

# Charter

## Butte Valley Groundwater Basin Advisory Committee

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### Purpose, Organization and Governance

Approved by the GSA Board on May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019

Adopted by the Advisory Committee on May 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Amended by the GSA Board on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022

## **Background and Purpose**

In order to carry out requirements of the 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), the Siskiyou County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District) serves as the local Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for three of the four groundwater basins in the county that must comply with SGMA—the Shasta, Scott and Butte Valley basins.

SGMA requires development of a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) for the Butte Valley groundwater basin. In May, 2016, the California Water Commission unanimously adopted Final GSP Emergency Regulations which describe, among other things, the required contents of any GSP, including administrative information, a description of the basin setting, sustainable management criteria, description of the monitoring network, and projects and management actions.

The District has established a Butte Valley Groundwater Basin Advisory Committee (“Advisory Committee” or “Committee”) to serve an advisory role and make recommendations to the District board on and GSP development. The District, in its capacity as the GSA Board, is the final decision maker in the GSP process. In its capacity, the committee will provide local knowledge and insight, review of draft and final documents, and provide recommendations to the District during development and implementation of a Butte Valley GSP.

The goals of the Advisory Committee are to:

- Work collaboratively and transparently with other members to identify common goals, foster mutual understanding, and provide consensus recommendations to the Board that will help the District develop a locally informed and broadly supported GSP;
- Develop a common understanding of all existing groundwater resources in the Butte Valley groundwater basin;
- Solicit and incorporate community and stakeholder interests into committee discussions and emerging committee recommendations to the Board of Directors in order to develop recommendations;
- Consider and integrate science, as guided and with support from the District’s qualified scientific consultants when reviewing and commenting on GSP development and implementation;
- Collaborate in good faith to achieve consensus on recommendations, and to the extent consensus cannot be achieved, share with the Board minority viewpoints as well.
- Provide support to the GSA regarding implementation actions set forth in the GSP.

The Advisory Committee may review and evaluate, and thereafter advise or make recommendations to the District Board, on the following:

- Review and offer feedback on technical data, documentation, presentations, and other appropriate items as it pertains to SGMA and the development of the GSP;
- Review and make recommendations on appropriate studies, models, projects, and other technical needs that will aid in developing additional information in relation to the GSP;
- Identify and make recommendations on proposed groundwater management goals, objectives and strategies specific to the GSP;
- Provide comments, recommendations, or suggestions on professional consultants, or technical experts being considered by the GSA Board;

- Identify and review grant or funding opportunities that would provide financial support for GSP development and implementation;
- Hear and offer feedback on presentations by organizations, companies, consultants, or other necessary individuals or entities regarding the GSP.

The preparation of a SGMA GSP is a complex process that requires considerable research, discussion and deliberation before its adoption. To support this process, the District contracted a technical team from Larry Walker Associates (UC Davis and CSU Chico) to draft the GSP, conduct scientific studies, and build a groundwater monitoring network that will inform GSP development and implementation. This District also received DWR Facilitation Support Service (FSS) funds, which enabled the contracting of impartial facilitation services of the Sacramento State University Consensus and Collaboration Program (CCP), formerly the Center for Collaborative Policy, to organize and facilitate a series of advisory committee, public and, as needed, special meetings as the GSP is developed.

As a standing committee of the GSA, the Advisory Committee will operate in compliance with the Ralph M. Brown Act (Brown Act). Committee meetings will be noticed and agendas posted according to the Brown Act. All meetings will be open to the public and allow public comment. Speakers will generally be limited to three minutes, but time may be adjusted based upon meeting circumstances. As needed, the facilitator may place time limits on public comments to ensure that the committee is reasonably able to address all agenda items during the course of a meeting. The District will announce committee meetings on its website and through its regular communication channels. Recommendations and advice from the committee will be presented to the GSA at public meetings regularly held by the District.

## **Definitions**

“Advisory Committee” or “Committee” means the Butte Valley Groundwater Basin Advisory Committee, established by resolution of the Siskiyou County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (Resolution No. FLD 18-06).

“CDFW” means California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

“Chair” or “Vice-Chair” means the Butte Valley Groundwater Basin Advisory Committee Chair or Vice-Chair, respectively.

“District” or “Convener” means the Siskiyou County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, the established Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for the Shasta, Scott and Butte Valley groundwater basins.

“District Staff” or “Staff” means Natural Resources Department staff at the Siskiyou County Flood Control and Water Conservation District.

