

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE
COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE RAINBOW MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
NOVEMBER 4, 2021**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – The Communications and Customer Service Committee Meeting of the Rainbow Municipal Water District on November 4, 2021, was called to order by Chairperson Shute at 3:30 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 Hamilton, Member Shute, Member Stewart, Member Vernon *(via video conference)*, Alternate Gray.

Also Present: General Manager Kennedy, Executive Assistant Washburn, Operations Manager Gutierrez, Information Technology Manager Khattab.

Also Present Via Teleconference or Video Conference:

Finance Manager Largent, Construction and Maintenance Supervisor Lagunas.

Two members of the public were present via teleconference or video teleconference.

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

The instructions were not read aloud due to no public attendees being present via teleconference or video conference.

Discussion returned from Item #7.

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

Discussion went to Item #7.

5. **SEATING OF ALTERNATES**

Ms. Gray was seated as an alternate.

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)**

It was realized public members were in attendance.

Discussion returned to Item #4.

Mr. Balben from SDCWA thanked the committee for the opportunity to speak, but he had no comments at this time.

Discussion went to Item #8.

***8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. October 7, 2021

Motion:

To approve the minutes as presented.

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

Vote: Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote (summary: Ayes = 4).

Ayes: Member Hamilton, Member Shute, Member Vernon, Alternate Gray.

Absent: Member Stewart.

Discussion went to Item #9.

9. GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

Mr. Kennedy announced a Board vacancy was created in Division 4 due to the recent resignation of Carl Rindfleisch. He talked about the steps taken notifying the public of the vacancy as well as that a Special Board has been scheduled for November 17th at which time the Board will consider appointing a director to this position.

Mr. Kennedy also reported the Rainbow Heights Pump Station has been delivered, was in the process of being hooked up, and will be operational by the end of December 2021.

Discussion went to Item #10.

10. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Hamilton announced Fallbrook Public Utilities District would be commissioning their Conjunctive Use Project on November 9, 2021.

Bill Stewart joined the meeting at 3:43 p.m. and Ms. Gray was unseated as the alternate.

Mr. Stewart reported he continues to hear positive remarks related to the excellent job staff has been doing while working on the Water Services Upgrade Project (WSUP) program. He noted this speaks very well in that RMWD staff is being of great service to the customers.

Mr. Shute shared his recent experience with a leak on his property brought to his attention via the Flume device. He stated RMWD staff was very responsive in investigating the matter and confirming the meter was operating correctly. He noted the leak was found at the root of one of his trees. Discussion followed.

Discussion went to Item #11.

11. WATER BOARD ARREARAGES PROGRAM UPDATE

Ms. Largent explained RMWD submitted its application which went through the first review process, after which the State notified the District that it was not allowed to include any exclusively agricultural customers. She stated upon receipt of this information, staff adjusted it down to excluding agricultural customers and golf courses. She noted 944 customers would be potentially receiving a credit and that the letter shared with the committee last month will be mailed once the funds are received. She pointed out those customers will be credited the amount received from the State and having any late fees they have incurred reversed. She concluded by noting RMWD was required to offer a payment plan for those customers who continue to have arrearages beyond the amount credit funded by the State.

Mr. Vernon inquired as to how many people RMWD provides services. Ms. Largent stated approximately 9,000. Mr. Hamilton asked if agricultural customers were included, how many customers would receive funds from the State. Ms. Largent said approximately 1,350. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Stewart asked if this was for water or sewer. Ms. Largent replied these funds were for water only at this time and that the sewer program will most likely become available in Spring 2022.

Mr. Shute asked whether RMWD would draft a different letter for those customers with balances remaining after receiving these funds or outstanding sewer charges. Mr. Kennedy stated once the State finalizes this program, staff will craft a letter accordingly. Mr. Shute recommended those customers receiving credit for past due water charges with unpaid sewer charges be encouraged to pay their sewer fees or enroll in a payment plan.

Ms. Largent noted the information related to unpaid sewer charges was not being released to customers until the State funds are received.

Discussion continued.

Discussion went to Item #12.

12. DROUGHT RESTRICTIONS UPDATE

Mr. Kennedy reported Metropolitan Water District (MWD) put out their drought alert and Governor Newsom extended the emergency proclamation for all counties throughout California placing RMWD under voluntary drought restrictions. He noted the RMWD Board of Directors activated RMWD's Level 1 of its Water Shortage Contingency Plan at their October 26th meeting.

