

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE
COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE RAINBOW MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
MAY 6, 2021**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – The Communications and Customer Service Committee Meeting of the Rainbow Municipal Water District on May 6, 2021 was called to order by Vice Chairperson Vernon at 3:30 p.m. in the Board Room of the District, 3707 Old Highway 395, Fallbrook, CA 92028. *(Due to COVID restrictions the meetings are being held virtually.)* Vice Chairperson Vernon presiding.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **ROLL CALL:**

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

Absent: Member Shute, Member Stewart.

Also Present: Information Systems Specialist Espino.

Also Present Via Teleconference or Video Conference:

General Manager Kennedy, Executive Assistant Washburn,
Finance Manager Largent.

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**

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

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 changes 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. April 1, 2021

Motion:

To approve the minutes.

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

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

Ayes: Member Hamilton, Member Vernon, Alternate Gray.

9. GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS AND UPDATE ON REOPENING THE RMWD HEADQUARTERS

Mr. Kennedy reported the Budget and Finance Committee will be reviewing a Cost of Service Study as well as the budget and how as part of that process may result in starting the Prop 218 process for a possible rate increase due to RMWD's detachment from SDCWA was still in progress. He stated should this happen the Communications and Customer Service committee may be called upon to assist with the communications portion of this process.

Mr. Kennedy noted since the vaccination rate has increased throughout San Diego, the District may be able to reopen once CalOSHA provides additional guidance.

Mr. Vernon recommended that any communications related to rate increases include a description of why the increases are necessary as well as what may be expected in the future. Discussion ensued.

10. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

There were no comments.

11. CALL VOLUME COMPARISON REVIEW

Ms. Largent shared a call volume comparison report showing the data for each month. She noted it has been helpful to have three customer service representatives as well as one staff member focused on billing issues to assist with reducing call volumes.

Mr. Hamilton recommended exploring having the ability for customers to leave a message as opposed to remaining on hold as well as possibly some type of message notifying the customers of the anticipated wait time.

12. DISCUSSION ON COMMUNICATIONS RELATED TO BACKFLOW TESTING ISSUE

Mr. Kennedy reported the Board discussed two primary issues regarding backflow testing for which some customers paid for but did not receive and others received the service for which they were not billed. He noted the Board decided to issue a one-time bill credit for those existing customers who paid for a service they did not receive.

Mr. Kennedy solicited the committee for input as to what information should be included in a letter to the customers. It was noted the law determining when a backflow device is required, testing is provided by the District or outside vendors, contact information to receive assistance should a customer no longer need a device, as well as a timeline during which a customer must notify the District should they no longer have a device so charges can be discontinued should be included in the communication.

13. CONDUCTING SURVEYS TO RECEIVE CUSTOMER FEEDBACK UPDATE

Mr. Kennedy explained the platform the District currently utilizes does not provide a function for conducting surveys. He said while conducting additional research, it was found most of the survey services are text-based. Discussion followed.

Ms. Gray recommended creating a survey monkey template that could be emailed to the customers soliciting for their feedback by asking a few key questions. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Kennedy noted staff will work on this and bring something back to the committee in June.

14. WATER SERVICE UPGRADE PROJECT (WSUP) PROGRAM UPDATE

Mr. Kennedy reported the program was 50% complete and the claims have remained very low. Ms. Gray shared what steps have been taken to improve the notification process.

15. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH ITEMS

- A. Topics
- B. Calendar
- C. Snipes Calendar
- D. Updates from Other Committees
- E. Customer Relations
- F. Monthly Newsletter Review
- G. Social Media Post Updates

Mr. Kennedy mentioned some of the new media activity taking place as a means of providing the public with information related to RMWD's possible detachment from SDCWA.

Mr. Vernon complimented Ms. Gray on the recent newsletter.

Ms. Gray provided a PSWAR program enrollment update.

16. REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF RMWD RELATED MEDIA STORIES

Mr. Kennedy mentioned his recent appearance on KUSI related to the possible detachment.

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

It was noted communications related to both the backflow testing and rate communications as well as a review of survey topics should be on the next committee agenda.

18. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Vice Chairperson Vernon.

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Russ Vernon, Committee Vice Chairperson

Dawn M. Washburn, Board Secretary