

**Minutes of the Regular Meeting of  
the Aromas Water District Board of Directors  
June 22, 2021**

- I. CALL TO ORDER.** The regular meeting of the Aromas Water District Board of Directors was called to order by President Leap on Tuesday, June 22, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. online via Zoom.
- II ROLL CALL.** President Leap, Vice President Morris and Directors Dutra, Holman and Smith were present. Also in attendance were General Manager Johnson, Counsel Bosso and Board Secretary Coombes.
- III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** President Leap 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 May 25, 2021 Board Meeting were presented for review and approval. Director Smith moved for approval of the minutes as presented; Vice President Morris 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 Report(s).** President Leap expressed his appreciation for the work of the Ad-Hoc Budget Committee. President Leap also created the Ad-Hoc Infrastructure and Financing Committee made up of Vice President Morris and Director Smith.
- B. Attorney's Report.** Counsel Bosso mentioned pending legislation regarding Federal funds allocated to counties which may or may not be distributed to local special districts.
- C. Manager's Report**

***OPERATIONS***

***Production & Well Levels***

GM Johnson reported total production in May 2021 was 10,680,580 gallons, with a daily average of 344,535 gallons; just over an acre foot. The stacked graph demonstrates that the amount of water pumped in May alone represents 30% of the annual total so far.

There are a currently 967 meters connected. All water testing continues to be both filed on time and represent satisfactory results.

Reporting on well levels; Carpenteria Well is down one foot and San Juan Well is down three feet. The observational level for Marshall Well is down two feet and Aimee Meadows Well is down five feet.

***MAINTENANCE***

Preventative maintenance of chlorine chemical pump and analyzer, as well as the Generac generator monthly fifteen minutes load test continues.

***INCIDENTS***

There were none at the time of writing the General Manager's report, however, between then and this Board meeting a leak in the main line on Rea Avenue occurred; this will be detailed in the next Manager's Report.

***ADMINISTRATIVE***

***Staff & Board Recognition***

CSR Bowman, ASO Coombes, WUSp Giron and GM Johnson have worked on office procedures in preparation for reopening the District office beginning June 16, 2021.

ASO Coombes emailed the annual Water Quality Report (CCR) to around two-thirds of our customers via email and a week later the remainder was sent via mail.

Operator Smith has been working hard to maintain the District's system in the absence of CO DeAlba, greatly enhancing his knowledge and understanding of the water system. CO DeAlba has returned to full duties and Op Sanchez will continue to support the District during CO DeAlba's recovery.

GM Johnson is reviewing a scope of work for MNS Engineering to perform a GPS survey of our facility assets to eliminate discrepancies in recorded versus observed elevations.

### ***Conservation & Rainfall***

Since the beginning of the new rainfall year on October 1, 2020, and up to June 16, 2021, there has been a total of 9.44" to the date of this meeting, with no rainfall in May.

### ***Projects***

#### **Response to COVID-19 Virus**

GM Johnson continues to monitor the changing pandemic regulations; the office opened to the public on June 16, 2021 and a further report was given in the Action Items of this meeting.

#### **Technology Upgrade - SCADA**

GM Johnson reported that the District's XiO website has been undergoing some updates since the new portions have been added, with special attention to the direction of water flow. GM Johnson plans to provide a short demonstration of this to the Board when it is complete.

#### **Orchard Hill Road Proposed Annexation**

GM Johnson will soon be reviewing the technical memorandum from MNS, indicating the costs and magnitude of the project involved. This will likely arrive in August and GM Johnson will subsequently present this to the Board prior to presentation to the Orchard Hill property owners.

#### **Cole Road Outreach for Annexation**

Will be discussed in greater detail in the Action Items of this meeting.

#### **New Water Source**

GM Johnson has been in touch with Granite Rock; they are collecting data from their well and have invited the District Operators to come and take a sample. Once GM Johnson has reviewed the data, including physical characteristics of their well, the sample will be taken.

**Correspondence:** GM Johnson pointed out one or two more Cole Road outreach responses have arrived, along with another parcel on Chateau Road requesting annexation for connection.

Significantly, the moratorium on water shut offs, due to non-payment has been extended from July 15 to September 30, 2021. This is discussed further in the first of the Action Items of this meeting.

## **IX. ACTION ITEMS**

### **A. Consider receiving a report regarding the progress on the Late Fee Collection Process**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, although a moratorium had been placed on shutting off a customer's water due to non-payment, there was no moratorium on the accrual or collection of late fees, but to assist our customers, late fees were held off until December 2020, when the Board directed staff to resume the collection of late fees.

After setting parameters to avoid unnecessary penalization of those who had only missed two to three payments, or owed less than \$150, a series of letters were sent to each of around thirty customers, offering payment plans. Around sixty percent of recipients agreed to a payment plan with waived late fees. The remainder, who had not contacted the office and therefore not established a payment plan, were provided one last opportunity to establish a payment plan prior to further action by the District. To the date of this meeting, only one customer has not been in contact with the office or made any payments; Staff will continue to reach out to this customer through a variety of means. Late fees will be resumed as was normal pre-pandemic.

