French to adopt the SSJGSA 2025 Annual Budget.

The motion passed 5 to 0 by the following vote:

AYES:	de GRAAF FRENCH HOLMES VAN RYN WESTSTEYN
NOES:	NONE
ABSTAIN:	NONE
ABSENT:	NONE

Item #6 – Discussion on Recent Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority Meetings

Mr. Nakagawa addressed the Board and noted the following recent ESJGWA discussions and/or activities:

- The ESJGWA Board and Steering Committee meetings scheduled for January 8, were canceled.
- The multi-county ESJGWA 2025 Budget was adopted by the Calaveras, San Joaquin, and Stanislaus County Boards.
- The Eastside GSA is a multi-agency, multi-county GSA which includes Calaveras County Water District (CCWD), Rock Creek Water District (RCWD), Calaveras County, and Stanislaus County. The Eastside GSA is a member agency of the ESJGWA, and is governed by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) as opposed to a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) and will require individual board or council approval from each of its member agencies for any action taken by the Eastside GSA. This could potentially stall immediate action and/or decisions required by the ESJGWA.
- The ESJGWA 2025 Updated Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) will be finalized and submitted to the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) by the January 31, 2025 deadline.

COMMUNICATIONS

Item #7 – Various Reports to the Governing Board:

a) Staff and Consultant Updates

Mr. Nakagawa informed the Board about Senate Bill (SB) 1156 – Groundwater Sustainability Agencies: Conflicts of Interest: Financial Interest Disclosures, which was approved by Governor Newsom on September 22, 2024. The bill, effective January 1, 2025, requires members of the Board of Directors, and Executives, of a GSA to e-file Form 700s directly to the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC). SSJID Clerk of the Board/Executive Assistant Danielle Barney will email, the SSJGSA Board and Executive Staff, a link to the FPPC to expedite the required e-filing of the Form 700. The deadline to e-file Form 700s directly to the FPPC is March 1, 2025.

Mr. Nakagawa noted that in addition to the SB 1156 requirement to e-file directly to the FPPC, Ms. Barney will also require an original hard-copy, with wet signature, of the Form 700 for 2024-25, for the SSJGSA reporting to San Joaquin County.

b) Technical Advisory Committee

None

c) Member Reports

None

d) Correspondence

None

CLOSED SESSION

Item #8 – Closed Session – None

Chairman de Graaf welcomed Director Van Ryn to the SSJGSA Board of Directors.

ADJOURNMENT

Item #9 – Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 a.m.

ATTEST:

Danielle Barney, Clerk of the Board