

**MINUTES OF THE ENGINEERING AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE RAINBOW MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
SEPTEMBER 7, 2022**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – The Engineering and Operations Committee Meeting of the Rainbow Municipal Water District on September 7, 2022, was called to order by Chairperson Nelson 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 Nelson, presiding.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **ROLL CALL:**

Present: Member Brazier *(via teleconference)*, Member Gasca, Member Johnson, Member Marnett, Member McKesson, Member Nelson.

Also Present: General Manager Kennedy, Executive Assistant Washburn, Customer Service Representative Kilmer, Operations Manager Gutierrez, Project Manager Tamimi, Construction and Meters Supervisor Lagunas, Information Technology Manager Khattab.

Also Present Via Teleconference or Video Conference:

Alternate Largent, Engineering and CIP Program Manager Williams, Grant Specialist Kim, Project Manager Parra, Associate Engineer Powers, Risk Management Officer Esnard, Engineering Technician Rubio.

Three members of the public were 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. Nelson 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)**

There were no amendments to the agenda.

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

There were no public comments.

***8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
A. August 3, 2022

Motion:

To approve the minutes.

Action: Approve, Moved by Member Johnson, Seconded by Member Gasca.

Vote: Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote (summary: Ayes = 6).

Ayes: Member Brazier, Member Gasca, Member Johnson, Member Marnett, Member McKesson, Member Nelson.

9. GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

Mr. Kennedy announced RMWD recognized as the Innovative Project of the Year on a statewide level at the recent 2022 CSDA Annual Conference. Mr. Khattab shared the video that was presented.

Mr. Gasca stated it may be incumbent upon RMWD to find other heli-hydrant locations to achieve complete coverage of the District to satisfy the requirements for better ISO ratings. He recommended putting together a team made up of staff and Board Members to show a united front when dealing with the ISO rating agency to help the ratepayers protect themselves with affordable fire insurance. Mr. Kennedy noted he has had these discussions with the Fire Chief who would be the individual to reach out to the ISO.

Mr. Gasca reported RMWD's heli-hydrant was a main topic of conversation among attendees during the 2022 CSDA Annual Conference and how multiple agencies are very interested in getting these tanks installed in their areas. Mr. Gutierrez mentioned some of the local agencies who are actively pursuing the installation of heli-hydrants.

Mr. Marnett encouraged the District to do whatever it can to help reduce the cost of fire insurance.

10. ENGINEERING AND CIP PROGRAM MANAGER COMMENTS

Mr. Williams reminded the committee members who were interested in reviewing the Civil Engineering On-Call As-Needed proposals that were emailed on August 30 should do so before the deadline.

Mr. Williams pointed out due to the committee meeting currently scheduled for the month of December is on the Wednesday immediately following the Board meeting, staff will not have anything for the committee to discuss; therefore, the committee may want to consider either rescheduling or cancelling the December committee meeting as the date approaches.

Mr. Nelson and Ms. Johnson stated neither of them recalled receiving an email related to the as-needed proposal review. Ms. Washburn offered to investigate this matter and report back to the committee.

Discussion returned from Item #18.

It was clarified that the initial email with the proposals was accidentally sent to the incorrect distribution group on August 30th and that it was resent to the committee members while this meeting was in session.

Discussion returned to Item #18.

11. OPERATIONS MANAGER COMMENTS

Mr. Gutierrez provided an update on the recent unusual weather as well as the steps RMWD takes to address these types of conditions, including local fires, heatwaves, and power outages. Discussions ensued.

12. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Ms. Johnson thanked Mr. Williams for the recent RMWD facilities tour she attended with members of the other committees.

Mr. Gasca stated he needs to leave the meeting early today.

Mr. Nelson commented on a recent article related to options for the Colorado River and how it was a very good historical, current, and future oriented overview of the issues surrounding both the upper and lower basins of the Colorado River as well as the interaction of the two. Ms. Johnson asked for the article to be sent to the committee members.

