

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of
the Board of Directors of the Aromas Water District
July 23, 2019**

- I. CALL TO ORDER.** The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Aromas Water District was called to order by President Smith on Tuesday, July 23, 2019 at 7.00 p.m. at the Aromas Community Grange located at 400 Rose Ave, Aromas, California.
- II. ROLL CALL.** President Smith, Vice President Holman and Directors Dutra, Leap and Norton were present. Also in attendance were General Manager Robert Johnson, Counsel Bob Bosso, Board Secretary Louise Coombes, Management Consultant Morris, plus staff Ester Girõn, Naomi Bowman, David DeAlba and Shaun Smith.
- III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** Director Holman led the pledge of allegiance.
- IV. STATEMENTS OF DISQUALIFICATION.** There were no disqualification statements.
- V. ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS.** There were no additions or deletions to the Agenda.
- VI. MINUTES.** The minutes of the June 25, 2019 Board Meeting were presented for review and approval; there were no corrections or comments. Vice President Holman moved for approval of the minutes and Director Norton seconded. Minutes were unanimously approved with all Directors present.
- VII. ORAL COMMUNICATION.** There were no public comments.

VIII. REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS

- A. Presentation of Ceremonial Resolutions commemorating the Aromas Water District's 60th Anniversary.** Erica Parker presented a Resolution on behalf of California Legislature Assembly Members Mark Stone and Robert Rivas. San Benito County Supervisor Anthony Bothelo presented a Proclamation honoring the 60th Anniversary.
- B. Director's Reports.** Director Norton reported on his recent meeting with the Resource Management Agency (RMA) Director for San Benito County (Supervisor Bothelo had arranged the meeting), including GM Johnson regarding the plans for both Carr Ave and Rocks Road bridges. Director Norton understood that the news appears favorable for the Aromas Water District but asked for further information. GM Johnson explained that, based on recent correspondence from the RMA Director; the Carr Ave bridge is a Measure G project whose scope is currently being developed. The Rocks Road bridge comes under the Federal Highway Bridge Program, so it will receive matched Federal funding. Preliminary engineering has a targeted construction date of March/April 2021. Initially, it seemed the District's water main would need to be moved to accommodate this bridge upgrade, costing the District considerable funds not covered by Federal reimbursement. Through the significant effort of the previous GM, Vicki Morris, County Supervisor Bothelo and the District Board Members, there is a new solution where the water main will not need to be moved or even disturbed. Director Norton personally thanked Supervisor Bothelo for his hard work, over the years, on the District's behalf.

Director Norton then reported on the Monterey County Special Districts Association (MCSDA) meeting that he and Director Leap just attended. The President of the MCSDA recently requested Special District members to write a letter of support for ACA1 Constitutional Amendment to change the approval vote count from two-thirds (66%) vote at the local level to 55 percent for both General Obligation bonds and special taxes. Director Norton inquired whether the District's policy provides the GM with authorization to write such a letter. GM Johnson would like to call a meeting of the Ad-Hoc Legislative Committee to discuss the ACA1 early next week.

GM Johnson also mentioned the insurance required to cover MCSDA meetings; he will be discussing this with ACWA JPIA before the end of July.

Director Leap added that he enjoyed attending the Monterey County Board of Supervisors meeting where, on behalf of the District, GM Johnson received a Resolution commemorating the District's 60th Anniversary.

- C. Attorney's Report.** Counsel Bosso reported that there are a number of cases that have not yet been decided. There may be new rate cases in the Fall.

D. Manager's Report

OPERATIONS

No new connections were established in June, so the total number of connections remains at 963. Meters are being upgraded as time allows. All water testing continues to be both, filed on time and represent satisfactory results.

Production & Well Levels

GM Johnson reported total production, in June 2019 was just under 10 million gallons, with a daily average of 332,640 gallons. The total production was almost an even split between the three wells. This calendar year to date, total production is 38,205,260 gallons with Carpenteria Well as the main producer. San Juan Well was not utilized for about 5 days of the month.

Reporting well levels; Both Carpenteria Well and San Juan Well levels have not changed despite a full month's production. However, the observation wells fluctuated; Marshall Well is up one foot and Aimee Meadows Well is down three feet.

MAINTENANCE

Incidents

There was a recent power outage, during a weekend, at Oakridge Booster which did not automatically restart, therefore Operations staff needed to come onsite and restart the booster after unsuccessful attempts from the online SCADA system.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Staff & Board Recognition

GM Johnson expressed heartfelt thanks to all office staff who have been working hard on the details for the 60th Anniversary celebrations, whilst still maintaining regular workloads. He edified the strength of the team to the Board.

