

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of
the Board of Directors of the Aromas Water District
May 26, 2020**

- I. **CALL TO ORDER.** The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Aromas Water District was called to order by President Holman on Tuesday, May 26, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom online.
- II. **ROLL CALL.** President Holman, Vice President Leap and Directors Dutra, Norton and Smith were present. Also in attendance were General Manager Robert Johnson, Counsel Bob Bosso, Board Secretary Louise Coombes and Management Consultant Vicki Morris.
- III. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** President Holman led the pledge of allegiance.
- IV. **STATEMENTS OF DISQUALIFICATION.** There were no disqualification statements.
- V. **ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS.** There were no additions to, or deletions from, the Agenda.
- VI. **MINUTES.** The minutes of the April 28, 2020 Board Meeting were presented for review and approval; Director Norton moved for approval of the minutes and Director Leap seconded. Minutes were unanimously approved by roll-call vote with all Directors present.
- VII. **ORAL COMMUNICATION.** There were no public comments.

VIII. REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS

- A. **Director's Reports.** Director Norton attended virtual legislative days with the CSDA. There are many upcoming legislations that may affect the District, but COVID-19 has stalled their progress.
- B. **Attorney's Report.** Counsel Bosso reported few cases pending, however, two legislative items currently active are Prevailing Wage; the CSDA are providing a webinar in June which Counsel Bosso plans to attend, and the other is regarding AB 5 defining Independent Contractor employment status.
- C. **Manager's Report**

OPERATIONS

Production & Well Levels

GM Johnson reported total production in April 2020 was 6,340,214 gallons, with a daily average of 211,340 gallons per day. GM Johnson and President Holman expressed surprise that there has not been a larger increase considering the shelter-in-place order.

One new connection was established on May 14, so the total number of connections is now 965.

All water testing continues to be both, filed on time and represent satisfactory results. In April, the finished water from the treatment plant showed no trace of iron and manganese.

Reporting operational well levels for April; Carpenteria Well's level is down four feet; San Juan Well was down eight feet. Observational well levels: Marshall Well was down three feet; and Aimee Meadows Well which was down eight feet.

MAINTENANCE

Incidents

No incidents at the time of writing the General Manager's report.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Staff & Board Recognition

CSR Bowman and AC Girõn are working through the Billing process to incorporate changes due to the Governor's executive order regarding late or lack of payment and no shut-off. The amount not being collected is being monitored. Director Smith expressed an interest in seeing how this is affecting the District's financial situation.

AC Girõn has been preparing documentation for the annual Audit Interim Testing later this week.

ASO Coombes has completed the annual Water Quality Report (aka CCR) which is currently being printed and then will be distributed ahead of schedule.

CO DeAlba and Op Smith will be replacing broken or under-reporting meters as time allows now that meters are finally being delivered from the manufacturer.

The District has been issued FEMA face masks as part of the CalWARN program.

Conservation & Rainfall

Since October 1, 2019, a total of 16.4” of rainfall has been recorded up to May 26, with just over .25” of rain falling in May.

Projects

Carpenteria Well Rehabilitation

The start date is still set for June 8.

Ad-Hoc Personnel Committee Meeting

GM Johnson reported that this committee will be meeting to review and amend the employee handbook.

Technology Upgrade for SCADA – XiO Phase 3

The schedule to implement Phase 3 is still delayed due to COVID-19, plus the Electrician is currently unavailable for personal reasons.

D. Correspondence: Not much Correspondence this month and there were no questions from Directors.

IX. CONSENT CALENDAR

Resolutions 2020-06 & 2020-07

Two Resolutions were presented for Board adoption, regarding the Annual Tax Levies for both Assessment Districts.

Director Norton moved to approve the Consent Calendar Items as presented; seconded by Director Smith. There was no discussion and the Consent Calendar Items were unanimously adopted by roll-call vote with all Directors present.

X. ACTION ITEMS

A. XiO Water SCADA System Informational Report

SCADA systems have been used by water districts for 30 years. Since 2004 the District has used various SCADA consultants include TelStar \$96K (today \$122,250) for a smaller system than current; 2008-2010 CalCon \$41K (today \$50K) ; 2012-early 2019 Tesco \$55k (\$60,500).

Costs to date for XiO Water at \$49,200 plus \$3,400 (annual) for monitoring. The major differences are XiO equipment have minimal components, requires no maintenance and repairs are performed by replacing modules shipped to the District and installed with remote support. Their technological approach is so different that no programming is required by visiting consultants – this is done remotely; data loss is very minimal; cloud backup is much more reliable than a single PC at a District facility; continuous monitoring takes place by XiO staff in addition to direct alerts to our Operations staff.