“DWR” means the California Department of Water Resources.

“Facilitation Support Services” or “FSS” means DWR’s SGMA Facilitation Support Services assistance program for local agencies.

“Facilitator” or “Facilitation Team” means the Sacramento State University facilitator or facilitators requested by the District, and contracted, under a DWR Work Order, to provide impartial facilitation support services during development of the Butte Valley Groundwater Sustainability Plan.

“GSA” means Groundwater Sustainability Agency as defined by the 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. In this charter GSA refers to the Siskiyou County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, the established local GSA for the Shasta, Scott and Butte Valley groundwater basins.

“GSA Board” means the board of directors of the Siskiyou County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, specifically when the board is operating in its capacity as the GSA Board.

“GSP” means Groundwater Sustainability Plan as defined by the 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act. In this charter GSP specifically refers to the Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the Butte Valley groundwater basin.

“Members” mean members of the Butte Valley Groundwater Basin Advisory Committee.

“Siskiyou County Flood Control and Water Conservation District” means the special district established in 1959 by the Siskiyou County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Act, (Cal Uncod. Water Deer, Act 1240 §§ 1-38), which is the Groundwater Sustainability Agency for the Shasta, Scott and Butte Valley groundwater basins. The Siskiyou Board of Supervisors serve as the Board of Directors of the Siskiyou County Flood Control and Water Conservation District.

“SGMA” means the 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

“Technical Team” means scientific consultants from Larry Walker Associates (UC Davis and CSU Chico) contracted by the District to provide technical and scientific support during development and implementation of the Butte Valley GSP.

## **Membership Composition**

Composition of the Advisory Committee is intended to reflect the beneficial uses and users of groundwater, as defined by SGMA, in the Butte Valley groundwater basin. Established by a District resolution and further explained in this Charter, the committee currently consists of nine members that represent five distinct interest groups. Entities or affiliations on the committee will determine their representative however they choose, providing District staff an email or letter statement of their approved member. Current committee membership can be found online at [<https://www.co.siskiyou.ca.us/buttevga>] and includes the following:

<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Interest Group</b>
Private Pumper	Water user
Residential	Water user
City of Dorris	Municipal
Private Pumper	Water user
Private Pumper	Water user

CDFW Butte Valley Wildlife Refuge	Agency/District
Private Pumper	Water user
Butte Valley Irrigation District	Agency/District
Tribal	Tribal representative
Environmental/Conservation	Environmental/conservation

*Terms*

- After the GSA Boards GSA adoption, members will be provided the opportunity to extend their terms for two years, or end their term effective January 31, 2022. Committee members will provide their responses to the Siskiyou County Natural Resources staff SGMA manager. If any committee member decides, for any reason, to terminate his or her role prior to term expiration, he/she will notify District staff and as soon as possible after making such a determination.
- The application process will occur between February 15 and March 15 of each year to fill vacant or expiring seats, with appointments occurring at the first District board meeting in April. Members with expiring terms will be notified by mail from the Clerk’s office to respond during the application period if they would like to be reappointed. Applications will be available to those wishing to apply to any vacant or expiring seat.
- The chair and vice-chair will serve two years. At the culmination of the term of a chair or vice-chair, the committee will use its decision-making procedures to nominate and confirm a new chair and vice-chair. Any interested chair or vice chair may be nominated for a second term, however, no chair or vice-chair shall serve more than two consecutive terms.

*Attendance*

Given the volume of information to be considered and discussed, it is essential that members actively participate in committee meetings on a consistent basis. A member is considered inactive if he/she has more than two consecutive unexcused absences or three excused absences in an 18 month period. It is understood that professional and personal commitments may at times prevent members from attending committee meetings. In such cases, members shall notify District staff and the facilitator no less than 24 hours in advance to be excused from attending any given committee meeting. As needed, staff or the facilitator will reach out to members who are not actively participating to give them the opportunity to explain their absence and reaffirm their interest to participate on the committee, and thus not lose their seat. Members who do not meet the threshold for active participation, and have not expressed an interest to continue participating, will, at the recommendation of District staff, be automatically removed by the GSA Board from the committee.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

This section describes roles and responsibilities that the District, Advisory Committee Members, the Technical Team, and the CCP Facilitation commit to during development and implementation of the Butte Valley groundwater basin GSP.

