

**South San Joaquin Groundwater Sustainability Agency  
Regular Meeting  
Manteca, California  
October 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 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, Special SSJGSA Counsel Valerie Kincaid, and SSJID Clerk of the Board Danielle Barney.

**Public Comment** – None

**ACTION CALENDAR**

**Item #1 – Approval of the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of July 16, 2025**

**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

Chairman de Graaf moved Agenda Item #3 before Item #2, upon notification of technical difficulties the Zanjero, Inc. consultant was experiencing logging onto Zoom.

**Item #3 – Quarterly Presentation of Financial Statements through September 2025**

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 September 30, 2025. She provided detailed descriptions of the balance sheets, cash balances, accounts payable, bank reconciliation, statement of changes in net position, statements of

members' capital, expense reimbursements to the South San Joaquin Irrigation District, and the SSJGSA 2025 budget balance to date of \$166,045.00.

Ms. Bloom noted the US Bank fees paid, in the amount of \$297.38, and stated that there have been multiple unsuccessful attempts to communicate with bank personnel regarding reduction of this service charge. She explained that switching financial institutions for the SSJGSA would require changing the user interface, which may affect the programming setup for the SSJID. Ms. Sonya Williams, SSJID Finance and Administration Manager and SSJGSA Treasurer, concurred and stated that changing financial institutions at this time would require a Request for Proposal process.

Mr. Brandon Nakagawa, SSJID Water Resources Coordinator and SSJGSA Secretary, gave a brief summary of upcoming SSJGSA expenses including membership dues to the Eastern San Joaquin Groundwater Authority (ESJGWA) in the amount of \$44,561.00 for FY 2025-2026, and hiring a groundwater data consultant. He added that SSJGSA expenses are slightly under budget for 2025.

#### **Item #4 – Discussion Regarding Establishing an SSJGSA Internal Groundwater Monitoring Network**

Mr. Nakagawa referenced the San Joaquin County (County) Flood Control and Water Conservation District Groundwater Report(s) for Spring 2025 and Fall 2025, which semi-annually monitors 100+ wells throughout the County to measure groundwater levels. He summarized past groundwater Reports in 1986 and 1992 showing levels immediately recovering after a wet rainy season. The wet year in 2023 did not show the expected rise in groundwater levels. Mr. Nakagawa stated that well-monitoring protocols and timing of measurement may be contributing factors that could affect measurements.

The Board discussed having the SSJGSA self-monitor selected wells within its groundwater sustainability agency (GSA) to corroborate and/or dispute the County's Groundwater Report(s), the benefits of the SSJGSA self-monitoring its wells, identifying which wells to monitor within the SSJGSA, use of a third party technical consultant to monitor the SSJGSA wells, and the cost and subsequent budget increase.

#### **Item #2 – Presentation and Discussion with Zanjero, Inc. – Satellite Based ET Measurement**

Mr. Nakagawa introduced Mr. Greg Young, Principal at Zanjero, who was participating via the online Zoom meeting platform. Mr. Young addressed the Board, and gave a brief presentation on the methods used to track evapotranspiration (ET) data for GSAs. GSAs are using the data to form the basis for demand management strategies including the reduction of groundwater pumping.

Mr. Young noted his experience working with the Merced Subbasin GSA, and the North San Joaquin Water Conservation District (NSJWCD) and provided a detailed summary of his work with NSJWCD which identified parcels; water use variances by year; ET tables; crop layers; precipitation; and groundwater pumping. He explained program tools that could "grab" data (e.g. water usage, crop info), within a specific parcel, and upload onto a spreadsheet. Mr. Young concluded and stated that GSAs face challenges implementing Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) requirements, and that Zanjero provides training on the OpenET program to fully empower its clients to gather, gauge, review, and hold data for documenting and reporting purposes.

Board discussion included water use yield data correlation by crop (e.g. grapes, almonds, etc); demand reduction programs; potential to cross reference OpenET data with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data; groundwater model updates; and the estimated cost of \$30-35,000.00 for Zanjero services and the OpenET program.

## **Item #5 – Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the SSJGSA 2026 Preliminary Budget**

Mr. Nakagawa addressed the Board regarding the proposed 2026 annual budget and highlighted projected expenses including legal, staff time, banking fees, technical consultants, conference costs, and the SSJGSA member contribution to the ESJGWA. He noted an increase in the preliminary 2026 budget totaling \$422,300.00 in total appropriations, a 9.4-percent (9.4%) increase from 2025. The proposed budget also included the new work proposed by Zanjero, and the start of SSJGSA monitoring a select number of local wells.

Mr. Nakagawa requested that the Members take the preliminary 2026 Budget to their respective agencies for review, with the expectation that the final budget will be presented and adopted by the SSJGSA Board of Directors at the December 2025 meeting.

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

Mr. Nakagawa reported that Ms. Julia Berry has strongly demonstrated her abilities as the new ESJGWA Executive Director (ED). He added that her transition into the ED position has been smooth, that she has taken on leadership in communicating with the ESJGWA consultants, and that the ESJGWA is moving in the right direction.

Director Holmes, who is also Chairman of the ESJGWA, concurred on Ms. Berry's successful transition as Executive Director and added that she implemented a weekly meeting for regular discussions on groundwater data, and a demand reduction program. He noted ESJGWA member updates including the Central San Joaquin Water Conservation District's new Interim General Manager Steve Knell, and the City of Stockton's groundwater recharge project.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Item #7 – Various Reports to the Governing Board:**

- a) **Staff and Consultant Updates**  
None
- b) **Technical Advisory Committee**  
None
- c) **Member Reports**  
None
- d) **Correspondence**  
None

*The Board convened to Closed Session at 9:55 a.m.*

## **CLOSED SESSION**

### **Item #8 – Closed Session**

*The Board returned to Open Session at 11:08 a.m. No reportable action.*

## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Item #9 – Adjournment**

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 11:09 a.m.

**ATTEST:**

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Danielle Barney, Clerk of the Board