

**MINUTES  
ENGINEERING AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING  
OF THE RAINBOW MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT  
FEBRUARY 7, 2024**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – The Engineering and Operations Committee Meeting of the Rainbow Municipal Water District on February 7, 2024, was called to order by Chairperson Nelson at 3:30 p.m. in the Board Room of the District, 3707 Old Highway 395, Fallbrook, CA 92028. Chairperson Nelson, presiding.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **ROLL CALL:**

**Present:** Member Marnett, Member McKesson, Member Nelson

**Also Present:** General Manager Wiley, Operations Manager Gutierrez, District Secretary Quintanar, Construction and Meters Supervisor Lagunas, Information Technology Manager Khattab, Engineering and CIP Program Manager Williams, Finance Manager/CFO Aragon

**Also Present Via Teleconference or Video Conference:**

Director Johnson, Senior Project Manager Tamimi, Senior Project Manager Parra, Administrative Analyst Barrow, Administrative Assistant Montano

Two members of the public, Cari Dale and Mig Gasca were present via teleconference or video conference.

4. **INSTRUCTIONS TO ALLOW PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS FROM THOSE ATTENDING THIS MEETING VIA TELECONFERENCE OR VIDEO CONFERENCE**

Chairperson Nelson read the participation information aloud.

5. **SEATING OF ALTERNATES**

No alternates were seated.

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

There were no amendments 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. November 1, 2023

***Motion:***

***To approve the minutes.***

***Action: Approve, Moved by Member Marnett, Seconded by Member McKesson.***

***Vote: Motion carried by unanimous vote (summary: Ayes = 3)***

***Ayes: Member McKesson, Member Nelson, Member Marnett***

9. GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

Mr. Wiley introduced the District's Finance Manager/CFO, Rick Aragon, and reported that in December, Dupont and 3M reached a settlement agreement concerning Polyfluorinated Substances (PFAS). The settlements were based on flow rates and concentration per source, and across the industry, the settlement amount fell short of costs related to the treatment of PFAS. Many agencies are opting into the agreement for the funds. If an agency opts out, it retains its rights in the future to pursue funds for damages. We have no PFAS detected in our imported water, so RMWD opted out in December. Mr. Wiley explained what PFAS are and provided some background on the UCMR5 Mandate that requires water districts to test. The data from the testing is being published now, and the testing technology has become much more accurate. A map is available of the sources affected by PFAS and it is widespread. There are some fairly expensive treatments. The final MCLs have not been set but it's been proposed that 4 parts per trillion (ppt) would be the level agencies would have to meet. Many agencies are taking sources offline where PFAS is detected.

He continued to report about the detachment from the San Diego County Water Authority (SDCWA). There are two main activities that now have to take place. One is the construction of two southern pump stations, which has begun. Staff is also working on an Operations Plan, as defined in the Settlement Agreement, establishing the details of the transfer of facilities and other technical details. We will have a draft of the Plan this month. There will be two aqueduct connections from the MWD pipelines. Aqueduct 1 is a little more challenging.

He announced a vacancy in Division 3 of the RMWD Board following the resignation of Mig Gasca. He explained the appointment process to date and that two of the seven interviewed candidates, Lisa Herman and Cari Dale, will attend the February 27, 2024, Board Meeting for the continuation of the interview process and formal Board appointment.

He also reported on plans for joint committee and Board workshops, starting in March. We will focus on the five-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and the Engineering and Operations and Budget and Finance Committees will both participate. Over the next few months, we'll be talking about costs, CIP needs, reserve targets, and more.

Recent storms have been good for water supply throughout the state and in Colorado. At this point, we are at about 75 percent of normal in the Sierras or 50% of the April average. The Colorado side is about 90 percent of normal and reservoirs are at above-average levels. The State Water Project allocation will likely increase. However, MWD has experienced a loss in sales revenue. Their bi-annual budget estimate includes significant rate increases of 13 percent on January 1, 2025, and an 8 percent increase in 2026.

Mr. Gasca asked what MWD's increase would be to RMWD customers, now that we have detached from the SDCWA. Mr. Wiley answered that we are uncertain of the impact, but do know it will affect the wholesale costs.

Mr. Nelson stated that we've seen a trend of declines in water consumption, asked if MWD has done all they can to reduce costs to the delivery of service, and opined that when demand is falling, supply needs to adjust. Mr. Wiley answered that there was a lot of discussion of this the last time we saw an increase. This time, it appears they have made cuts, but they charge volumetrically but their fixed costs are the challenge. MWD is in the process of reviewing its rate structure. Discussion ensued regarding the balance of revenues and supply.

## **10. ENGINEERING AND CIP PROGRAM MANAGER COMMENTS**

Mr. Williams reported that a status update of CIP projects will be provided to the Committee shortly. Staff is currently working on a five-year plan.

## **11. OPERATIONS MANAGER COMMENTS**

Mr. Gutierrez reported that due to the rain received last week, staff started hauling sewage to Oceanside. Staff has been working long hours to man pump stations and controls of the sewer lift station, and we have experienced two water main breaks as well. There was also a tree down, temporarily impeding staff's access to a facility. Mr. Gutierrez explained general tasks performed by staff and some specific instances being handled by staff.