**Convener**

The District, in its capacity as the GSA Board, is the final decision maker in the GSP process. The GSA Board will:

- Receive, evaluate, and decide on all GSP and SGMA related actions that come in the form of advice and recommendations from the Butte, Scott, and Shasta Advisory Committees;
- Hear and offer feedback on presentations linked to the GSP by organizations, companies, consultants, or other necessary individuals or entities;
- Welcome feedback that pertains to the GSP from all diverse stakeholder interests in each groundwater basin;
- Serve as a representative for the three basins, making decisions in the best interest of achieving and maintaining long-term groundwater sustainability for all beneficial uses and users of water in each basin;
- Utilize district staff, who will serve as the communication link between the committee and the GSA Board by providing staff reports during board meetings on key progress milestones and board required actions.

### **Advisory Committee Members**

Members of the Advisory Committee (“members”) collectively represent the diversity of beneficial groundwater uses and users in the Butte Valley groundwater basin. Committee members commit to:

- Serve as strong, effective advocates and educators for the interest group (constituency) represented;
- Nominate and confirm a committee chair and vice chair every two years;
- Arrive at each meeting fully prepared to discuss all agenda items and relevant issues. Preparation may include, but is not limited to, reviewing previous meeting summaries, draft and final GSP chapters, and other information distributed in advance of each meeting;
- Participate in ad hoc subcommittees or work groups on an as needed or desired basis;
- Develop an innovative problem-solving approach in which the interests and viewpoints of all members are considered;
- Explore all options to resolve disagreements, including, as needed, one-on-one discussions with the facilitator or District staff, and, with support from the facilitator, the use of GSA Board approved subcommittees, or, at Advisory Committee meetings, interest-based caucuses or small group discussions;
- Act as liaisons throughout the GSP development and implementation process to educate, inform and solicit input from the wider local community and interested constituencies not represented on the committee;
- Present constituent views on the issues being discussed and commit to engage in civil, respectful and constructive dialogue with other members, as well as District staff, technical team members and the facilitator;
- Ensure accuracy of information dissemination during or outside meetings, and correct false information as needed or appropriate;
- Avoid representing individual viewpoints as those of the committee and respect confidential conversations;
- Work collaboratively to ensure broad constituent understanding and support for any advice and recommendations that the committee shares with the GSA Board;
- Coordinate with District staff and the facilitator regarding recommendations for any

additional committee tasks that should be undertaken by the committee, and which items shall be presented to the GSA Board for its review and approval;

- Operate at all times in compliance with the Brown Act.

Through its public meetings, the committee shall serve as an additional forum for public dialogue on SGMA and GSP development. Finally, with approval by the GSA Board, committee tasks may be amended, repealed, or additionally added at any time with the intent to comply with SGMA related activities provided said activities comply under the authorities granted by SGMA law.

### **Chair/Vice-Chair**

The committee will use its decision-making procedures to appoint a chair and vice-chair. The chair agrees to the below roles and responsibilities. The vice-chair will serve in this capacity when the chair is unavailable or otherwise cannot play this role.

- Coordinate with District staff and the facilitator to develop committee meeting agendas;
- Chair Advisory Committee meetings as needed, particularly when facilitation support services are unavailable;
- Assist District staff and the facilitator in planning and outreach for public meetings;
- Assist District staff, as needed at key milestones, in briefing the GSA Board on committee discussions, consensus recommendations generated by the committee, and issues in which the committee holds majority/minority viewpoints.

### **Technical Team**

The Larry Walker Associates Technical Team will provide the science and technical expertise to support the Advisory Committee in making its recommendation and GSA Board in development and implementation of the GSP. Additional science and technical contractors may be included during the GSP development process, implementation, or to address future GSP needs, as approved by the GSA Board. Specific roles include:

- Lead the evaluation and analysis of the basin hydrology, geology, land use, groundwater resources, water budgets, etc.;
- Perform, design, or with GSA Board approval, seek subcontractors for all monitoring and data analysis, including statistical and numerical modeling and visualization;
- Lead the technical development of the GSP monitoring program;
- Regularly communicate its findings with the committee, its chair, and the GSA Board, and solicit Board feedback;
- Provide technical and scientific advice to the committee and the GSA Board as the Board develops sustainability criteria and associated projects.

