

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE
COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE RAINBOW MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
JUNE 18, 2024**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – The Communications and Customer Service Committee Meeting of the Rainbow Municipal Water District on June 18, 2024, was called to order by Chairperson Shute at 1:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the District, 3707 Old Highway 395, Fallbrook, CA 92028. Chairperson Shute presiding.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **ROLL CALL:** Member Shute, Member Stewart, Member Hamilton, and Member Kozak

Also Present: General Manager Wiley, Information Technology Manager Khattab, Administrative Analyst Weber, Alternate Harp, Operations Manager Gutierrez, Engineering and CIP Manager Williams, District Secretary Quintanar

Also Present Via Teleconference or Video Conference:

Construction and Meters Supervisor Lagunas, and Safety and Risk Management Officer Johnson.

4. **SEATING OF ALTERNATES**

No alternates were seated.

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

There were none.

6. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Motion:

To approve the Agenda as presented.

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

Vote: Motion carried by unanimous vote (summary: Ayes = 4)

Ayes: Member Hamilton, Member Stewart, Member Shute, Member Kozak

7. **PUBLIC COMMENT RELATING TO ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

There were none.

8. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. May 21, 2024

Motion:

To approve the minutes as presented

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

Vote: Motion carried by unanimous vote (summary: Ayes = 4)

Ayes: Member Hamilton, Member Stewart, Member Shute, and Member Kozak

9. COMMENTS & REQUESTS

A. General Manager's Comments

Mr. Wiley welcomed the new Member, James Kozak. He also provided an update on the progress of our budget planning efforts, ongoing CIP Projects, background on the benefits of and process of detaching from the San Diego County Water Authority, water sales, proposed rate increases, and the timing of the increases.

Member Kozak requested information on the numbers and types of customers we serve, and that information will be reviewed next month.

Discussion followed regarding strategies for sharing our information with customers.

B. Committee Member's Comments

Member Stewart mentioned an article in the Union Tribune about a lack of volunteers for committees, public agencies, non-profits, etc., statewide. He complimented RMWD's interaction with committee members, encouraging open information exchange and feedback, and relaying committee recommendations to the Board of Directors. This culture has resulted in steady membership of members. He also remarked about the quality of RMWD's management team, and relayed his appreciation.

Brief comments were made about SDCWA's newsletter, Imperial Irrigation District's Take or Pay Program, and the Salton Sea.

Chairman Shute- welcomed Member Kozak to the Committee. Member Kozak provided information regarding his professional experience and background, and expressed his desire to be involved, serve the community, and provide support for agriculture in the area.

Chairman Shute relayed appreciation for Utility Line Locater Thomas Sjuneson's quick and professional response to a Dig Alert call in his neighborhood.

10. CROPSWAP UPDATE

Mr. Wiley provided background on the CropSWAP program and purpose. RMWD has fantastic participation from our customers. Ms. Weber explained that RMWD started the campaign in May of last year, slowly building interest through newsletters and direct mail, and due to the successful launch of the campaign, Rainbow has 35 application submittals to date. We have twelve projects approved and have met and exceeded our initial \$200,000 reserve threshold. This Program benefits the agriculture community and culture of the community, and provides long term sustainability. Applications by type include 7 for Crop Conversion, 4 for Avocado Rejuvenation, 3 for Uniformity Improvements, 3 for Soil Moisture Sensors, 3 for Scheduling Automation, 2 for Mulching, 1 for Nutrient Management, and 1 for Cover Crops.

Chairperson Shute mentioned that San Diego County has the highest percentage of organic farms in the Country, and micro farms are extremely numerous in California as well, so this is a very appealing program. Vice Chairperson Stewart mentioned a PBS program called "Growing Passion," which airs each Tuesday. Members Hamilton and Kozak suggested that the County Supervisor and Federal legislators may also be able to assist with additional sources of funding for expanding the program.

11. COMMUNITY EVENTS UPDATE

Ms. Weber announced the Rainbow Run on June 15, 2024, which had great support and raised a tremendous amount of money. The North County Water Agencies Water calendar contest entries were exhibited, and winning artwork will be included in the 2025 calendar. Recognition of contest winners will be planned for the July Communication and Customer Service Committee meeting. Providing information for Member Kozak, Ms. Weber announced that we participate in the Avocado Festival, the Fallbrook Holiday Parade, the Bonsall High School Field Trip, and the Poster Contest, annually.

12. NEWSLETTER CONTENT PLANNING

The June Newsletter and 2023 Water Quality Report were provided. The Report is available on our website in Spanish as well. A message in the June invoices will include a link to find the Report on our website. July will be featured as "Smart Irrigation Month," and in August, we'll share the "Value of Water," and a backflow device review informational video. Member Kozak suggested messaging to encourage the planting of native plants. Chairperson Shute asked about programs we have had access to through the SDCWA, and Ms. Weber responded that we have been transitioning and planning to include links to MWD programs which will be available post detachment.

13. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATED MEDIA STORIES

Two Articles Published in The Valley News were included in the packet. Mr. Wiley provided additional information on the progress of the construction of the lift stations. A ribbon cutting event is being planned for September or October. We also have plans with Fallbrook PUD for a celebration of the detachment planned for September 27, 2024. Eastern Municipal Water District also suggested holding an event at one of the pump stations once the detachment is complete. Mr. Wiley added that we have an emergency banner on our website to alert customers of planned shutdowns and emergencies. Brief discussion followed regarding ongoing efforts to encourage customers to update their emergency contact information so they can receive important notifications.

14. CONSIDER ADDITION OF LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS TO THE COMMUNICATIONS & CUSTOMER SERVICE COMMITTEE

Mr. Wiley reported that a policy is being drafted for guidance on taking positions on various legislation that impacts the District, and suggested review and discussion of the policy and legislative matters in this venue. The Committee expressed their support for doing so.

15. LIST OF SUGGESTED AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

In July, the Committee will review and discuss outreach for customer contact information, the CropSWAP Program, ratepayer profiles, the draft Strategic Communication Plan, and future planned events.

16. ADJOURNMENT - To July 16, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Shute at 2:24 p.m.


Terese Quintanar, District Secretary


Bill Shute, Committee Chairperson