13. BOARD ACTION UPDATES

Mr. Williams reported the Board adopted Resolution No. 22-23 certifying the PEIR, approved the Joint Agreement for the Citro Planning Area 5C, another omission of signature, the Change Order to Hoch Consulting for the Hutton Turner and Dentro Pump Station in the amount of \$299,061, and Amendment No. 3 to the Participation Agreement between RMWD and Tri Pointe Homes in the amount of \$80,000 bringing the total project cost to \$5,582,373.

Mr. Kennedy mentioned it cannot be overstated the importance of the PEIR approval. He stated the amount of work that will be reduced is hard to overestimate and how challenges are not anticipated.

14. RMWD GRANT RESEARCH AND COORDINATION PRESENTATION (FINANCE)

Mr. Nelson noted this item was deferred to today's meeting last month.

Amelia Kim mentioned she started at RMWD in March 2022 as the Grant Specialist as well as provided the committee with a summary of her background and experience. She stated she was currently identifying opportunities including competitive grants, formula grants, and government loans. She explained the competitive funding is awarded upon a comparative basis, formula grants are non-competitive grant that is awarded to pre-determined recipients and is usually calculated in terms of how much will be allocated to each, and government loans are issued for specific purposes that are required to be repaid often with interest. She noted RMWD was most interested in competitive and formula grants which sometimes can come in the form of a committed cost share. She pointed out when looking at applying for these grants, RMWD must make sure all prerequisites are met which she spends a great deal of time doing when assessing an opportunity.

Ms. Kim provided a demonstration of how the SharePoint site she created noting how it works in terms of communications between staff members, accessing information related to the current progress of grant applications, providing required grant documentation upon request, posting new opportunities for discussion or notification purposes, as well as tracking RMWD projects needing funding. She pointed out this site also allows for tracking which opportunities are either upcoming or recurring so that they are not missed.

Mr. Gasca inquired about the grant mentioned related to school water refill stations and whether RMWD would be collaborating with the school district. Mr. Kennedy stated staff meets with the superintendent each week at rotary meetings. Ms. Largent added these stations have been requested on numerous occasions from the local schools; therefore, funding opportunities were sought.

Ms. Kim continued with her presentation noting she prefers to keep everything on the same site for easier navigation and tracking purposes. Ms. Johnson asked if this site was available to staff members only or public members as well. Mr. Kennedy clarified it was for internal use only and how it has been a huge part of the efforts of getting a structure in place on which staff can continually build upon.

Discussion ensued regarding possible grant opportunities related to the San Luis Rey River basin study.

Mr. Nelson asked whether there were some generic types of opportunities available for which RMWD could apply. Ms. Kim explained RMWD would need to find a way to describe a project in a way it would fit into these types of opportunities which can sometimes be difficult. She provided an example of how RMWD recently made a project eligible for a generic grant opportunity.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Nelson inquired as to how Ms. Kim goes about conducting searches for opportunities relevant to RMWD. Ms. Kim stated a list is used to keep a track of all the organizations with which contact has been made or subscribed to as well as information received through networking.

Ms. Kim continued with the presentation reviewing the steps taken whenever a grant opportunity presents itself as well as those involved with application timelines.

Mr. Gasca noted some of the delays caused by funding delays could push a project for one fiscal year into another. Mr. Kennedy confirmed this was true.

Ms. Kim provided updates on the grants currently received by RMWD as well as ongoing opportunities. She pointed out there were quite a lot of opportunities for the Watersmart programs that lumped into one due to the Bureau of Reclamation continually releasing Watersmart programs as they are related to the bipartisan infrastructure law for which they are responsible for releasing funds.

Ms. Kim concluded the presentation noting she was hopeful funding will start to come in; however, due to wait times, these funds may not be received until 2023.

Mr. Gasca inquired as to RMWD's goal in terms of collecting grant funds. Mr. Kennedy stated barring the big projects, RMWD will most likely receive a steady stream of funding that can become part of the normal financing culture.

Mr. Gasca excused himself from the meeting at 4:48 p.m.