### **Facilitation Team**

A third-party facilitator will provide impartial facilitation support services for committee, public and, as needed, special meetings. The facilitator's primary responsibility is to ensure an open, civil and inclusive process where all interests and perspectives are heard and thoughtfully considered. To this end, the facilitator works for the full group on behalf of the committee purpose, structure and process outlined in this charter. The facilitator's specific role and responsibilities include:

- Support District staff and the committee chair and/or vice chair in developing and

- distributing committee, public or special meeting agendas and relevant materials;
- Advocate for a fair, effective, and credible process, but remain impartial with respect to the outcome of the deliberations;
- Promote good faith discussions (i.e., share information, ensure inclusive member and public participation, encourage mutual understanding, maintain focus on the agenda and seek multi-interest solutions);
- Apply collaborative, interest-based methods of dialogue that foster openness and identify areas of preliminary and final consensus agreement regarding advice and recommendations the committee provides to the GSA;
- Manage meeting time to balance public participation with the committee’s ability to address all agenda items and complete its work;
- Track and ensure agreed upon meeting action items are completed and reported on in a timely manner by appropriate parties;
- Check in with members as needed, at or between meetings, to better understand member interests and ensure all issues are identified and thoroughly explored;
- Provide, as needed, mediation or shuttle diplomacy to help resolve disagreements among members or with other interested constituencies;
- Coordinate with District staff and the chair or vice-chair to ensure accurate, impartial documentation of meetings and committee agreements (e.g., action items, meeting summaries and recommendations to the GSA);
- In the absence of consensus, help identify areas of agreement and disagreement among members, and ensure all majority and minority viewpoints are clearly documented and shared with the GSA;
- Coordinate with District staff and committee members to develop a stakeholder communications and engagement strategy to guide public engagement on SGMA, which may also include specific outreach to tribes and others;
- Ensure the committee operates at all times in compliance with the Brown Act;
- Ensure all members uphold the tenets of the charter.

### **Tribal Government**

The Advisory Committee recognizes that the Tribal Representative role is unique in that the representative is representing a sovereign nation. The Tribal Representative is not delegated broad authority to act on behalf of the Tribal Government.

### **Decision-making Procedures**

In order to hold a meeting and conduct its work, a quorum of the Butte Valley GSA Advisory Committee must be present. A simple majority of the total number of currently filled advisory committee member seats constitutes a quorum.

- 1) **Consensus as the Fundamental Principle:** The advisory committee shall strive for consensus (agreement among all participants) in all of its decision-making. Working toward consensus is a fundamental principle which will guide group efforts, particularly when crafting any draft or final advisory committee proposals, reports or recommendations for GSA Board consideration. If the committee is unable to reach consensus, the range of opinions provided, including areas of agreement and disagreement, will be documented in



meeting summaries or otherwise communicated in written reports when advisory committee work is shared with the GSA Board.

- 2) **Definition of Consensus:** Consensus means all committee members either fully support or can live with a particular decision and believe that their constituents can as well. In reaching consensus, some committee members may strongly endorse a particular proposal, report or recommendation while others may simply accept it as "workable." Others may only be able to "live with it" as less than desired but still acceptable. Still others may choose to "stand aside" by verbally noting disagreement, yet allowing the group to reach consensus without them, or by abstaining altogether. Any of these actions constitutes consensus.
- 3) **Types of Decision-Making:**
  - a. Administrative: Decisions about the daily administrative activities of the committee—including, but not limited to meeting logistics, meeting dates and times, agenda revisions and schedules. *Administrative decisions* will typically be put forward to the group by District staff. As needed, staff will consult with the committee. Any administrative decisions by the committee will be made on a simple majority vote of all members present at a meeting. The committee will defer to the decision-making procedures outlined in this section of the charter in circumstances where it is unclear if a committee decision is *administrative* in nature, or represents a more substantive *GSP/SGMA* decision (described below).
  - b. Groundwater Sustainability Planning/SGMA Advice and Recommendations: Advice and recommendations about the Butte Valley GSP—including but not limited to topics mandated by SGMA and other groundwater related topics that the committee chooses to address. All *GSP/SGMA advice and recommendation decisions* will be made by the decision-making procedures outlined in this section of the charter.
- 4) **Assessing Progress Towards Consensus:** The facilitator may at times use straw polls to assess the degree of preliminary support for an idea or proposal before it is given consideration as a final committee decision. This may occur when the committee moves from agreements in principle to agreements in detail, or when it appears a consensus agreement is near or otherwise emerging. During this time members may indicate tentative approval without fully committing support for a final decision or recommendation.
- 5) **Consensus with Accountability:** Consensus seeking efforts recognize that a convened group such as Butte Valley GSA Advisory Committee makes recommendations, but is not a formal decision-making body like the Siskiyou County GSA. That said, achieving consensus is the goal, as this allows all stakeholder interests represented on the committee to communicate a unified group perspective to the GSA Board as it considers public policy decisions and actions which may affect the constituencies that members represent, and the wider community. Using a model of consensus with accountability, all committee members shall commit to two principles:
  - a. All members are expected to routinely express their interests and analyze conditions to ensure they have clarity on how their interests and those of others may shift over time;

- b. All members shall negotiate agreements in a manner that serves their interests, and offers either neutral impact to others, or ideally provides benefit to others' interests as well as their own.

