

JOSHUA BASIN WATER DISTRICT
Minutes of the
REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
March 13, 2018

1. CALL TO ORDER 6:02 p.m.
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
3. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:

Jeff Dongvillo	Absent
Tom Kayne	Present
Shari Long	Present
Karen Morton	Present via PHONE
Karyn Sernka	Present
Karen Tracy	Present
Gayle Austin	Present

STAFF PRESENT: Curt Sauer, General Manager

CONSULTANTS: Kathleen Radnich, Public Information & Outreach

GUESTS: 2

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MSC/Kayne/Austin 6/0/1 to approve the Agenda of the regular meeting of the CAC for January 9, 2018.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT –
There was no public comment.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

MSC/Tracy/Kayne 6/0/1 to approve the draft minutes with the correction of Special Meeting “Rate Workshop” on December 6, 2017, and Gayle Austin to be marked as Present.

7. DISCUSSION: LOW-INCOME RATE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS:

GM Sauer opened the discussion with an overview of the status of proposed programs in consideration at the State level.

SB 401 Affordable and Safe Drinking Water Initiative -Progress on this Bill, to date, has involved steps of passing lesser Bills: SB 88 (failing water system providers mandated to consolidate or take assistance from alternate water providers); SB 552 (failed water providers of disadvantaged communities, must accept managerial assistance as appointed by the SWB); and SB 1263 (helps to prevent the establishment of new, unsustainable public water systems. The biggest challenge is the lack of funding to help subsidize the water rates paid by low-income residents and all other overheads associated with providing water to them.

Tom Kayne, shared a written “break down” of how he saw AB 401 broken down for our District. He felt it was unfair as 1/3 of our ratepayers are at or below the poverty level being considered, with 2/3 of the rate payers paying for a significant portion of 1/3 of these poverty level customer’s bills. A discussion followed as to why we should or shouldn’t subsidize only the first tier rate payers.

Jeff Dross asked if we, “just not raise rates for the poor, while not concerning our time and efforts determining why they are poor.” More discussion followed.

Karen Tracy clarified that it was, “illegal to make 40% pay for 60% of the customers.”

Jeff Dross suggested we try the, “rounding up” program (voluntarily) and designate those funds to help the poor. Discussion followed with a consensus that it would not cover enough of the “needs.”

GM Sauer reiterated, “it was illegal, bottom line.”

GM Sauer shared, from AGM Susan Greer, a recap of proposed “Water Account Assistance-related solutions.”

SB 623, not yet adopted, called the Water Tax by ACWA and the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fee (by the Author), this is a 95-cent tax paid by all to be redistributed to disadvantaged communities. ACWA is opposing this legislation.

SB 998, not yet adopted, this bill would prevent the District from locking-off non-payment customers, along with other new unfunded mandate compliance regulations that potentially would increase “bad debt” with accounts from District customers.

AB 401, not yet adopted. Called the Low Income Water Rate Assistance Act: Refer to discussion points in item 7A (above). SWRCB and the State Board of Equalization have not met their deadline to decide on this bill yet.

JBWD CAAP (Customer Account Assistance Program) this is a current program for large bills of unknown or accidental origin, and the cost of this assistance has increased each of the last four years, which is seen as a disturbing trend.

United Way Program - Allow the United Way to distribute to qualifying accounts some property tax revenues received plus charitable donations from account holders. Unable to use water revenues to fund any assistance program, GM Sauer stated that he just learned the United Way program only charges \$50/month administrative fees to distribute charitable funds for water needs.

Jeff Dross suggested we put a “donation box” on our water bills.

Gayle Austin was in support of looking into the United Way program. Her concern was that we just voted on a significant rate increase (affecting everyone) and that hiring staff to implement any charity program would not be appropriate.

GM Sauer suggested that staff could investigate the United Way program further.

Gayle Austin asked about also checking with the “Haven and Arch” organizations for assistance.

GM Sauer clarified they were umbrella organizations under the Basin Wide Foundation.

Karen Tracy endorsed the United Way opportunity.

MSC/Kayne/Long 6/0/1 to move forward on the United Way opportunity.

8. GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

GM Sauer offered an update on the progress of Well 14—that to date, it was moving forward. So announced the hiring of Mark Ban, our new Operations Director. He shared the time and dates of the Finance Committee meeting (which has been moved to the 2nd Wednesday of each month.

Kathleen Radnich reminded the CAC about the upcoming Water Education Day event and the potential fall District Tours, and to forward potential candidate names to her. A new program called, “Droplets,” which will involve tracking the CIP progress and enhance District transparency.

9. CONFIRM DATE FOR NEXT CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE-

- May 8, 2018, at 6 p.m.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

MSC/Kayne/Long 6/0/1 to adjourn the January 9th, 2017, Regular Meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee at 7:06 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,


Curt Sauer, GM and Board Secretary

INFORMATION: State your name and have your information prepared and be ready to provide your comments to the Committee. The District is interested and appreciates your comments. A 3-minute time limit will be imposed. Thank you.

Any person with a disability who requires accommodation to participate in this meeting should telephone Joshua Basin Water District at (760) 366-8438, at least 48 hours before the meeting to request a disability-related accommodation.