

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE
COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE RAINBOW MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
OCTOBER 3, 2019**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – The Communications and Customer Service Committee Meeting of the Rainbow Municipal Water District on October 3, 2019 was called to order by Vice Chairperson Shute at 3:30 p.m. in the Board Room of the District, 3707 Old Highway 395, Fallbrook, CA 92028. Vice President Shute, presiding.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **ROLL CALL:**

Present: Member Hamilton, Member Johnson (*arrived at 4:05 p.m.*), Member Stewart, Member Shute, Member Vernon.

Also Present: Alternate Gray, General Manager Kennedy, Executive Assistant Washburn, Customer Service Supervisor Rubio.

One member of the public was present.

4. **SEATING OF ALTERNATES**

There were no alternates seated for this meeting.

5. **ADDITIONS/DELETIONS/AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA (Government Code §54954.2)**

Mr. Kennedy requested the google analytics provided be discussed under Item #14.

Motion:

To approve the change to the agenda.

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

Vote: Motion carried by unanimous vote (summary: Ayes = 4, Absent = 1).

Ayes: Member Hamilton, Member Stewart, Member Shute, Member Vernon.

Absent: Member Johnson

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

There were no public comments.

7. **COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS**

There were no committee comments.

***8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. September 5, 2019

Mr. Shute pointed out “coorination” should be “coordination” in the last sentence on Page 6.

Motion:

To approve the minutes as amended.

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

Vote: Motion passed (summary: Ayes = 3, Noes = 0, Abstain = 1, Absent = 1).

Ayes: Member Hamilton, Member Shute, Member Vernon.

Abstain: Member Stewart.

Absent: Member Johnson

9. COORDINATION OF INFORMATION TO CUSTOMERS

Mr. Shute recalled this item was to address coordinating information with an outside agency to allow RMWD an opportunity to participate. Mr. Hamilton added it was also to discuss a generic plan for coordinating that information.

This item was tabled for discussion until Ms. Johnson was present.

Discussion went to Item #10.

Discussion returned from Item #10.

Mr. Stewart spoke about the commitment involved with improving customer relations and how pleased he was with this organization having a committee dedicated to making this happen. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Shute asked if RMWD has the capacity for its customers to opt into any type of group texting in the event communication needs to go out. Mr. Kennedy explained one challenge could be the timeframe in which the communication must be provided.

Mr. Vernon pointed out this item was tabled. Mr. Shute agreed to keep this item tabled with the addition of email blast communications to the discussion.

Discussion went to Item #11.

10. MISSION STATEMENT REVIEW

Mr. Shute referenced the proposed mission statement provided as he solicited for committee member input. Mr. Stewart and Mr. Hamilton expressed concern with customer service being implied but not specified.

Mr. Kennedy mentioned some of the concerns expressed by Board President Brazier included in the worksheet she provided at the Board meeting.

Mr. Shute suggested changing “partnering with the local community” with “partnering with District staff and the local community”. He also agreed to add customer service to this statement. Mr. Shute recommended new language for the mission statement.

Motion:

The mission statement read “To provide a cooperative platform for partnering with District staff and our local community to enhance customer service, educate and engage the public by listening, communicating, and mentoring through active dialog and real-world experiences” which will be reviewed at the next committee meeting.

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

Vote: Motion carried by unanimous vote (summary: Ayes = 4, Absent = 1).

Ayes: Member Hamilton, Member Stewart, Member Shute, Member Vernon.

Absent: Member Johnson

Discussion returned to Item #9.

11. WSUP EXTENDED NEWSLETTER ARTICLE REVIEW

Mr. Kennedy reported the separation has been completed and the District was ready to start working on the Water Service Upgrade Project starting with getting the information out to the customers in advance. He mentioned the article was previously reviewed by the committee; however, staff would welcome any minor edits.

Ms. Gray confirmed the article would be prepared for print and distribution tomorrow. She noted this newsletter article was reviewed by the then Committee Chairperson Kirby, Mr. Kennedy, as well as the committee members; however, it was delayed due to unforeseen circumstances.

Mr. Kennedy explained the additional messaging prepared. It was confirmed the messaging would not be filtered through this committee again since it has already been printed. Ms. Gray solicited for snipes to be included on the outside of the mailing envelope.

Mr. Stewart asked for clarification as to what the project entails. Mr. Kennedy stated it includes replacing all the old meters, replacing the AMR, installing customer-side ball valves for customers who do not have these, replacing meter boxes, as well as replacing all the pressure regulators. He noted these items were funded through the various financial instruments put in place last year that were postponed due to unforeseen circumstances. He pointed out the Board will need to approve the contract to use the same sub-contractor the previous prime contract had to complete the work which is expected to be presented to the Board for consideration at their October meeting.

