

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
PUBLIC AWARENESS/PERSONNEL/POLICY COMMITTEE  
OF THE VALLECITOS WATER DISTRICT  
MONDAY, MARCH 7, 2022, AT 10:00 A.M.  
VIA TELECONFERENCE

Director Boyd-Hodgson called the meeting to order at the hour of 10:01 a.m.

Present: Director Boyd-Hodgson  
Director Pennock  
General Manager Pruim  
Assistant General Manager Gumpel  
Finance Manager Owen  
Development Services Senior Engineer Lopez  
Executive Assistant Johnson

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

PERSONNEL

None.

PUBLIC AWARENESS

**(OLD BUSINESS) UPDATE ON BILL CONSOLIDATION FOR LARGE CUSTOMERS (SAN ELIJO HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION)**

Finance Manager Owen provided an update on the San Elijo Hills Homeowners Association's (SEHHOA) request for modifications to consolidate their bills. He explained how information is sent from the District's Northstar system to the billing vendor, InfoSend. Over 23,000 customers receive their bills in a standard format; only four customers receive a consolidated bill. Modifying the consolidated bill format has proven to be challenging for several reasons, including additional fields would have to be created and there is a cost to do this. Staff has not forgotten about the SEHHOAs' request, but staff is managing several other priorities.

Finance Manager Owen stated staff has communicated with representatives of the SEHHOA, letting them know that staff is happy to put them on a consolidated bill format. The consolidated bill will combine all 43 of the SEHHOA's accounts onto one bill showing total water usage by account. The SEHHOA has requested the usage be shown by tier. Staff has offered to send the bill electronically which would allow data to be imported to a spreadsheet that the SEHHOA's data analyst could use to obtain the information they are requesting.

Elliott Herman, representing the SEHHOA, expressed his frustration that this process is taking so long. The SEHHOA has spent a considerable amount of money over the past year and a half making changes to their irrigation systems. They would like to see the water usage per tier so that they can make changes to reduce their tier three usage.

Director Boyd-Hodgson suggested representatives from the SEHHOA, herself, Director Pennock, and staff meet to discuss this issue further. Finance Manager Owen stated the first step is to receive the SEHHOA's approval to transition their bills to the consolidated bill format. A virtual meeting separate from this Committee will be set up ideally for next week or as soon as possible.

Mr. Glickman, also representing the SEHHOA, echoed Mr. Elliott's frustration about how long it's taking to resolve this issue.

## POLICY

### **(OLD BUSINESS) ORDINANCES/RESOLUTIONS/POLICIES RECOMMENDED FOR REVIEW:**

#### **ORDINANCE NO. 216 (BUSINESS OF THE BOARD) REIMBURSEMENT AGREEMENT POLICY BACKFLOW DEVICE UPGRADES**

Due to time constraints, Director Boyd-Hodgson suggested the Committee delay their review of Ordinance No. 216 until the next Committee meeting.

#### Reimbursement Agreement Policy, Ordinance No. 180

Development Services Senior Engineer Lopez facilitated a presentation on the Reimbursement Agreement Policy, Ordinance No. 180, as follows:

- Agreement Purpose
- Current Reimbursement Term (Section 1.5, Term of Agreement)
- Proposed Reimbursement Term (Change Current Ordinance)

Development Services Senior Engineer Lopez stated the current terms of the reimbursement agreement stipulate the proportionate share of eligible construction costs plus an escalator based on the increase in the Engineering News Record-LA (ENR-LA) Construction Cost Index from the effective date of the agreement and 5% of the reimbursement fee is retained by the District for administrative costs. Rather than tying the escalator cost to the ENR-LA Construction Cost Index, staff proposed to just include a 5% escalation cost for each year of the agreement. In addition, instead of the District retaining 5% of the reimbursement for administrative costs, staff proposed a flat fee (to be determined).

General discussion took place about how the flat fee for administrative costs would be calculated.

The Committee supports staff's proposed changes to Ordinance No. 180 as discussed and indicated they did not need to further discuss the flat fee calculation for administrative costs. Staff will develop the flat fee and make the revisions to the ordinance and will present it to the Board for consideration at a later date.

#### Backflow Device Upgrades, Ordinance No. 204

Assistant General Manager Gumpel stated Ordinance No. 204 is complicated as the State requires backflow devices to protect the public system. The State and local Health Department requirements place enforcement on the retail water agencies.

Development Services Senior Engineer Lopez facilitated a presentation on the Cross Control Connection (Backflows), Ordinance No. 204, as follows:

- Why Are Backflows Required?
- Where Are Backflows Required?

Development Services Senior Engineer Lopez stated the main issue is that older backflow devices cannot be tested and certified that they are still functioning properly. There are a total of 496 fire service backflows within the District. Of that number, 202 are older, non-compliant devices that must be updated by the owner or the District, depending on when they were installed. The current policy states that property owners of privately-owned backflow devices are responsible to upgrade non-compliant backflows. The District has budgeted to upgrade four non-compliant District-maintained backflow devices per year at a cost between \$30,000 and \$50,000 each. Staff is in the process of determining how many of the 202 non-compliant backflows are the District's responsibility and will bring this information back to the Committee in the future. Staff would then start budgeting to replace more District-maintained backflows each year and begin contacting customers to request they upgrade their backflows. Staff believes Ordinance No. 204 is consistent with current state health requirements and wants the Board's support in case they receive calls from customers.

General discussion took place. Director Pennock stated that some property owners may have loss assessment coverage on their insurance that may cover upgrading their backflow device. Staff will review the non-compliant backflows to determine who is responsible for upgrading them and will present this information to the Committee at a future meeting.

The Committee will review Ordinance No. 216 as well as responsibility after the meter, and possibly water/sewer capacity issues at their next meeting.

#### NEXT MEETING DATE – APRIL 4, 2022

The next Committee meeting is scheduled for 10:00 a.m. on Monday, April 4, 2022.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at the hour of 11:07 a.m.