

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE VALLECITOS WATER DISTRICT
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2021, AT 5:00 PM, VIA TELECONFERENCE

President Sannella called the Regular meeting to order at the hour of 5:00 p.m.

Present: Director Boyd-Hodgson
Director Elitharp
Director Hernandez
Director Pennock
Director Sannella

Staff Present: General Manager Pruum
Legal Counsel Gilpin
Administrative Services Manager Emmanuel
District Engineer Gumpel
Finance Manager Owen
Operations & Maintenance Manager Pedrazzi
Development Services Senior Engineer Lopez
Information Technology Supervisor Labarrere
Public Information/Conservation Supervisor Robbins
Administrative Secretary Johnson

Director Boyd-Hodgson led the pledge of allegiance.

ADOPT AGENDA FOR THE REGULAR MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 15, 2021

21-09-07 MOTION WAS MADE by Director Hernandez, seconded by Director Pennock, and carried unanimously, to adopt the agenda for the Regular Board Meeting of September 15, 2021.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

PRESENTATION

President Sannella acknowledged Meter Services Supervisor Chris Tapia's attainment of his certifications for Backflow Prevention Assembly General Tester and Cross-Connection Control Program Specialist from the American Water Works Association California-Nevada Section.

CONSENT CALENDAR

21-09-08 MOTION WAS MADE by Director Pennock, seconded by Director Boyd-Hodgson, and carried unanimously, to approve the Consent Calendar as presented.

1.1 Approval of Minutes

- A. Finance/Investment Committee Meeting – August 24, 2021
- B. Regular Board Meeting – September 1, 2021

1.2 Warrant List through September 15, 2021 - \$1,830,254.30

1.3 Financial Reports

- A. Water Meter Count – August 31, 2021
- B. Water Production/Sales Report – 2021/2022
- C. Per Capita Water Consumption – August 31, 2021
- D. Water Revenue and Expense Report – August 31, 2021
- E. Sewer Revenue and Expense Report – August 31, 2021
- F. Reserve Funds Activity – August 31, 2021
- G. Investment Report – August 31, 2021
- H. Legal Fees Summary – August 31, 2021

1.4 Final Acceptance of Water and Sewer Improvements for Orchard Hills Subdivision Improvements (Warmington Residential California, Inc.)

ACTION ITEM(S)

WATER SUPPLY CONDITIONS UPDATE

Public Information/Conservation Supervisor Robbins facilitated a presentation, Update on Water Supply Conditions, as follows:

- Colorado River Shortage Declared
- Fire Danger Closes California National Forests
- Northern Sierra 8-Station Precipitation Index
- Snowpack Water Content
- California Reservoir Storage
- Colorado River Status
- Three-Month Temperature Outlook
- Three-Month Precipitation Outlook
- New Ordinance and Video

General Manager Pruim stated Governor Newsom has called for a voluntary 15% reduction which may become mandatory in the future.

General discussion took place.

This item was presented for information only.

REDISTRICTING PROCESS

General Manager Pruim stated public agencies with elective offices are required to redraw their political boundaries every decade based on the most recent census data. Staff provided an overview of the redistricting process at the September 1, 2021, Board meeting at which the Board requested an overall schedule of the process as well as additional information regarding public outreach relating to the process.

District Engineer Gumpel provided an overview of the redistricting process which included:

- Redistricting Process
- Process Schedule
- Division Population and Director Changes 2012 to 2016 to 2020

General discussion took place.

This item was presented for information only.

WATER SERVICE SHUT-OFF MORATORIUM

General Manager Pruim stated the state-wide moratorium on water service shut offs for non-payment is set to expire on September 30, 2021, and unless extended, districts will be allowed to decide whether or not to shut service off. Staff requested the Board's direction as to how to proceed if the moratorium expires on September 30.

General Manager Pruim further stated that staff has applied for reimbursement through the state's arrearages program. Approximately 500 customers are eligible for the program, and many of those customers have contacted the District to be put on a payment plan. Letters have been sent to approximately 200 customers who have not responded to the District's repeated outreach regarding payment arrangements. He presented several options for the Board to consider including:

- Resume the normal pre-COVID practices regarding late payments.
- Allow continued water service to late customers who have committed to a payment plan and remain current on their payments.
- Hold off on all shut offs until the arrearages program payments are determined and/or received by the District, possibly in January or February.
- Establish a date for pre-COVID practices to resume.

General discussion took place.

21-09-09 MOTION WAS MADE by Director Hernandez, seconded by Director Pennock, and carried 3 – 2, with Directors Elitharp, Hernandez and Pennock voting yes and Directors Boyd-Hodgson and Sannella voting no, to resume pre-COVID practices regarding water service shut-offs for non-payment on October 1, 2021, if the state moratorium is not extended past September 30, 2021.

DISCUSSION REGARDING THE RETURN TO IN-PERSON PUBLIC MEETINGS

General Manager Pruim stated that due to the COVID pandemic, Governor Newsom issued a series of Executive Orders suspending certain provisions of the Brown Act governing the manner in which public meetings can be held, allowing public agencies to conduct meetings via teleconferencing. The District has conducted all public meetings utilizing the Zoom videoconferencing platform since March 18, 2020.

