

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE
COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE RAINBOW MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
JUNE 2, 2022**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – The Communications and Customer Service Committee Meeting of the Rainbow Municipal Water District on June 2, 2022 was called to order by Chairperson Shute at 3:31 p.m. in the Board Room of the District, 3707 Old Highway 395, Fallbrook, CA 92028. *(All meetings are being held with in-person attendance following County and State COVID guidelines as well as virtually.)* Chairperson Shute, presiding.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **ROLL CALL:**

Present: Member Shute, Member Hamilton, Member Vernon *(via video conference)*.

Also Present: General Manager Kennedy, Alternate Gray, Information Systems Specialist Espino.

Also Present Via Teleconference or Video Conference:

Finance Manager Largent, Information Technology Manager Khattab.

One member of the public was present in person, via teleconference or video conference.

4. **INSTRUCTIONS TO ALLOW PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS FROM THOSE ATTENDING THIS MEETING VIA TELECONFERENCE OR VIDEO CONFERENCE**

Mr. Shute read aloud the instructions for those attending the meeting via teleconference or video conference.

5. **SEATING OF ALTERNATES**

There were no alternates seated.

6. **ADDITIONS/DELETIONS/AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA (Government Code §54954.2)**

Ms. Gray requested that Item #14 be deferred. There was no objection.

7. **PUBLIC COMMENT RELATING TO ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA (Limit 3 Minutes)**

There were no public comments.

*8. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. May 5, 2022

Mr. Hamilton suggested the language used for seating alternates be revised to “Alternate Gray was seated”.

Motion:

To approve the minutes as revised.

Action: Approve, Moved by Member Hamilton, Seconded by Member Shute.

Vote: Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote (summary: Ayes = 3).

Ayes: Member Hamilton, Member Vernon, Member Shute.

9. GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

Mr. Kennedy reported he and Mr. Hamilton will attend a meeting at LAFCO on June 6th and will provide the committee with an update next month.

10. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

There were no comments.

11. DISCUSSION REGARDING FLUME PROJECT AND AVAILABILITY ARTICLE FOR PUBLICATION (REQUESTED BY DIRECTOR MOSS)

Ms. Gray stated she needed more clarification to address Director Moss' request directly; however, she has prepared another press release for the Village News to publish that this may be a great thing to do in light of the upcoming drought restrictions.

Mr. Hamilton recommended possibly getting comments from customers using Flume devices.

Mr. Shute shared a recent occurrence he experienced with his device. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Shute asked for clarification as to whether RMWD has no access to customer Flume devices. Mr. Kennedy confirmed RMWD will not receive any customer Flume data.

Mr. Shute inquired as to whether this committee addressed Director Moss' request. Mr. Kennedy confirmed the press release will suffice. Mr. Shute encouraged the committee members to have their comments on the press release to Ms. Gray before Monday, June 6th.

12. DISCUSSION REGARDING SUBMETERING AND HOME OWNERS ASSOCIATIONS ARTICLE FOR PUBLICATION (REQUESTED BY DIRECTOR MOSS)

Mr. Hamilton explained Director Moss was looking for a way those residing in submetering communities to receive direct notifications and communications from RMWD. He recommended having a separate mailing list.

Mr. Kennedy confirmed these individuals do have voting rights.

Mr. Shute recommended publishing something in the local newspaper that drives anyone living in a submetering or HOA who does not receive a bill directly from RMWD that wants to receive direct notifications to the district website to keep abreast of matters as well as sign up for the newsletter.

Mr. Vernon stated he did not think putting a physical mailer out to submetering occupants would be beneficial. He recommended reaching out with a communication through email encouraging everyone interested in receiving communications from RMWD to sign up on an email list.

Mr. Shute proposed publishing an article in the newspaper so they can be involved as well as receive RMWD communications, especially in light of voting items that will be coming in the near future.

Mr. Hamilton recommended staff reach out to the Registrar of Voters to receive a list of registered voters free of charge. He said if this list is available that includes apartment numbers and such, IT could sort through that list. He suggested once staff has a name and address, a letter or postcard could be mailed to each pointing them to the district website to sign up for the newsletter and receive important notifications.

Mr. Kennedy asked Mr. Espino to check with the Registrar of Voters to see if they can provide a list of RMWD's registered voters as well as pull a list of RMWD's HOA account list so that they can be cross referenced to see if there is a match from which a list of residents who reside in the district but do not have meters can be compiled. Mr. Hamilton pointed out he suggested this be done quarterly to capture any potential turnover in residents. Mr. Vernon suggested using this opportunity to recruit for committee membership.

Ms. Gray mentioned RMWD was not able to send out email blasts. Mr. Hamilton clarified he was recommending a postcard or letter be mailed to these residents without meters directing them to the website to sign up for email notifications for the newsletter.

Mr. Kennedy stated staff will brainstorm as to how a list can be created and bring an update back to the committee next month.