Operating by consensus with accountability will encourage multi-interest solutions based on shared member interests. Such solutions are in turn more sustainable and durable as they represent shared agreements rather than majority/minority dynamics. Most consensus building during the course of GSP development and SGMA implementation will be based on verbal dialogue, deliberation and iterative development of group ideas. The facilitator may commonly ask, when it appears consensus or near consensus agreement has emerged or is emerging, if any member cannot live with said agreement. For any final decisions, committee members will demonstrate consensus, or lack thereof, in the following manner:

*Thumbs Down: I do not support the proposal.*

*Thumbs Sideways: I am not enthusiastic about all elements, but the proposal is workable and I can live it.*

*Thumbs Up: I support the proposal.*

*Stand Aside: Member verbally notes he/she is willing to stand aside and allow group consensus.*

*Abstention: At times, a pending decision may be infeasible for a participant to weigh in on. Member verbally notes he/she abstains. Abstentions do not prevent group consensus.*

The goal is for all participants to be in the 'Thumbs Up', or 'Thumbs Sideways' levels of agreement. The committee will have reached consensus on an item when all members present are at 'Thumbs Up' or 'Thumbs Sideways' levels, or otherwise stand aside or abstain. If any member is at a 'Thumbs Down' level, that member must provide a counter proposal that legitimately attempts to achieve his/her interest as well as the interests of other members. The committee will then evaluate how best to proceed. Any member that stands aside or abstains from a decision is encouraged to explain why his/her choice is in his/her best interest.

- 6) Less than 100% Consensus Decision Making:** The advisory committee is consensus seeking but shall not limit itself to strict consensus if 100% agreement among all participants cannot be reached after all interests and options have been thoroughly identified, explored and discussed. Less-than-consensus decision-making shall not be undertaken lightly. If the committee cannot come to 100% agreement, it could set aside the particular issue while it continues work on other issues, then revisit the disagreement later in the process. The committee could also form an ad hoc committee to develop a draft proposal for full advisory committee consideration. With support from the facilitator, the ad hoc committee would develop one or more draft proposals that attempt to address the interests of all the members

and then present this information to the full advisory committee. Finally, the committee recognizes that certain deadlines must be met during the collaborative process to ensure completion of all SGMA opportunities and requirements on time.

If, after thoroughly exploring all ideas and options, consensus is absent or otherwise not forthcoming, the committee, with assistance from the facilitator and District staff, will clearly document majority and minority viewpoints. The facilitator will then work with District staff and the chair or vice-chair to incorporate all viewpoints into the meeting summary, and, as warranted, prepare a committee report to the GSA Board. The chair, in coordination with District staff, will then present the report to the GSA, ensuring that all majority and minority viewpoints are clearly communicated and accurately represent the outcomes of committee discussions. Any committee member holding minority viewpoints will have the opportunity, if he/she is not comfortable with the process, to present his/her viewpoints directly to the GSA Board at the time the report is presented. Members wishing to do this will express their interest and minority viewpoints with District staff in advance of said GSA Board meeting.

- 7) **Decision Outcomes:** Advisory committee decisions will be made at appropriate meetings and, in accordance with the Brown Act, will be publicly noticed in advance and shared via the District's website and SGMA interested parties email list. As described above, all committee proposals, reports and recommendations will reflect the outcomes of collaborative member discussions. All consensus agreements and other negotiated outcomes during GSP development and implementation, as well as discussion outcomes when consensus is not forthcoming, will be documented, as described above, and shared with the GSA Board.

## **Subcommittees**

The Advisory Committee can form ad hoc subcommittees or workgroups as needed to assist with its work advising the GSA on groundwater sustainability plan development and implementation, or other SGMA-oriented issues. Subcommittee composition shall reflect the diversity of interests and interested members on the advisory committee. No final advice, decisions or recommendations will be made by any subcommittee. Rather, subcommittees will develop draft proposals or recommendations for full committee consideration.