No motion was necessary, however, there was a consensus, by all Directors, to receive the report. Director Holman commented that this process had been well done.

**B. Consider receiving a report on the Cole Road Outreach Project**

Since the District has recently received so many requests to be annexed and connected from parcel owners along Cole Road, the Board had directed staff to perform an outreach exercise to all parcel owners to potentially perform a multi-parcel annexation in one action. The parcel owners were contacted in April and provided with a questionnaire. In all, 26 questionnaires were sent out; of those eight parcel owners are interested; eight were definitely not interested, however two were anonymous; the remaining 10 gave no response. An additional parcel was requested to be considered; it is owned by one of the Cole Road parcel owners, located at the end of Seely Avenue, but adjacent to the Cole Road parcel. In fact, there is an easement across this parcel for District infrastructure.

Director Dutra enquired about the cost to annex all the Cole Road parcels; GM Johnson responded if he is directed to move forward, he would provide this information at the next meeting. VP Morris agreed, furthermore, mentioning that cost to the District can be prorated for each parcel and recompensed when those parcel owners become customers. Director Smith feels that parcel owners may be more interested when they know more about the costs. VP Morris mentioned that, in the past, the owners of the three large and contiguous properties on the west side of Cole Road requested annexation to subdivide. Counsel Bosso remembers this occurring on multiple occasions but suggests that the District cannot make the annexation conditional and a subdivision is usually five or more parcels. Director Holman pointed out that it is not the decision of the District, but rather PVWMA and/or LAFCo, and Counsel Bosso concurred.

GM Johnson reminded the Board that most of the connections along Cole Road so far have been granted based on health and safety to only supply the existing dwelling with water.

President Leap suggested contacting all the owners, who gave a negative response, again to illustrate that it is to the owners advantage to be annexed for a future connection. Counsel Bosso asked if the parcel owners who either did not respond or, responded negatively may have sufficient voting ability (based on property value/acreage) to oppose this multi-parcel annexation. Counsel Bosso suggested that people may have the misconception that the cost of this process will be added to their property taxes and are therefore resistant on that basis.

GM Johnson was directed to contact LAFCo to establish the cost estimate for the multi-parcel annexation.

Director Dutra made a motion to establish the cost estimate for the acreage and to find out more about the protestation ability of the parcel owners. The motion was seconded by Vice President Morris. The action was unanimously approved by roll-call vote with all Directors present.

**C. Consider receiving a report on the reopening of the District office**

GM Johnson presented the reopening strategy of the District office. A number of items of furniture have been rearranged to provide distance between customers and staff and clear acrylic screens on the two desks in the outer office. Requests have begun to be made to start using the District conference room by external groups; GM Johnson invited discussion from the Board. Director Smith reminded the Board that prior to the pandemic, some minor damage had occurred in the conference room, so this provides a good opportunity to start afresh with new guidelines to mitigate such issues. GM Johnson pointed out such issues as cleanliness of the room pre and post external meetings with potential associated costs and concerns for staff safety. Director Dutra broached his thoughts that the groups coming into the office are small and local as opposed to locations such as supermarkets and restaurants and therefore strongly feels the room should be opened up again, perhaps with the option of paying for a cleaning service for each visit. Vice President Morris reminded the Board that most of these small, local groups are providing a community service and cannot afford to pay for a cleaning service.

A motion was made by Vice President Morris to reopen the conference room to the District Board from the July meeting onwards but wait until after the end of September for external groups, seconded by Director Dutra. The action was unanimously approved by roll-call vote with all Directors present.

**D. Financial Reports for the Month of May 2021**

On the Balance Sheet, Total Assets / Liabilities & Equity are \$10,976,000.72, of which Total Current Assets are \$4,689,141.24, and Total Fixed Assets are \$6,145,920.48. In Liabilities, the Total Current Liabilities are \$120,414.39 and Total Liabilities are \$4,413,129.23.

In the P&L Report, Water Revenue for May was \$122,310.20. Total Expenditures were \$77,875.64 between May 19 through June 15, 2021.


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


**X. FUTURE MEETINGS & AGENDA ITEMS.** The next meeting will be on Tuesday, July 27, 2021.

The next meeting will be the first in-person meeting since the pandemic began. Topics will include an update on water samples from local wells; the GPS engineering survey; the Orchard Hill project; an indication of the LAFCo costs for the multiple annexations along Cole Road as well as the Martinez annexation Resolution with a Categorical Exemption.

Dates were to be arranged, by GM Johnson, for the Ad-Hoc Committee meeting for Infrastructure and Financing of the new water source with Director Smith, Vice President Morris and GM Johnson.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT.** President Leap adjourned the meeting at 8:38pm until Tuesday, July 27, 2021.

Read and approved by:   
President, Jim Leap

Attest:   
Board Secretary, Louise Coombes

Date: 8-2-2021

Date: August 2, 2021