GM Johnson also complimented the Operations Team in keeping the system running smoothly; quickly dealing with emergencies as they occur. Operator Smith is already doing on-call work as well and recently becoming qualified as a Backflow Technician; a significant achievement. GM Johnson, CO DeAlba and Operator Smith all recently attended an Advanced Water Treatment training class including a tour of the Monterey Pure Water Project.

Conservation & Rainfall

According to the rain gauge at Chittenden, since the beginning of the rain year, October 1, 2018 to date, a total of 25.48" has been recorded, with only one minor instance of rainfall during June.

Projects

Annexations Update

Further to the Eilert application being accepted by LAFCo on May 30, 2019 a meeting date for August 21, 2019 has been set.

Before the end of July 2019, the Cole Road application should be ready to be submitted to LAFCo, with the expectation that it will be added to their agenda around September or October.

Public Safety Power Shut Off (PSPS)

More on this subject in the Action Items.

E. Correspondence. GM Johnson drew the Board's attention to the correspondence with Utility Cost Management (UCM) which is a free consultancy service to save costs on power. They have worked with, and saved the District funds in the past, though, they could not provide any cost savings this time around.

GM Johnson explained the correspondence regarding the rebate to Oakridge / Via Del Sol customers who have paid their assessments in full; all received a small equalizing rebate as another customer paid off their assessment.

GM Johnson is planning to relocate the currently non-utilized CalNet T1 connection at Marshall Yard to the Blohm office, as this line would provide better internet speed and consistency at the office for greater efficiency.

GM Johnson reported that the issues surrounding the flow testing for the fire sprinkler design requirements were resolved and the successful test carried out with himself, CO DeAlba, and Operator Smith present. Calculations obtained from this test will be useful for future testing and analysis.

IX. ACTION ITEMS

A. Consider adopting Resolution 2019-08 for the approval of Proposed Rate Changes for the Aromas Water District

GM Johnson opened the Public Hearing. He then invited members of the public present to turn in any protest votes, explaining that the last opportunity to place a protest vote is up until the ballot count and closure of the public hearing later in this meeting.

GM Johnson explained the reasons why the rate increase was necessary during the next five years; to improve the current negative net equity position; meeting the Reserve Policy; meeting debt service and funding capital projects for planned replacement of aging District infrastructure to insure continuous supply and efficiency.

Tom Pavletic of Municipal Financial Services (MFS), gave a presentation to explain the calculations and considerations behind the new rate structure.

President Smith invited any members of the public present to approach the lectern and make comment for no longer than three minutes. Mr. Eric McLean, an Aromas resident for thirty eight years, summarized a letter he had previously sent in to the District, including an addendum provided at this meeting. He suggested that the presentation could include a comparison of the new proposed rates against if the rates stayed the same. Secondly, the information provided in the Proposition 218 document, only showed an example of the increase for the first of the five years, at the end of which a total increase of 34%. Mr. McLean explained that he has had industry experience of calculating maintenance, asset value over the years and material costs. He explained he has taken numerous measures to conserve water in his home. He suggested some alternatives to the proposed rate changes; only increase the rates in line with the cost of living; follow a similar program as PG&E namely CARE/FERA for which he provided additional information, to assist low and fixed income customers; maintain the current tiered rate levels, particularly for Tier 1, but Tiers 2 and 3 could be lowered to encourage water conservation.

Counsel Bosso pointed out that the PG&E CARE/FERA program, which operates under the California Public Utility Commission, permits such a program, however, Proposition 218 prohibits the District from charging customers different rates to subsidize other customer's usage.

Mr. Dan Blanchard, an Aromas resident for eight years, spoke next. He was concerned about water quality and displayed a picture of a new and used whole house carbon filter which he said demonstrated mineral accumulation over a sixty-day period, however, these filters should normally work well for a six-month period. He questioned if the Board would drink such water; Director Dutra indicated that he has a similar home filter, and went on to mention that the District has a well-controlled iron and manganese filter plant. Mr. Blanchard explained that he is carrying out independent water testing at Perry Labs. Mr. Blanchard explained that he has not seen recent test data from Aromas Water [".but maybe his wife has]. He desired the independent test to verify the accuracy of the data from the District. He then went on to explain the detrimental affect on his pet, which he attributes to the mineral content of the water. GM Johnson explained Aromas Water adheres to the State regulated testing cycles for potential contaminants, monthly for iron and manganese, which is tested by a

credible and long-standing laboratory. He went on to inform Mr. Blanchard that the 2018 Water Quality Consumer Confidence Report was distributed to all customers within the last month and is readily available on the District's website. He invited Mr. Blanchard to continue this discussion during District office hours.

