

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE
COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE RAINBOW MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
DECEMBER 1, 2022**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – The Communications and Customer Service Committee Meeting of the Rainbow Municipal Water District on December 1, 2022, was called to order by Chairperson Shute at 3:33 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, Alternate Gray.

Also Present: Executive Assistant Washburn, Information Systems Specialist Espino.

Also Present Via Teleconference or Video Conference:

General Manager Kennedy.

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

5. **SEATING OF ALTERNATES**

Alternate Gray was 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 comments.

*8. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. November 3, 2022

Motion:

To approve the minutes.

Action: Approve, Moved by Member Hamilton, Seconded by Alternate Gray.

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

Ayes: Member Hamilton, Member Shute, Alternate Gray.

9. GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

There were no comments.

Mr. Hamilton mentioned there may be a change on the Board in Division 4 based on the preliminary election results.

Discussion returned from Item #12.

Mr. Kennedy mentioned he had just returned from attending the 2022 ACWA Fall Conference the past several days and apologized for being late to this meeting.

Discussion went returned to Item #11.

10. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Shute noted Jenene Milakovich was in present in the audience again today observing the committee meeting today. He thanked Ms. Milakovich for attending.

11. DETACHMENT UPDATE

Mr. Hamilton reported it has been relatively quiet since LAFCO issued their prospectus related to the detachment. He noted there should be a LAFCO meeting held in December and how there has been some discussions about an ad-hoc committee meeting be held prior to discuss the detachment matter prior to presenting something to the Commission. He stated it is available for members of the public to attend the December 5, 2022 LAFCO meeting in person or virtually.

Mr. Hamilton explained LAFCO stands for Local Agency Formation Commission, the services they provide, as well as the detachment matter for the audience.

Ms. Washburn pointed out should Mr. Kennedy join the meeting, this item may be revisited later in the meeting.

Discussion returned from Item #9.

Mr. Kennedy reported LAFCO released a prospectus document outlining some of their thoughts on applications, preliminary findings, and proposed solutions. He stated comments on the prospectus were due yesterday and how numerous comments were submitted, including a 37-page response from SDCWA. He pointed out one item on which everyone agrees is that LAFCO needs to get to the decision point on this matter due to no new information coming out.

Mr. Kennedy reported the one thing less desirable was the City of San Diego responded stating they oppose detachment because it may increase costs for their ratepayers. He said he finds this to be hypocritical for an agency whose roll off of pure water will cost RMWD's and FPUD's ratepayers a whole lot more than a detachment would cost theirs; however, this is something that will need to be discussed. He mentioned SDCWA has been controlled by the City of San Diego since its inception and because the City has ten times more voting power at SDCWA than RMWD, they generally get what they want. He explained although full support was not expected,

depending on what LAFCO proposes it may be beneficial to have additional discussions with the City in hopes of getting their opposition removed before their one vote on LAFCO is cast.

Mr. Kennedy pointed out the detachment matter may not be presented to the Commission for consideration until March 2023.

Mr. Kennedy expanded on how the pure water project may impact rates per Mr. Shute's request.

Discussion went to Item #13.

12. DISCUSSION REGARDING COMMUNICATIONS ANNUAL CALENDAR

Ms. Gray mentioned this item was brought forward by Ms. Largent in hopes the committee could review some of the articles that are provided in the newsletter on a regular basis and provide some feedback to staff as to whether these routine messages should be provided more or less frequently as well as if there are others that should be provided on an annual basis. She reviewed and summarized each of the routine articles provided in the handout.

Mr. Shute said he has heard about a program for which individuals can sign up to receive ten pepper trees for free on a first-come-first-served basis. He noted the program currently allows for people to sign up to receive free trees in 2024 as an incentive to plant super drought tolerant trees. He stated having a link to programs such as this in the District's newsletter as well on the website would be helpful.

Ms. Gray continued to review the list of routine articles.