Augmenting the current XiO system is part of the 2019 Rate Study prerequisites for approximately \$90,000. Three phases of the four have been purchased; Phase 1 (Rancho Larios – previously no telemetry) and Phase 2 (Pleasant Acres Well and Pine Tree Tank) have been installed so far. Phase 3 (Cole Tank, Carr Tank and Boosters) are purchased and soon to be installed. For Phase 4, parts of the system to be included are San Juan Well, Carpenteria Well, Rea Tank and Boosters, Oakridge Tank and Cole Boosters for approximately \$70K plus the installation cost of an Electrician and monthly communication costs.

Director Norton expressed concern regarding whether this new technology will be supported for a long period of time into the future. GM Johnson believes it will, based on his extensive research before presenting the original proposal to the Board.

Director Norton moved to accept the XiO Water SCADA System Informational Report as presented; seconded by Vice President Leap. There was no further discussion and the Report was unanimously adopted by roll-call vote with all Directors present.

B. Proposed New Fees for FY 2020-21

GM Johnson presented a proposal for a new fee of approximately \$50 to customers for the State required annual backflow testing which could generate around \$5,000 annual income for the District. This is a specialized testing for which the District Operations team have to be biennially certified with associated cost to the District. There are currently 91 backflow devices in the District system. The customer has the prerogative to employ a certified backflow tester to perform the test instead of the District Operations Team. These fees are not intended as punitive, but rather a fee for a specialized task. All other local Districts charge for this service.

In addition, a new fee for hydrant testing is proposed. For the last two years, about two hydrants tested per year have been requested. This involves considerable man hours and de-chlorination of released water.

Director Norton agreed with the hydrant testing fee, but not with the backflow device testing, primarily because performing this task accurately and well protects the Districts' system. Director Norton prefers that our staff perform this action so that the District stays in control of the process. He also expressed concern about the increase in administration of this task, on top of the recent increase in water rates adopted in July 2019.

President Holman expressed agreement with the new fee to be in alignment with current industry standards, which he feels will be no surprise to those customers. Director Leap felt that the fee is very reasonable, especially since this is an industry standard. Counsel Bosso commented that all the other Districts he has represented have always had the customers be responsible for the backflow testing from a list of Certified Backflow Prevention Technicians. Management Consultant Morris understands that other Districts charge, though having the customer pay could potentially create a customer relations issue since it has previously been performed for free.

Director Smith moved to adopt the New Fees as presented; seconded by Director Dutra. There was no further discussion and the New Fees were adopted by roll-call vote, as follows, with all Directors present.

AYES: Directors Dutra, Holman, Leap, Smith. NOES: Director Norton

C. Financial Reports for the Month of April 2020

On the **Balance Sheet**, *Total Assets / Liabilities & Equity* are \$11,645,349.02, of which *Total Current Assets* are \$4,475,496.18, and *Total Fixed Assets* are \$6,505,483.84. In *Liabilities*, the *Total Current Liabilities* are \$245,266.59 and *Long-Term Liabilities* are \$4,309,299.04.

In the **P&L Report**, *Water Revenue* for April was \$82,212.28. The total revenue for April was \$158,451.98, often below budget on expenditures. Total expenditures were \$141,806.72 between April 22 and May 19, 2020, which include the biannual solar loan payment.

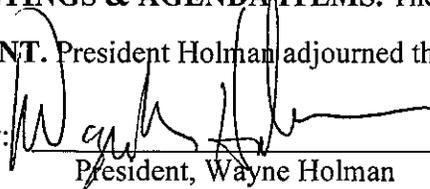
Director Smith moved to accept the Financial Reports as presented; seconded by Vice President Leap. The Financial Reports were unanimously approved by roll-call vote with all Directors present.

X. ADJOURN TO CLOSED SESSION. At 8:25pm the Board adjourned to Closed Session to conduct the GM Performance Evaluation as permitted by Government Code §54956.9.

XII. RETURN TO OPEN SESSION. At 8:50pm President Holman attempted to return to the Board's open session; unfortunately, the Zoom meeting connection was lost.

XIII. FUTURE MEETINGS & AGENDA ITEMS. The next meeting will be on Tuesday June 23, 2020.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT. President Holman adjourned the meeting at 8:55pm until Tuesday, June 23, 2020.

Read and approved by: 
President, Wayne Holman

Attest: 
Board Secretary, Louise Coombes

Date: 23 June 2020

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