

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE
COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE RAINBOW MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
NOVEMBER 3, 2022**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – The Communications and Customer Service Committee Meeting of the Rainbow Municipal Water District on November 3, 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, Alternate Gray.

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

Also Present Via Teleconference or Video Conference:

Human Resources Manager Harp.

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. 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. October 6, 2022

Ms. Gray noted the first sentence on Item #9 should be changed to “on there not being”. Ms. Washburn acknowledged this revision.

Motion:

To approve the minutes as revised.

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

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

Ayes: Member Hamilton, Member Shute, Alternate Gray.

9. GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

Mr. Kennedy provided an update on the LAFCO Special District Advisory Committee Meeting noting the framework of what detachment might look like in a document titled a prospectus. He explained the document generally outlines some of LAFCO's findings as well as their proposed conditions in a draft form which has been circulated for input.

Mr. Kennedy pointed out of the utmost important was LAFCO's determination that the water supply from Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD) is reliable. He mentioned LAFCO confirmed the ability to detach, but also made a statement regarding the County Water Authority Act and LAFCO law, a point on which RMWD and FPUD continue to disagree. He said LAFCO has promised to provide a rationale for their view on this matter which both RMWD and FPUD look forward to receiving.

Mr. Kennedy explained even though LAFCO received information regarding San Diego County Water Authority's (SDCWA's) concern related to their voting rights at Metropolitan Water District (MWD) changing from 17.5% to 17.25% should the detachment occur, when RMWD staff reviewed MWD's votes from the past ten years, they found only one would have been affected. He noted when LAFCO proposed a remedy in which the votes would be left with SDCWA for the first five years of detachment and then move them to MWD, RMWD and FPUD informed LAFCO this was illegal to which SDCWA agreed.

Mr. Kennedy talked about the nature of financial impacts and how it was found RMWD and FUPD would experience considerable savings totaling approximately \$10 million per year. He stated Dr. Hanemann also calculated the net revenue loss to SDCWA to be approximately \$12.8 million per year after taking away the revenue SDCWA would receive from collected taxes for which they have no basis to collect since none of their debt is on property taxes. He pointed out LAFCO offered what they believe to be a fair remedy which would be to mitigate the financial impact on all the other member agencies for a period of five years which would total \$64 million; however, should the detachment not take place, SDCWA would need to immediately begin construction on an estimated \$40 million pair of pump stations to serve as emergency water supply which LAFCO would agree to credit back. He mentioned additional information was provided to LAFCO in terms of additional savings SDCWA would experience in the event of detachment, including \$17 million in cash reserves that RMWD and FPUD helped to create, for which RMWD and FPUD would like to receive some credit applied.

Mr. Kennedy reported the suggestion for taking the detachment matter to a county-wide vote was off the table. He noted LAFCO has indicated they would be using the Class 20 CEQA Exemption as well as the matter was tentatively scheduled to go before the Commission the first week of February, 2023.

Mr. Shute asked whether this prospectus would be utilized in LAFCO's decision-making process. Mr. Kennedy clarified the prospectus was put out with feedback with a deadline to receive comments of November 30th after which time LAFCO will complete their final report to present to the Commission for consideration.

Mr. Shute asked what the timeline would be for this matter to go to a vote if the February 2023 deadline is met. Mr. Kennedy stated should the Commission approve the detachment, then LAFCO would need to identify how and when the matter will go to a vote which would most likely be in Summer 2023.

Ms. Gray inquired as to whether the two emergency pump stations mentioned earlier would only need to be purchased should RMWD and FPUD stay with SDCWA. Mr. Kennedy clarified if RMWD and FPUD have to stay, SDCWA would need to build two pump stations immediately, especially since RMWD and FPUD have paid for these since 1998 and are the only emergency pump stations SDCWA has not built. Discussion ensued.

Ms. Gray inquired as to where RMWD customers would be able to access all this type of information. Mr. Kennedy listed many resources available to the public. Ms. Gray offered to publish these resources on the RMWD's website page designated for detachment. Mr. Kennedy agreed this would be a good idea as well as cautioned RMWD was not allowed to advocate on this matter.