Mr. Nelson referenced the manhole covers the District previously invested in. Mr. Gutierrez responded that those are holding up and we also have rain pans that capture the rainwater to keep it from infiltrating manholes. He explained additional equipment and efforts to track extra flows. Once the Thoroughbred Lane Lift Station is complete, it will alleviate the issue, but the staff also have routine tasks that will continue.

Mr. Gasca asked for an update on the meter repairs. Mr. Wiley reported that there have been a few discussions lately at the Budget and Finance Committee and Board meetings, and staff has been active in repairs. Much of that was done last year and there are not as many problematic meters as we thought. 600 Meter registers have been replaced and more are on order. However, as we complete repairs and normal usage is returned, the

policy allows the District to back bill three months for malfunctioning meters. Staff is confirming and reaching out to customers to make payment arrangements. Going forward, staff is reviewing where meter capacity is being exceeded and how to address the issue, which is complex. The goal is to be equitable to all customers. Staff plans to have a solution to present in the next couple of months. Mr. Gutierrez provided additional details about the meter issues and answered questions about the impact of recent rains on the sewer system and the status of the Thoroughbred Pump Station.

Mr. Nelson expressed satisfaction with the thought and planning to find an equitable and legal solution.

## 12. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

There were no comments.

## 13. BOARD ACTION UPDATES

Mr. Williams reported that on January 23, 2024, the Board of Directors approved an agreement for construction management services with Valley Construction for the Pump station project, and approved a Notice of Completion and Acceptance of minor facilities constructed by customers. An update was also provided to the Board about the headquarters building and the reinvigorating of the ad hoc committee. Mr. Wiley explained that the Sheriff's department does not want to move ahead with shared facilities with the District and that we've had damages to our headquarters building and need to determine a plan for rehabilitation or construction of a new building.

## 14. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRPERSON AND VICE CHAIRPERSON

Mr. Nelson and Mr. McKesson were appointed Chair and Vice Chair on February 1, 2023. Mr. Mig Gasca has relayed interest in being appointed to this Committee, and a Board Member will also be appointed.

***Motion:***

***To maintain the existing committee assignments, of Mr. Nelson as Chair and Mr. McKesson as Vice Chair.***

***Action: Approve, Moved by Member McKesson, Seconded by Member Marnett.***

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

***Ayes: Member McKesson, Member Nelson, Member Marnett***

Chairman Nelson asked Rick Aragon to serve as the alternate.

***Motion:***

***To appoint Rick Aragon as the Alternate.***

***Action: Moved by Member Nelson, Seconded by Member McKesson.***

***Vote: Motion carried by unanimous vote (summary: Ayes = 3).  
Ayes: Member McKesson, Member Nelson, Member Marnett***

**\*15. AS-NEEDED SERVICES EXPENDITURES SUMMARY**

There were no new updates.

**16. CIP UPDATE PRESENTATION**

Mr. Williams provided a presentation, reporting that the Fiscal Year 2023/24 approved budget summary includes \$3.2M for ten potable projects, \$5M for one wastewater project, and \$6M budgeted for one wholesale water efficiency project.

He named District-wide projects underway, and that staff is recommending a mid-year budget adjustment for the San Luis Rey Imported Return Flow project. Mr. Williams presented a map indicating project locations and provided status updates. He also provided a five-year Water, Wastewater, and Wholesale Water Efficiency CIP listing, a list of completed projects and 2023/24 ongoing projects, and an update on the Water System Monitoring Program.

Mr. Nelson asked if Hazzard Construction sought additional time for their project from RMWD and the County. Mr. Wiley confirmed that was not the case.

Mr. Williams continued to report that the Camino Del Ray Waterline Relocation Project will be County-funded. RMWD's portion of the Live Oak Road Bridge Replacement Project will be done in the next six weeks. The Magee and Huntley-Gomez Emergency Generators project is 85 percent complete, and the Electrical Panel Switches Project is 20 percent complete, with three more sites to go. Staff proposes to bundle the remaining work into one project. The Gird to West Lilac Pipeline relocation project will require additional studies. The District Headquarters emergency roof repair is 60 percent complete and staff is recommending a mid-year budget adjustment of \$150,000. Mr. Williams also reported on projects being postponed and ongoing projects, by division.

West Lilac, Rancho Amigos, and Dentro De Lonas pump station project has begun, and the contract has been incentivized for early completion. The Thoroughbred Lane Lift Station is 85 percent complete, and work is ongoing.

The new or rehabilitated District Headquarters will be addressed by an ad hoc committee and conceptual studies and other studies will be available for the committee to reference.

The Tank Maintenance and Fall Protection is ongoing, and some security cages were added to some tanks. USG Water is performing the work.

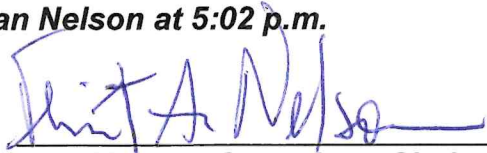
Regarding the Morrow Tank, we've partnered with Atlas Geotech to continue monitoring and will have more data at the end of this year.

**17. LIST OF SUGGESTED AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT SCHEDULED ENGINEERING AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**

The next meeting will be a joint Board Meeting in March, and the five-year Capital Improvement Projects will be discussed at that time.

**18. ADJOURNMENT**

*The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Nelson at 5:02 p.m.*



**Flint Nelson, Committee Chairperson**



**Terese Quintanar, District Secretary**