15. GIRD ROAD PRESENTATION (OPERATIONS/ENGINEERING)

Mr. Gutierrez gave a presentation updating the committee on the Gird Road project. He talked about what has transpired and why the direction of this project has shifted. He pointed out the most important discovery impacting the direction of the project was GIS stating it was a 12” pipe being replaced when it is 18”. He stated although it may never be determined how this incident occurred, it was important to note a major disaster was diverted due to the fact the work was being conducted by in-house staff. He pointed out how inadvertently the funds that were going to be expended on this project could now be reallocated to other portions of the wholesale water efficiency projects.

Mr. Nelson expressed concern as to whether this pipe was in good shape. Mr. Lagunas said it was in good shape based on the fact it has not had any leaks and how breaking concrete on good pipe was not a good idea as it may cause a leak. Mr. Nelson asked if 18” pipe has been ordered and readily available. It was confirmed it was already ordered and delivered to the District and there was 1,700 feet of pipe less to order for the Wilt Road project. Mr. Gutierrez noted the pipeline order for Wilt has been changed accordingly.

Mr. Gutierrez continued with the presentation as he explained how the two original two separate projects have shifted and what could be expected going forward.

Mr. Nelson stated he found the shifts to this project allows staff to achieve another objective such as pressure as well as more flexibility as to how RMWD will operate. He pointed out the savings of approximately \$600,000 being allocated to other work to be conducted was an added benefit.

Mr. Gutierrez noted the Wilt Road project was scheduled to start in early 2023 as well as mentioned the steps that need to be taken in preparation. He pointed out since this project will not start prior to January 2023, staff prepared a CIP list of projects that can be completed between now and the start of Wilt Road. Mr. Nelson inquired as to these other projects would meet the necessary requirements to qualify for funding under the Wholesale Water Efficiency projects. Mr. Kennedy answered not all of them. Discussion followed.

Mr. Gutierrez concluded with noting although the project did not proceed as planned, it has provided an opportunity to collect additional data in examining it further, including the return of investment in terms of adding staff. Mr. Kennedy pointed out another lesson learned was the benefit of potholing during the design process to assist in avoiding these types of anomalies.

Mr. Nelson asked when staff would start potholing on Wilt Road. Mr. Gutierrez stated most likely in early November depending on staff availability.

16. PROPOSED SCHEDULE FOR ALL COMMITTEE MEMBER SITE VISITS (OPERATIONS/ENGINEERING)

Mr. Nelson mentioned Director Moss has notified him that she would like to be advised of any scheduled site visits. Mr. Kennedy asked Mr. Williams and Mr. Gutierrez to create 2-3 different tour packages from which individuals can select the ones in which they would be most interested in attending and then work with Ms. Washburn to coordinate schedules accordingly.

Ms. Johnson stated she encourages RMWD's leadership staff to come up with different tours and make an announcement asking individuals to indicate their interest. Mr. Kennedy inquired as to how long she would prefer being allocated for each tour. Ms. Johnson said she only needs advance notice so she can plan accordingly, but she was unsure about other committee members.

Mr. McKesson recommended keeping the tour schedule in bite-size chunks with a half hour allotted on each end for arriving and departing tours. Mr. Nelson agreed the tours should be scheduled for the morning or afternoon, respectively. Mr. McKesson suggested including a Google Earth Virtual Tour available showing the layout of the District boundaries. Mr. Kennedy noted a previous staff member had created one of these approximately seven years ago that may be available to share with all three committees.

Ms. Johnson noted different committee members may have varied interests in what they would like to see or know when attending tours. Mr. Kennedy recommended breaking the tours into quadrants.

***17. AS-NEEDED SERVICES EXPENDITURES SUMMARY**

Mr. Nelson noted there were three more engagements on the list. Discussion ensued.

18. LIST OF SUGGESTED AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT SCHEDULED ENGINEERING AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

It was noted the tour schedule, as-needed Civil Engineering proposals, and a construction project update be on the next committee agenda.

Discussion went to Item #10.

19. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Nelson.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Flint Nelson, Committee Chairperson

Dawn M. Washburn, Board Secretary