Discussion ensued.

10. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Shute noted there were two members of the public present in the audience today who may be interested in serving on this committee. Each of the committee and staff members introduced themselves to the members of the audience.

Mr. Shute gave a shout out to the staff members who coordinated the November 1, 2022 facilities tour noting he found it to be very informative. Mr. Becker seconded Mr. Shute's comments stating the tour was very well done, extremely professional, and very enjoyable.

Frank Becker introduced himself as a customer of RMWD for the past 28-29 years who has 15 acres and is interested in water. He said he has his own well; otherwise, he would not be able to support 1,700 organic lemon trees. He stated he understands some of the basics as to how water is moved up the hill, PSI, and such. He said after receiving communications from a member of his community regarding who may be interested in volunteering on the committee, he decided to attend today's meeting to see what happens although he is not sure what he can contribute. He mentioned prior to becoming a gentleman farmer, he was an entrepreneur involved in sales, real estate development, ran a financial service company, and now a citrus grower.

Ms. Gray told Mr. Becker based on what he has shared, she was sure he would have a great deal to contribute in terms of customer service and communications. Mr. Kennedy added one of the challenges the District encounters is trying to craft appropriate messaging for its customers which is made better with having valuable input from members of the committee.

Mr. Becker said he has always been impressed with RMWD and has always read the newsletters the District provides with its bills. He concluded with noting in his experience RMWD has always done a superb job.

Jenene Milakovich introduced herself to the committee noting she, too, received a communication regarding volunteers being sought for this committee. She said she has lived in the area for ten years and thought it would be interesting to see what was involved with serving on the committee and how to date she has found it to be interesting and informative, especially after participating in the recent facilities tour. She stated she looks forward to seeing what else there is to learn.

11. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON

This item was deferred to the December meeting.

12. COMMITTEE MEMBER RECRUITMENT UPDATE

Mr. Shute stated he has followed up with Director Stewart as to whether the write-up provided could be shared with the residents in the Pala Mesa area.

Mr. Kennedy mentioned he, too, has someone in mind who may be interested in volunteering to serve on this committee. He pointed out quite frequently customers want to understand something related to RMWD better at which time staff will mention there are opportunities to learn more by serving on any of RMWD's standing committees.

Mr. Shute inquired as to the mechanics for volunteers to be appointed to the committees. Ms. Washburn stated the first step would be to have interested public members attend a committee meeting to introduce themselves to everyone and vice versa as well as to observe what the committee does and how it operates. She said should a public member be interested in serving as a member following the observation, they would notify the committee Chairperson of their interest, and then an item would be placed on the next committee meeting agenda for a vote to formally recommend the Board make the appointments at the next available Board meeting. She explained following the official appointment by the Board, the new member(s) would be immediately seated as members of the committee to which they were appointed.

Ms. Washburn confirmed this committee would meet again on December 1st; therefore, if anyone is interested in being appointed to the committee, official appointment by the Board could take place at the December 6, 2022 Board meeting; otherwise, the appointment would need to wait until the Board meets again in January 2023. Mr. Kennedy recommended a placeholder be included on the December 6, 2022 agenda in the event a desire to serve is expressed at the December 1, 2022 committee meeting.

Mr. Kennedy talked about the requirement for committee members to file a Form 700 with the District. He explained the purpose of the Form 700 and what it entails. He offered to have Ms. Washburn email Mr. Becker and Ms. Milakovich a copy of the Form 700 for their reference.

Mr. Kennedy recommended the committee refrain from making a recommendation to the Board at this time since it was not on the agenda. Mr. Hamilton agreed having an item on the December 1st committee agenda would allow the public members to do their due diligence.

13. HOA AND SUBMETERING OUTREACH UPDATE

Ms. Gray recalled staff was working on creating a list so that staff can contact residents inside the HOA's as they do not currently receive bills directly from RMWD. She stated she was able to pull a large list of the HOA meters from RMWD's system which was delivered to Mr. Khattab who is currently working on matching the list with his database to be able to identify the customers with whom RMWD should start communicating directly.