Discussion went to Item #13.

13. EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION PROGRAM UPDATE

Ms. Gray stated per the recommendation at the last committee meeting, a message has been posted on the district website encouraging customers to submit their most current contact information. She noted staff will be training on additional call-back system features which will be promoted and published on the District website.

Mr. Stewart shared an experience from 2014 in which the emergency notification program worked effectively in assisting with the saving of homes and lives during an unexpected fire. Mr. Kennedy

mentioned he recently participated in a strategic planning session with Infor regarding how to better communicate with customers in a timely manner as well as in a way in which they are accustomed. Mr. Stewart noted RMWD and FPUD are the only agencies within the local area with the databases available to communicate emergency notifications; thus, it was vital to have something effective in place. Discussion continued.

Discussion went to Item #14.

14. ALL DEVELOPMENTS UPDATE

Ms. Largent reported current developments include Meadowood and Fairview and that any other developments are only conceptual at this time. She pointed out the recent rate study does not include any developments that are not absolute with the rates set accordingly.

Discussion went to Item #15.

15. WATER SERVICES UPGRADE PROJECT (WSUP) UPDATE

Mr. Gutierrez announced the project was 78% complete and proceeding well with approximately 1,897 meters replacements remaining. He confirmed the project was still on budget.

Ms. Largent pointed out the contract change as well as utilizing internal labor resulted in RMWD saving money which may be used for other projects.

Ms. Gray mentioned there were only four more routes to receive notifications and that portion of the project will conclude.

Discussion went to Item #16.

16. REDISTRICTING UPDATE

Mr. Kennedy provided a brief introduction to the redistricting process noting the Board will be taking this matter into consideration on December 7, 2021.

Mr. Khattab shared a presentation titled "Redistricting with Census Data" as he reviewed each of the steps taken in conducting the analysis. He noted RMWD was required by law to recalculate the population in each of its five divisions and redistrict every ten years. He explained the steps taken throughout the process as well as how staff had written a script for calculating the population in all the District's voting precincts. Discussion followed.

Mr. Shute inquired as to whether a water work group exists where best practices are shared or was RMWD's methodology was unique. Mr. Kennedy stated there is no hard and fast methodology that has been dictated by the state government in terms of rules and laws at how one arrives at this; therefore, his and Mr. Khattab's past employment experience has made it available for this work to be performed in-house as opposed to having to hire consultants.

Mr. Khattab continued with the presentation noting the guidelines followed in calculating the population while achieving all the necessary points such as not moving a Board Member's home from one division to another. Mr. Kennedy pointed out Division 4 includes the Citro Development and Division 1 contains what is expected to be the Ocean Breeze Estates.

Mr. Kennedy offered to have staff provide detailed maps to the committee members. Mr. Khattab confirmed he had copies readily available to share.

Mr. Vernon recommended utilizing different colors for Divisions 2 and 5 so they are less alike. Mr. Khattab explained the colors utilized in the presentation were selected for the purpose of sharing the presentation so it would be easier to see; however, when the updated map is finalized, it will be updated to include the same colors as the one currently published on the website.

Discussion went to Item #17.

17. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATED MEDIA STORIES

Ms. Gray mentioned she had posted the information for attending the upcoming Town Hall Meeting virtually on the RMWD website since it was not provided in either the postcard announcement or in The Village News article.

Mr. Shute inquired as to whether community events in which RMWD participates were going to take place in 2022. Ms. Gray said although there has not been anything solid, she is in contact with the Fallbrook Chamber regarding the Avocado Festival. Mr. Kennedy pointed out the Vintage Car Show will be relocated to the Potter Middle School in Fallbrook; however, a date has not been set. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Vernon inquired as to whether RMWD would have a water dispenser available at the Avocado Festival or Vintage Car Show. Ms. Gray said this and other items RMWD may like to offer at future community events should be considered by this committee in advance for preparation purposes.

Discussion went to Item #18.

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

It was noted updates on the Water Board Arrearages, drought restrictions, survey monkey, emergency notification analytics, and redistricting be included on the next committee agenda.

Discussion went to Item #19.

19. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Shute.

The meeting adjourned at 4:53 p.m.

Bill Shute, Committee Chairperson

Dawn M. Washburn, Board Secretary