13. UPDATE REGARDING RMWD BECOMING A FIELD TRIP DESTINATION FOR LOCAL SCHOOLS

Ms. Gray stated she was able to contact the Superintendent for this area and how he was very excited about this opportunity. She noted she offered for RMWD to present a tour to his staff members so they could provide RMWD staff with feedback as to what would best fit in their curriculum so that times and topics could be adjusted accordingly.

Mr. Hamilton mentioned the initial conversation at the last committee meeting was more focused on a tour of the departments located at district headquarters. Mr. Kennedy agreed this would be better than coordinating field trips to offsite facilities.

Mr. Shute inquired as to when tours with school staff members could begin. Ms. Gray replied most likely in the Fall since the current school year is nearing its end.

14. CUSTOMER SURVEY UPDATE

This item was deferred per Item #6.

15. DISCUSSION REGARDING COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGIES FOR BACKFLOW DEVICE REMOVAL

Mr. Hamilton asked why RMWD recently put a backflow on the system that did not need one. Mr. Kennedy said he would investigate this matter.

Mr. Hamilton clarified this discussion was regarding reminding customers with backflow devices they have the opportunity to back out. Ms. Gray stated she wanted to be sure changes to the backflow device language in the Administrative Code is clear in that customers can remove the devices themselves. Mr. Kennedy stated RMWD's Cross-Connection Control and Backflow Technician would be the only one to confirm a backflow device qualifies to be removed.

Mr. Shute noted the follow-up was whether RMWD could send separate notifications to those customers with backflow devices with detailed information regarding how they may qualify to have their devices removed including the steps that would need to be taken. Ms. Gray strongly recommended this be brought back in chunks due to the high number of failures staff was currently in the process of addressing.

Mr. Kennedy recommended Ms. Gray coordinate with Mr. Galloway as to how to best proceed.

Mr. Shute requested the committee come up with a communication plan including the best way to proceed for discussion at the next committee meeting.

16. CALL VOLUME UPDATE

Mr. Shute noted this item was deferred from last month since Mr. Vernon was absent. Mr. Vernon asked if staff was tracking the number of calls received. Ms. Gray confirmed this was true.

Ms. Gray explained the minute a customer states they would like a call back, staff sees the customer remains in the queue so that as soon as a customer service representative becomes available, it starts ringing the customer so the representative can speak with that customer. Mr. Hamilton asked if the return call remains unanswered, does the call return to the queue or is it dropped. Ms. Gray stated should the return call go to voicemail the customer service representative would leave a message.

Mr. Hamilton asked whether RMWD's system would hang up should the call back go to voicemail. Ms. Gray explained the system takes the information that the customer would like a call back from RMWD and keeps it so that it can be seen who is requesting a call back as well as that it starts ringing back the customer once a customer service representative is free until it reaches someone. Mr. Hamilton clarified the question is whether the customer service representative is put on the line while the call is ringing the customer back or only when the call is picked up. Ms. Gray said if a live person is not reached, the customer service representative would leave a voicemail message. She noted in the event a customer's voicemail is full, the customer service representative would make a notation on the account.

Ms. Gray displayed raw data collected for the month of May noting the steps she takes to wrap the collected information in terms of call volume and converts it into a monthly report showing the number of calls taken per customer service representative as well as the average time it takes to complete a call. Mr. Hamilton requested a summary report of the raw data be provided in the monthly Board meeting agenda packet.

Mr. Vernon asked how the time in queue is calculated in terms of how long before a call is returned upon request. Ms. Gray stated only the actual time waiting would be calculated. Mr. Kennedy asked Mr. Espino to research whether the data related to the average wait time for a call back to occur can be flushed from the software program.

Discussion ensued regarding the types of information the software captures.

17. COMMITTEE MEMBER RECRUITMENT UPDATE

Mr. Shute mentioned this was regarding possibly publishing a press release with quotes from current committee members. Ms. Gray agreed having committee member quotes may be more effective in a press release as well as in tri-fold handouts. She offered to coordinate getting quotes from the committee chairpersons and vice chairpersons, respectively.

18. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATED MEDIA STORIES

Mr. Kennedy announced the AP article got picked up by the Washington Post of which he will provide the committee members with a copy. He also mentioned he appeared on Channel 10 News earlier this week about detachment and water costs. Mr. Shute requested a copy of the article be sent to the committee members.

Mr. Hamilton mentioned there was a nice write-up in the Village News regarding the recent Town Hall Meeting.

Discussions ensued regarding recent media articles related to water matters and concerns.

19. LIST OF SUGGESTED AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT SCHEDULED COMMUNICATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE COMMITTEE MEETING

It was noted the HOA and submetering outreach, RMWD headquarters becoming a field trip destination update, communications strategies for backflow device removal, best practices for water conservation, conservation communications, and committee member recruitment update, should be on the next committee agenda.

20. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Shute.

The meeting adjourned at 4:49 p.m.

Bill Shute, Committee Chairperson

Dawn M. Washburn, Board Secretary