Ms. Gray pointed out one of three different HOA's in the exact same area have requested she make a presentation to its residence related to some ways they could save water. She said she asked at that time if she could also encourage residents to sign up for RMWD's monthly newsletters.

Ms. Gray stated if staff cannot retrieve what it needs from the database, she will reach out to the all of the HOA's and their property managers to see if she can just enlist them in getting customers who are interested to provide RMWD with their contact information. Mr. Kennedy mentioned Mr. Khattab is ready with the database information upon request.

Mr. Hamilton explained for the members of the audience that RMWD was actively seeking a means of communicating directly with people who reside at submetered within their community but are not an actual ratepayer to the District. Ms. Gray added the types of communications would include shutdown or water outages notifications, public hearings, and any other communications that may better assist those residents.

Discussion ensued regarding whether water costs are passed on to residents by the HOA's as well as reaching submetered residents with Reverse 911 calls.

Ms. Milakovich inquired as to how RMWD would be able to track when the residents in these scenarios could be tracked since it is dynamic and changing continuously. Mr. Kennedy stated this was part of the process on which staff was actively working.

Mr. Shute asked if there were any costs associated with obtaining the information. Ms. Gray stated although it will not cost anything to get the information, there may be some costs associated with the distribution of communications; therefore, she may need to prepare a cost analysis.

14. RMWD HEADQUARTERS BECOMING FIELD TRIP DESTINATION FOR LOCAL SCHOOLS UPDATE

Ms. Gray stated after speaking with the Bonsall School District Superintendent, all of the principals within the area were enlisted to attend an hour run through of each department on November 1, 2022. She said she provided each attendee an agenda to share with them what each department does, what interaction RMWD would be able to provide, and the flexibility for each age group. She said following the visit, she has requested feedback and input be provided within the week so she could start coordinating tours.

Ms. Gray mentioned the group initially met in the Board Room to watch the RMWD history video as well as received a brief tour of some of the departments. She said at the conclusion of the tour, the group commented on how unbelievable it was that they knew nothing about what RMWD does and its many facets.

Mr. Shute inquired as to whether any of the principals shared any of their potential curriculums for any of the age groups. Ms. Gray replied they did not; however, she was able to share with them that she works with fourth graders on a water awareness contest every year as well as someone at Bonsall High School regarding the cost of water and water loss following which the students went home and relayed information to their parents. She stated they were very excited at working out how this can be fit into the curriculums and asked for a week to come up with a plan and start collaborating with the District.

Mr. Shute asked whether it would be helpful to share with the principals a strawman review of the stations. Ms. Gray explained she did share with them there are nine stations at RMWD to visit which would take approximately five minutes to move around between each. She noted everyone present understood the flexibility in that not all nine stations would need to be visited. She mentioned IT has a great hands-on presentation they would like to bring in as a component from which students can learn and participate in some interactive activities.

Mr. Shute said he was very pleased to receive this update and that due to the feedback expected within the next week, this item should be brought back to this committee next month.

Mr. Becker stated it goes without saying that to build awareness into a child's mind about water and what is involved at an early age is invaluable.

15. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATED MEDIA STORIES

Ms. Gray noted the article written in The Village News about the candidates running for election to the RMWD were very well written and how she encouraged others to read it.

Mr. Hamilton talked about an article where Bonsall Unified School District approved the lease on the Gird Road property. He also reiterated Ms. Gray's mentioning of the write-up in The Village News regarding the upcoming elections for RMWD Board Members in two divisions.

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

It was noted appointment of committee members, appointment of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, as well as updates on the committee member recruitment, HOA and submetering outreach, RMWD headquarters becoming a field trip destination for local schools, and the online bill pay and potential ways of getting higher rates of adoption should be on the next committee agenda.

17. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Shute.

The meeting adjourned at 4:41 p.m.

Bill Shute, Committee Chairperson

Dawn M. Washburn, Board Secretary