Mr. Stewart suggested the snipe “18-Month Meter Upgrade Process Announcement” or “Water Meter Upgrade Announcement” to draw attention to the information contained inside the envelope.

Ms. Johnson joined the meeting at 4:05 p.m.

Mr. Vernon inquired as to whether a neighborhood notification with the estimated timeframe the project will take place would be provided on the RMWD website. Mr. Kennedy explained with RMWD having three different billing cycles, the replacement process will be bouncing around the various neighborhoods to avoid conducting any meter replacements within ten days of a read date. He pointed out the project team has all the routes laid out; however, there may be some variances to scheduling based on the pace of work in a particular neighborhood. Mr. Vernon clarified he would like the scheduling to be available on the website so he and others will know the estimated time they will be impacted by this project.

Ms. Gray explained the newsletter would be the first message to the customers to be followed up with postcards and area maps on the website.

Discussion ensued regarding the steps taken when the project originated.

12. STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVES

Ms. Johnson explained the committee wanted to review the objectives in more depth. She recommended the committee members be provided with a copy of the chart at next month's meeting for discussion purposes.

13. FLUME PROGRAM UPDATE

Ms. Gray requested some updated information on purchases, returns, installations, users, etc. from Flume which was presented in the handout provided. Discussion ensued.

14. 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
- H.** Google Analytics

Mr. Shute pointed out Item #14H was added as an amendment to the agenda. Mr. Kennedy noted the snapshot provided was taken nearing the end of the SDCWA Emergency Shutdown and how using this information as a metric, the postcard notifications proved to have been beneficial. Discussion followed.

Mr. Shute requested improvements to the bill pay system as well as feedback from the waived late fees from customers. Mr. Kennedy explained Ms. Rubio would be able to provide this information. Mr. Shute requested to have this matter on the next committee meeting agenda for discussion.

Mr. Vernon complimented staff on the recent newsletter.

Discussion went to Item #15.

15. REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF RMWD RELATED MEDIA STORIES

Mr. Hamilton mentioned articles with RMWD being featured in several editions of the local newspaper related to RMWD's possible detachment from SDCWA. He also pointed out there another Union Tribune article related to the San Diego Pure Water Project being delayed by court action.

Discussion went to Item #16.

16. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH EASTERN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT UPDATE

Mr. Kennedy reported RMWD has received previous direction regarding the process to be followed from both San Diego LAFCO and Riverside LAFCO. He stated although SDCWA contracted with legal counsel, letters were already sent to both LAFCO offices stating all of this should be done at San Diego County LAFCO. He explained MOU to be signed is very broad and how once signed Riverside LAFCO has no option to any type of approval nor do the Riverside County standards need to be applied. He stated the rationale was to prevent an applicant to focus on following the policies of San Diego LAFCO and then allow opportunity for Riverside LAFCO to cause confusion by not agreeing with those policies. He noted the other outcome may be to apply essentially the same applications with slight differences but the main discussion points basically identical after much coordination. He mentioned there was a meeting scheduled to meet with SDCWA's General Manager next Wednesday to discuss the matter without legal counsel which the parties greatly appreciated. He said it has been the goal all along to work with SDCWA to find a cooperative and mutually agreeable resolution to this matter without paying high legal costs.

Mr. Vernon expressed the importance of communicating this matter with the public in terms of how their bills may be impacted. Mr. Kennedy explained as a municipality, RMWD was governed by the California Fair Political Practices Commission; therefore, information (not advocacy) will be communicated.

Mr. Shute asked if there would be someone brought in to assist with the public relations portion of this project. Mr. Kennedy said although anxiety to get information to or from the public exists, the agencies involved want to respect the application process.

Ms. Johnson inquired as to the timeframe for negotiations to complete. Mr. Kennedy said it is thought once the upcoming meeting with SDCWA takes place, there will be a better indication of the time involved. He said although the law does not require this type of negotiation process, it would be the best economic decision on behalf of the customers.

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

It was noted the Mission Statement, bill pay improvements, customer feedback on the waived late fees, and strategic plan objectives will be on the next committee agenda.

18. ADJOURNMENT

Motion:

To adjourn.

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

Vote: Motion carried by unanimous vote (summary: Ayes = 5).

Ayes: Member Hamilton, Member Johnson, Member Stewart, Member Shute, Member Vernon.

The meeting adjourned at 4:57 p.m.

Julie Johnson, Committee Chairperson

Dawn M. Washburn, Board Secretary