## **Collaborative Process Agreements and Meeting Ground Rules**

Members commit to the following process agreements during discussion, deliberation and attempts to find consensus-based solutions to sustainable groundwater management in the Butte Valley groundwater basin. Moreover, members also agree to abide by meeting ground rules in order to intentionally and consistently engage each other in civil and constructive dialogue during the collaborative process.

### *Process Agreements*

- **Strive to focus on interests versus positions.** A focus on interests instead of positions will help reveal the needs, hopes or concerns behind any member's words. By extension this can help identify shared interests among committee members and, based on those shared interests, multiple options for mutually beneficial agreements.

- **Foster mutual understanding and attempt to address the interests and concerns of all participants.** For the collaborative process to be successful, all members must seek to understand the interests and concerns of other members, then strive to reach agreements that take all member interests under consideration.
- **Inform, educate and seek input from community constituents.** To the extent possible, members will share information and solicit input from their constituents, scientific advisors, and others about ongoing committee discussions and potential agreements or recommendations as they emerge.
- **View challenges as problems to be solved rather than battles to be won.** Challenges will at times arise during discussion of issues. Remember to focus on the challenge versus on each other. Search for multi-interest solutions, rather than win/lose agreements.
- **Be creative and innovative problem solvers.** Creative thinking and problem solving are essential to success in any collaboration. Get beyond the past, climb out of the perceived “box” and attempt to think about the problem, and potential solutions, in new ways.
- **Negotiate in good faith.** All members agree to candidly and honestly participate in decision making, to act in good faith in all aspects of this effort, and to communicate their interests in group meetings. Good faith also requires that parties not make commitments for which they cannot or do not intend to honor.
- **Consider the long-term view.** SGMA requires submission and approval of a Butte Valley GSP by January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022. Taking a long-term view of the planning horizon, may help inform collaborative discussions, reduce conflict and thereby ensure long-term sustainability of groundwater resources.

#### *Ground rules*

- **Use common conversational courtesy and treat each other with respect.** Civil and respectful dialogue tends to foster a constructive, thorough and solutions-oriented environment within multi-stakeholder groups.
- **Remember that all ideas and points of view linked to the committee’s charge have value.** All ideas have value in this setting. Simply listen, you do not have to agree. If you hear something you do not agree with or you think is silly or wrong, please remember that a fundamental purpose of this forum is to encourage diverse ideas.
- **Be candid, listen actively and seek to understand others.** This promotes genuine dialogue and mutual understanding. Mutual understanding in turn helps parties identify shared interests. Shared interests set the foundation to finding and developing mutually acceptable agreements.
- **Be concise and share the air.** Keep in mind that time is limited at meetings. Be concise when sharing your perspective so that all members can participate in the discussion. And remember, people’s time is precious, treat it with respect.

- **Avoid editorial comments.** At times it will be tempting to try and interpret the intentions or motivations of others. Please avoid this temptation and instead speak to your own interests and the motivation behind them.
- **Stay focused on the meeting agenda.** The committee is a Brown Act compliant body. As such it is important to stay focused on the posted agenda for any given meeting.
- **Welcome levity and humor to the discussions.** Work around water can at times be daunting and filled with challenges. Levity and humor is both welcome and helpful at times, as long as it does not come at the expense of others.
- **Turn cell phones off or to vibrate.** Help the group avoid distractions by turning cell phones to vibrate, not checking email during meetings and, if you must take a call, taking it outside the room.

### **Communications/Media Relations**

Members are asked to speak only for themselves or the constituency they represent when asked by external parties, including the media, about the committee's work, unless there has been a formal adoption of a statement, report or recommendations by the committee. Members will refer media inquiries to District staff while also having the freedom to express their own opinions to the media. Members should inform media and external parties that they only speak for themselves and do not represent other members or the committee as a whole. The temptation to discuss someone else's statements or positions should be avoided.

### **Charter Amendments**

The advisory committee can recommend the Board adopt amendments to the charter on an as needed basis. Suggested changes may be put forward by the committee members, the facilitator, District staff or the GSA Board. The committee will utilize its decision-making procedures to propose and adopt charter amendments. In the absence of consensus on suggested charter amendments, majority and minority views will be communicated to the GSA Board, staff may make a recommendation, and then the GSA Board will have final decision-making authority regarding whether or not a suggested charter amendment or set of amendments may be adopted by the group.