Legal Counsel Gilpin stated Assembly Bill (AB) 361 is currently awaiting the governor's signature. If signed into law, AB 361 will allow public agencies to continue conducting virtual meetings as long as a state of emergency is declared by either the state or on a local level. A provision of AB 361 requires that public comments are allowed to be made in real time, something the District has been doing all along. If AB 361 is signed and the Executive Orders expire, agencies will still be allowed to conduct meetings via teleconferencing under AB 361.

General Manager Pruim further stated that when the District resumes in-person Board meetings, the beneficial aspects of teleconferencing could be incorporated into the in-person format such as allowing the public to participate remotely in the Zoom format. He suggested a fixed wide-angle camera in the back of the room rather than individual webcams for the Board, and over time, two additional cameras could be added to provide a better video experience for viewers and close up views of the Board and speakers. California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal OSHA) requires that masks be worn during in-person meetings which may also include Board members. General Manager Pruim recommended the continued use of the Zoom platform to conduct public meetings if allowed by law.

General discussion took place regarding how other agencies are holding public meetings.

Gayle Martin, member of the public, stated she has attended several in-person San Marcos City Council meetings at which Council members and the public were masked and socially distanced. The meetings have gone well with those protocols in place.

Further general discussion took place regarding options for conducting public meetings depending on whether or not the Executive Orders are extended and if AB 361 is signed into law. A decision must be made prior to the October 1 publishing date for the October 6 Board meeting. General Manager Pruim again recommended continuing to conduct public meetings via Zoom as long as the state allows it. If the law does not allow teleconferenced public meetings as of October 1, the October 6 Board meeting will be conducted in an in-person hybrid format, allowing Board and public participation via Zoom as well as in-person.

The Board concurred with General Manager Pruim's recommendation.

REPORTS

GENERAL MANAGER

General Manager Pruim reported the following:

- The North San Diego County Water Reuse Coalition, of which the District is a member, was recently awarded a \$6 million grant for recycled water projects. The District's share of the award is approximately \$500,000 which will be used for the expansion of chlorine contact tanks at the Meadowlark Reclamation Facility (MRF). The expansion will increase the amount of recycled water produced at MRF.
- The District is trying an innovative method to flush water lines of any accumulated sediment as part of routine maintenance. Typically, this is done by opening fire hydrants to flush water through adjacent water lines which wastes water. The new method uses a closed loop filtration system that isolates a water main and moves a high velocity of water through it, filters the water through a tank on a truck, then returns the water to the water system in a closed loop manner. The sediment is then disposed of, wasting no water during the process. If this method is successful, staff will consider making this process a standard for the District for flushing lines and possibly purchasing a unit in the future.
- The solar dedication ceremony at Twin Oaks Reservoir Facility will take place on Thursday, September 16.

DISTRICT LEGAL COUNSEL

Legal Counsel Gilpin commented on AB 361 related to provisions of the Brown Act being extended. He also commented on Senate Bill (SB) 323 which would change the statute of limitations for claims related to challenges to water and sewer fees under Proposition 218.

SAN DIEGO COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY

Director Elitharp stated the next SDCWA Board meeting is scheduled for September 23.

ENCINA WASTEWATER AUTHORITY

Director Hernandez reported on his attendance to the Capital Improvement Committee meeting this morning at which the Committee reviewed capital improvement projects.

President Sannella stated he was unable to attend the Policy and Finance Committee meeting.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Director Elitharp stated the Engineering/Equipment Committee met on September 13. Agenda items included a review of a development construction agreement, an update on developer projects, and the MRF sodium hypochlorite conversion project design award.

Director Boyd-Hodgson stated the Public Awareness/Personnel/Policy Committee met on September 13. The District is moving forward with the internship program with Palomar College and is on track to have an intern start in the spring of 2022. Discussion items included the scholarship program and an educational display in the District's lobby.

DIRECTORS REPORTS ON TRAVEL/CONFERENCES/SEMINARS ATTENDED

Directors Boyd-Hodgson, Hernandez, and Pennock reported on their attendance to the California Special Districts Association Annual Conference August 30 – September 2.

Director Hernandez also reported on his attendance to the Urban Water Institute's Annual Conference September 8 – 9.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

DIRECTORS COMMENTS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Director Boyd-Hodgson stated the San Marcos City Council is proposing an ordinance pertaining to single-use plastics. She expressed her interest in the District supporting this. Director Hernandez offered his assistance with this matter.

Gayle Martin, member of the public, voiced her displeasure that the Board voted to end the water service shut off moratorium.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, President Sannella adjourned the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors at the hour of 6:39 p.m.

A Regular Meeting of the Vallecitos Board of Directors has been scheduled for Wednesday, October 6, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. via teleconference.

Michael A. Sannella, President
Board of Directors
Vallecitos Water District

ATTEST:

Glenn Pruim, Secretary
Board of Directors
Vallecitos Water District