

JOSHUA BASIN WATER DISTRICT
Minutes of February 21, 2018
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1. CALL TO ORDER: 6:30 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM: Mickey Luckman Present
Bob Johnson Present
Geary Hund Present
Rebecca Unger Present
Tom Floen Present

STAFF PRESENT: Curt Sauer, General Manager
Susan Greer, Assistant General Manager
Beverly Waszak, Executive Assistant

CONSULTANTS PRESENT: Gil Granito, Redwine & Sherrill
Alex Handler, Bartle Wells Associates
Kathleen Radnich, Public Outreach

GUESTS 35

GM Sauer introduced Mark Ban, Assistant General Manager of Operations to the Board and the public.

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA –

MSC/Hund/Johnson 5/0/0 to approve the Agenda of February 21, 2018, regular meeting of the Board of Directors.

Floen Aye
Hund Aye
Luckman Aye
Johnson Aye
Unger Aye

5. PUBLIC COMMENT –

Ed Vallerand asked about the increase in admin staff of \$100,000 in 17/18 compared to 16/17.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR –

MSC/Hund/Johnson 5/0/0 to approve the consent calendar.

Floen Aye
Hund Aye
Luckman Aye
Johnson Aye
Unger Aye

7. PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER INCREASES TO WATER RATES AND CHARGES – Alex Handler, Bartle Wells Associates, gave an updated presentation on the Rate Study followed by a brief Q&A period.

President Luckman opened the public hearing portion to public testimony:

Karen Tracy, Chairperson, Citizens Advisory Committee stated that after clean air, pure water is the most precious resource towards a healthy life. Nothing even comes close. Our aquifer is a treasure, which needs careful protection. Connected to the aquifer is a multitude of infrastructure improvements. The immensity and complex workings of a water district are staggering. In a tangential offering, I strongly recommend any ratepayers within the sound of my voice to take the complimentary District tour.

Michael McCourt asked President Luckman if the debt service to Mojave Water Agency (MWA) was included in the Rate Study.

Alex Handler, Bartle Wells Associates, responded that yes it was included and that in 5 years the debt will be paid.

Sandra Mullins, asked if there would be help for seniors and people with limited incomes?

GM Sauer responded that currently, the State Legislation is considering two Bills that would result in monies available for low-income people throughout the State.

Ed Vallerand was displeased with some of the inputs for the Rate Study.

Al Marquez questioned why we needed a rate increase because in 2012 stand-by-revenue was \$1,165,000. He is not against a rate increase, however, he was stating that the rate increase that he was in favor of was in the single digit like 8 or 9 percent, not a double-digit increase.

Chris Clark was in favor of the rate increase.

Luke Sabala spoke in favor of the rate increase but also suggested that the ratepayer could round up their bill with the extra going into a fund to help the people that may need extra help with paying their water bill.

Gayle Austin, Citizens Advisory Committee commented she was in favor of the rate increase for us and future generations to have the best water service possible.

Peggy Kennedy commented that we are water custodians for this generation and future generations to come by guaranteeing clean water is why we need a rate hike.

John Stang commented on his January 2017 bill and how the new rate hike affects him.

Tom Austin said that he was glad about the rate hike because then he knew that something is being done about the infrastructure.

Karen Morton, Citizens Advisory Committee stated that she too is on a limited income but feels she made the best decision with the Rate Study.

Beverly Newton commented that the rate increase is excessive.

Elaina Andrews feels that the rate increase is too much but hopes that the Administration will keep the costs down.

Jeff Bruce was shocked that there was no budgeting for repairs. He suggested that you could add a box to check so people can round up or pledge extra money per month.

Johnnie Painter, Citizens Advisory Committee stated in the past JBWD did not put enough money away, and now it is time to pay the piper. He encouraged the Board to pass this measure.

Karen Morton, Citizens Advisory Committee, thanked Alex Handler, Bartle Wells Associates, for presenting all the information so succinctly.

Carl Parmley, asked if there had been any grants written to help the community with the infrastructure problem? Mr. Parmley asked if JBWD receives grants to be used for the infrastructure and would that, in turn, decrease the rates.

GM Sauer responded that yes, JBWD has applied for grants and if the grants are received, then the Board could elect to lower the rates. He is working on a Solar Feasibility Study grant for solar that if it works out, it could decrease our electric bill by \$326,000 each year. This is not a fixed rate each year; the Board cannot go any higher than this. If we find more revenue with grants or low-interest loan, the Board will consider this.

Michael McCourt asked what the National Park's rate is since there are over two million people that visit the park and thinks that everyone should pay their fair share.

Kathleen Radnich, Public Outreach informed everyone that there was still space on the grant provided water tour.

President Luckman declared the public testimony hearing closed at 8:02 p.m.

Mr. Gil Granito, Legal Counsel, informed President Luckman that it was time to tabulate the protests.

AGM Greer informed the Board that there were 25 protests received before the meeting and 38 protests were received at the meeting for a total of 63 protests.

A brief Q&A and comment period followed.

MSC/Johnson/Unger 5/0/0 to accept and file the Rate Study from Bartle Wells Associates.

Floen	Aye
Hund	Aye
Luckman	Aye
Johnson	Aye
Unger	Aye

MSC/Unger/Hund 4/0/1 to approve Resolution 18-982 of the Board of Directors of the Joshua Basin Water District approving an amendment to the District's Rules and Regulations which amendment 1) provides for increases to the District's water rates and charges, and 2) makes findings and determinations that the action taken in this Resolution is exempt from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Hearing – February 21, 2018)

Floen	Aye
Hund	Aye
Luckman	Aye
Johnson	No
Unger	Aye

8. DISTRICT GENERAL COUNSEL REPORT – Mr. Granito indicated that he had no report but did share his positive impressions on how the Rate Setting Process had been thoroughly vetted and his respect for all who provided input during tonight's Public Hearing.
9. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT - None
10. DIRECTOR REPORTS ON MEETINGS ATTENDED, COMMENTS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS-

Director Unger commented on the Finance Committee meeting she attended.

Vice President Johnson encouraged everyone to attend the riveting Finance Committee meeting.

Director Hund is attending the District water tour and encouraged everyone to take the District Tour.

Director Floen commented on the Finance Committee meeting and encouraged people to attend and participate.

Kathleen Radnich, Public Outreach informed the Board that there were still seats available on the District water tour and that the District's water booth will reopen at the Farmer's Market in March. Mrs. Radnich asked people to please update their information with the Water District, cell phones, and emails so that everyone can receive emergency information.

11. FUTURE DIRECTOR MEETINGS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES –

President Luckman apprised the Board of upcoming meetings and that she would take the place of Vice President Johnson at the Mojave Water Agency Board meeting.

12. ADJOURNMENT -

MSC/Unger/Johnson 5/0/0 to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of February 21, 2018, at 8:42 p.m.

Floen	Aye
Hund	Aye
Luckman	Aye
Johnson	Aye
Unger	Aye

Respectfully submitted:


Curt Sauer, GM and Board Secretary