President Smith then declared the Public Hearing Session closed. A public tally of the protest votes was then made by Board Secretary Coombes; a total of 10 complete votes and 3 incomplete votes were counted. Fifty percent of the customer base (481) plus 1, would be required to oppose the rate increase, therefore the proposed rate increase passes. President Smith then directed the Board to ratify the Proposition 218 process to adopt amended exhibits to Ordinance #72 and adopt Resolution 2019-08. Vice President Holman moved to adopt Resolution 2019-08, seconded by Director Leap.

Director Norton commented that during the last rate study, one of the goals was to build reserves for capital improvements and emergencies, especially in light of the fact that some of the infrastructure is at least 60 years old, however, the expected revenue during those years was circumvented due to the drought, resulting in the necessity for the current proposed increases in order to continue to provide good quality service. He indicated that one serious emergency would result in a detrimental affect on the District, potentially resulting in a loss of service. Director Dutra went on to expound the fact that if one of the District's wells became inoperable, it would cost at least of three-quarters of a million dollars to reestablish. The District still has active debt for some of the infrastructure currently in service. Main line life expectancy is around 40 years and much of the District's main line is over sixty years old; a major earthquake could result in a huge debt for the District. He encouraged the public to visit the office during open hours to discuss water quality issues.

A roll call vote was taken for the adoption of Resolution 2019-08 and amended Exhibits to Ordinance #72, which were unanimously adopted with all Directors present.

B. Consider Receiving an informational report on the Pacific Gas and Electric Company's Public Safety Power Shut-off (PSPS) program

GM Johnson presented a summary of the recent power management program from PG&E. There will be considerable notification of such events, however, efforts are underway to exempt the District from the PSPS program, on the basis that in the event of a fire, water will certainly be needed by the Fire Department. Simultaneously, a plan to remain operational should the exemption not be possible is being developed.

President Smith asked whether the Strategic Plan and Capital Expenditure should be amended to accommodate any emergency preparations. GM Johnson indicated that this may be a possibility, especially for a large generator, however the security of this generator may be an issue. An alternative would be for the District to obtain priority for the receipt of a rented industrial generator in the event of an emergency.

Director Norton expressed his appreciation for all the effort to provide the information for this report so quickly as we enter fire season. He mentioned that we have already built into the Capital Expenditure some funds to add solar power with battery backup to the office; the PSPS program seems to make this requirement more urgent. In addition, adding solar to the other wells becomes more pressing in order to continue service during an emergency.

Director Leap moved to receive the informational report as presented, seconded by Director Norton. The report was unanimously received with all Directors present.

C. Financial Reports for the Month of June 2019

On the **Balance Sheet**, *Total Assets / Liabilities & Equity* are \$11,671,417.27, of which *Total Current Assets* are \$4,505,608.72, and *Total Fixed Assets* are \$6,976,527.75. In *Liabilities*, the *Total Current Liabilities* are \$265,959.54, *Long Term Liabilities* are \$4,633,264.54.

The total revenue for June was \$145,613.03. Total expenditures were \$80,480.50 between June 20 and July 11, 2019.

In the **P&L Report**, *Water Revenue* for May was \$103,426.88 as compared to the budgeted \$130,000.00, possibly due to the late rains. The fiscal year to date columns show that water revenue is \$377.54 under the budget at the end of the fiscal year.

In the **Monthly Expenditures**. GM Johnson drew the Board's attention to the recent purchase of meters, plus closeouts of Final bills and bill adjustments.

Director Dutra moved to accept the Financial Reports as presented; seconded by Director Leap. The Financial Reports were unanimously accepted with all Directors present.

X. FUTURE MEETINGS & AGENDA ITEMS.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, August 27, 2019 at 7:00pm at the District Office; 388 Blohm Ave.

Agenda items will include quarterly Board training - 5:00pm start time for training session.


XI. ADJOURNMENT. President Smith adjourned the meeting at 8:47pm until Tuesday, August 27, 2019.

Read and approved by:



President, Richard Smith

Attest:



Board Secretary, Louise Coombes

Date: 8/27/19

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