Mr. Shute mentioned he attended the nursery exposition last month where someone spoke about free irrigation checks for those with a certain number of trees on their property. He said although it sounded as though it was a governmental program, it may be worthwhile to share information such as this as well as other programs that provide free products and services in the District newsletters and on the website. He said he would provide more details to Ms. Gray.

Discussion ensued regarding sharing information ratepayers may find beneficial such as "how to" guides, as well as any programs that provide free products and services.

Mr. Shute asked if RMWD has ever participated in a succulent give-away program. Ms. Gray stated she had planned on doing something like this using MWD's funding program; however, after being contact by an HOA requesting assistance, some of this funding will instead be utilized to assist the HOA with turf removal, plant purchases, and garden design. She pointed out this was not something she had to create due to the fact Otay and FPUD have put together a template packet from which she can reference. She stated she still has all the paperwork for putting together a succulent giveaway, as well as transform RMWD's front area into a demonstration garden. Mr. Shute recommended contacting the Master Gardeners organization to see if they may be willing to partner with RMWD with public communications as well as these types of projects.

Discussion ensued regarding sharing information ratepayers may find beneficial such as "how to" guides, as well as any programs that provide free products and services.

Mr. Hamilton expressed concern that RMWD's newsletter may not be vastly read since it comes with a monthly water bill. He asked what percentage of ratepayers have their emails on file with the District. Ms. Gray stated approximately 20%. Mr. Hamilton suggested at some point RMWD may want to investigate producing a parallel newsletter that is all electronic with live links for

distribution to the ratepayers as a means of giving broader usage. Mr. Shute recommended making it into a html email. Ms. Gray reported 10% of the ratepayers currently receive the newsletter via email. Mr. Hamilton recommended having more impact teasers or QR Codes in both the paper and electronic newsletters.

Ms. Gray stated staff was in hopes of receiving input from the committee in terms of expanding the list of annual newsletter topics. She also noted any assistance the committee members could provide in terms of writing articles or bringing topics of interest to her attention would be very helpful in assuring the communications being provided are of value.

Mr. Shute suggested this item come back to the committee in January.

Discussion ensued regarding possibly using interns to assist with District communications.

Discussion returned to Item #9.

13. COMMITTEE MEMBER RECRUITMENT UPDATE AND POSSIBLE APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS

Mr. Kennedy mentioned Bill Stewart has expressed interest in rejoining this committee should he not be re-elected to the Board. It was noted someone would follow up with Mr. Stewart as to whether he had an opportunity to share the write-up prepared by Mr. Shute with his HOA.

Mr. Shute explained to Ms. Milakovich the process for members of the public to be appointed to serve as a committee member. It was clarified that should Ms. Milakovich be interested in being appointed as a member of this committee, there was an item on the December 6, 2022 agenda for the Board to consider her appointment. Mr. Shute pointed out should the Board make the appointment on December 6, 2022, the next meeting would not be until January 2023.

Ms. Milakovich stated she was interested in serving on the committee.

Motion:

To recommend the Board appoint Jenene Milakovich as a member of the Communications and Customer Service Committee at their December 6, 2022 meeting.

Action: Approve, Moved by Member Hamilton, Seconded by Alternate Gray.

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

Ayes: Member Hamilton, Member Shute, Alternate Gray.

Mr. Shute stated he would follow up with Frank Becker to see if he is still interested in joining this committee.

14. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON

This item was deferred to January.

15. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATED MEDIA STORIES

Mr. Kennedy mentioned there was a recent article in the Village News about a reduction in RMWD's voting entitlement at SDCWA.

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

It was noted the communications annual calendar, appointment of committee chairperson and vice chairperson, updates on the HOA and submetering, RMWD headquarters being a field trip destination, and detachment, as well as newsletter enhancements, communication channel counts, and a 2023 event calendar should be on the next committee agenda.

17. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Shute.

The meeting adjourned at 4:38 p.m.

Bill Shute, Committee Chairperson

Dawn M. Washburn, Board Secretary