

Approved

**SOMIS CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE
VENTURA COUNTY WATERWORKS DISTRICT NO. 19
MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 1, 2024, MEETING**

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Michael Mishler-Chair
David Hutter-Vice Chair,
Keith Huss, Michael Morgan

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Tyler Cobb

STAFF: David Fleisch, Assistant Director
June Kim, Engineering Manager
Gilberto Minero, Staff Services
Specialist II
Sean Hanley, WWS Superintendent
Pam Cook, Senior Accountant-Zoom
Jean Fontayne, Staff Services Manager II

GUESTS: Cheryl Schoolland Borard
Kathy Janowski
Lynette Buckanan-Roth
Grace Keely
Waldemar Janowski

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1. CALL TO ORDER

Michael Mishler called the meeting to order at 3:31 PM. 4 of 5 Committee Members are present.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 8, 2024, MEETING

Motion to adopt the minutes was made by Michael Mishler.

Vote: Nay 0, Yea 4. Minutes adopted.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Kathy Janowski, resident of Somis, said she has some questions of the rate proposal and was asked to fill out a speaker card. Michael Mishler asked if Public Comments could wait until we are talking about the rates to continue with this subject. All guests agreed and those wanting to ask questions, filled out speaker cards.

4. DIRECTOR'S INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. RATE PROPOSAL PRESENTATION

- o Calleguas approved a rate increase of 9.5% for 2025.
- o Board approved Cash reserve target on 12/08/2020 of 25% O&M, 10% Revenue, 2% Net Assets

- Ground water makes up 90%, the imported water is 10% usage
- Historic Rate Increases from 2016 to 2025 shown
- With no rate increase, this year, we show how quickly we will go in the red. Spending down our reserves.
- The proposed 9.5% increase shows how the Reserves will look. We are spending more revenue than we are taking in.
- 9.5% seems reasonable to the CAC Board. The major projects, we are looking at Grant Funding so that we don't have a loan to pay off.
- Kathy Janowski, representing The Groves Neighborhood spoke. In some of your assumptions, you're assuming your able to complete all the Capital Projects for next year, which is very aggressive. We've never started that many Capital Projects in one year. Reply was, we are not short staffed. We have doubled our staff. One of the projects Hwy 118/Caltrans Project is out of our control, no estimated start date/time. We are told when we need to start our work. We need to fund all the funds when the project starts.
- Lynette Buchanan-Roth spoke next and what she would like to see is the actual timeline and points on a chart, this project is going to be due at this point and this will start at this time. Accomplishment dates. Reply was, we have been looking at Capital Planning, scheduling and providing an accurate look. Projects do take longer; we need to be realistic and include a timeline. Grant money often takes longer. Lynette's point is they want to see a timeline of projects. Mr. Fleisch spoke up, slide 9 shows that 100% of the Capital Projects are Debt Financed. and not part of the water increase. Looking over at the Revenue vs. Expenditures you can see that our current revenue and total expenditures are operations and maintenance, not Capital Projects.
- Cheryl Schoolland Borard, representing the Groves stated, she finds the Revenue vs. Expenditures chart a little confusing. Am I assuming this is a 9.5% increase that will not go away. Many small farmers cannot afford a 9.5% increase. It will be difficult for these farmers, so they are not watering, and their crops are dying.
- Mr. Mischler asked if there is another solution to the lack of revenue.
- Kathy Janowski asked if we are collecting additional revenue for the Farmers Housing? Answer is that they are not fully built or utilizing water. Kathy said, Lynette mentioned that we looked at the financials last year and Kathy is proposing; to allow a separate financial committee to see if our budget is allocating a huge amount of administrative time to us. She believes that staff is over allocating time. We would be interested in 4% for three years vs. 9.5% increase now.
- Mr. Fleisch stated that he appreciates all the comments from the Public and CAC Board.

- Mr. Mishler proposes that they vote on the increase today 9.5%. A separate follow up issue can be addressed. A separate committee meeting.
Mike Mishler and David Fleisch took a small 3 minute break.
- Mike Mishler returned and suggested a 5% increase for one year and then during that time, do a deep dive, someone from the public and someone from the Board.
- A vote was made, and a motion was passed. Vote: Nay 0, Yea 4
5% increase has been made for 2025.
- For the next meeting we will it should be set up on the agenda to discuss a Financial Sub-Committee to discuss the rates. We can take an action at the next meeting.
- David Fleisch took this time to introduce Rick Raives, retired from the City of Ventura and has taken over as the Interim Director. Gregg Strakaluse is the new Agency Director. We have made an offer, and someone has accepted to be the new Deputy Director position. He worked here 10 years ago. We are interviewing another candidate for the Director of Water and Sanitation, and we will keep you updated.

B. AMI REPORT

- We are at 11%. We track month to month everyone who signs up.
No cost to sign up or track water usage, get notifications of leaks.

C. O&M REVIEW

- One Main line leak on intersection of Bradley
- Installed a meter at Sand Canyon.
- Account activity, Service Orders and Line locations we accounted for.
- Wells, how many acre feet they pumped. We will finish the calendar year low in consumption.
- 9 Acre Feet was pumped
- Well 19 Static and pumping levels, some relief overall, slowly declining
- Well 3 steeper angle decline.
- Well 4 same trends but less decline.
- Well 2 fully functional
- Looking Forward, well 4 rehab, 571 Pump Station Design and La Ave Caltrans Project.

5. DISTRICT STAFF REPORT

A. CAPITAL PROJECTS REVIEW

- Well 4 Rehabilitation-In the process of hiring consultants to assist with developing a well rehabilitation strategy, tech specification, bidding, construction observation and evaluation of the well's rehabilitation
- 571 Pump Station-Survey completed. In process of design consultant contract modification to perform design.

- LA Ave Caltrans Pipe Relocation. Our design completed. We should be working on this early next year. Utility Agreement has been signed by W&S Director.

B. WATER QUALITY REPORT

- 4 complaints, 1 odor, 2 pressure system was fine on one. Backflow issue on the 2nd. we believe it was irrigation that was causing the issue. Chlorine issue on other. We fixed the issue.

C. WATER SUPPLY CONDITIONS

- Nothing has changed since the last meeting.

D. LOS POSAS VALLEY WATERMASTER

- David Fleisch has been attending the policy meetings. Right now, they are focused on the plans that the GSB's are currently being reviewed cancelled the policy this week. Nothing new.

E. CALLEGUAS MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT/ METROPOLITAN WATER

F. AVENUES OF PUBLIC OUTREACH

- Potential rebates were sent out to everyone.

G. BOARD LETTER TRACKER – AN UPDATE ON VENTURA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AGENDA ITEMS RELATED TO THE DISTRICT

- Rules and Regulations Board Letter 09/10/2024. One change: were switching to a different system with a new contract. If someone skips out on their bills, we have no way of finding them. Going forward we are asking for their Drivers License to collect when someone moves without paying their water bill.

H. BUDGET AND FINANCIAL REVIEW

- For future CAC Meetings we will give you a Summary rather than this lengthy report, unless someone wants to see more.

6. COMMITTEE MEMBERS COMMENTS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

- Mike Mishler is asking for "what percentage of water usage for this district. To Agriculture, Residential, Commercial. We can provide for the next meeting volume percentage wise.
- What is the active participation that someone can miss before it should be called out to the Board of Supervisors Office?

7. ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting is December 12, 2024.

The meeting is adjourned at 5:30 PM