

President
Tom Floen

VP
Stacy Doolittle

Directors
Jane Jarlsberg
Tomas Short
David Fick

**General
Manager**
Sarah Johnson

Legal Counsel
Jeff Hoskinson



REGULAR MEETING AGENDA OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Wednesday, March 5, 2025, at 5:30 p.m.

MEETINGS ARE HELD IN PERSON AT 61750 CHOLLITA RD., JOSHUA TREE, CA 92252

REMOTE ACCESS IS AVAILABLE FOR THE CONVENIENCE OF THE PUBLIC

CLICK TO JOIN VIRTUALLY: [ZOOM LINK](#)

CALL TO JOIN BY PHONE: (669) 444-9171

MEETING ID: 872 8707 9239

PASSCODE: 61750

MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

Mission Statement

To provide, protect, and maintain Joshua Tree's water - our vital community resource.

Vision Statement

To achieve excellence in all District endeavors.

Values

The community of Joshua Tree has entrusted the Board of Directors and employees of Joshua Basin Water District with its most valuable natural resource, its groundwater. As stewards of the community water supply, we oversee this critical natural resource to ensure current and future water reliability. Dedicated to this purpose, we embrace these important values:

- **Integrity** – To consistently earn our customers' trust by prioritizing the needs of the community... doing the right thing for the right reason.
- **Transparency** – To openly and honestly share information about our operations with the public.
- **Respect** – To treat the residents of Joshua Tree, and all those contacted in the course of business, with high esteem and regard.
- **Fiscal Responsibility** – To manage all resources as if they were our own, whether revenues, assets, or water supply, in a conscientious and appropriate manner.
- **Accountability** – To take responsibility for our decisions and actions in managing this essential resource.

1. CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM

Consideration of Board Member requests for remote participation.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

4. PUBLIC COMMENT

This designated time is for members of the public to provide comments on any District related matter, whether appearing on the agenda or not. Under the provisions of the Brown Act, the Board is prohibited from taking action on items not listed on the agenda. At the discretion of the Board President, comments on a particular agenda item may be deferred until that item is heard. Please state your name and limit your comments to 3 minutes.

5. CONSENT CALENDAR

Consent calendar items are expected to be routine and non-controversial, to be acted upon by the Board at one time, without discussion. If a board member would like an item to be handled separately, it will be removed from the Consent Agenda for separate action.

Pg.

A. DRAFT MINUTES – 02.19.25

6. ITEM(S) PULLED FROM CONSENT CALENDAR FOR DISCUSSION

7. DISCUSSION/ACTION CALENDAR

Pg.

A. MEMORANDUM OF INTENT (MOI) BETWEEN JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK ASSOCIATION & JOSHUA BASIN WATER DISTRICT

PRESENTED BY: PUBLIC OUTREACH CONSULTANT, KATHLEEN RADNICH

RECOMMENDED ACTION: RECOMMEND THAT THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS APPROVE THE MOI BETWEEN JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK ASSOCIATION AND JOSHUA BASIN WATER DISTRICT.

B. METER WORKSHOP

PRESENTED BY: DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION, DAVID SHOOK

RECOMMENDED ACTION: FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY.

- 1. METERS 101
- 2. CAAP REVISIT

8. REPORTS AND COMMENTS

For informational purposes only on subjects not covered by the agenda. The opinions of individual directors are not necessarily the opinions of the board or district staff. No action is to be taken. The Board may provide staff with requests for future agenda items. Director requests are located on pages following the agenda.

Pg.

A. DIRECTORS REPORTS

B. GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

9. ADJOURNMENT

CALENDAR REMINDER - FUTURE DIRECTOR MEETINGS	DATE	TIME	ATTENDEE(S)
JBWD – MANAGER MEETUPS	03.12.25	9:00 AM	FICK/DOOLITTLE
MWA – BOARD MEETING	03.13.25	9:30 AM	JARLSBERG
ASBCSD - DINNER	03.17.25	5:30 PM	TBD
JBWD – BOARD MEETING	03.19.25	5:30 PM	FLOEN

MEETING INFORMATION

The public is invited to comment on any item on the agenda during the discussion of that item.

Availability of agenda materials: Materials related to any item on this Agenda submitted to the District Board of Directors or Committee Members after distribution of the agenda packet are available for public inspection at the District’s office, 61750 Chollita Road, Joshua Tree, CA 92252, during normal business hours. All documents supporting this agenda are available on the District website www.jbwd.com, subject to the staff’s availability to post the documents before the meeting.

Reasonable Accommodation: Any person with a disability who requires accommodation to view the agenda or to participate in the public comment portion of the Board meeting, should direct such requests to Lisa Thompson, Executive Assistant, at 760-366-8438. Please allow three business days for your request to be processed. Requests must be received at least seventy-two (72) hours before the scheduled meeting.

Disruptive Conduct: If any meeting of the District is willfully disrupted by a person or by a group of persons so as to render the orderly conduct of the meeting impossible, a meeting may be recessed or the person or persons willfully disrupting the meeting may be ordered to leave the meeting. Disruptive conduct includes addressing the Board or Committee without first being recognized, not addressing the subject before the Board or Committee, repetitively addressing the same subject, failing to relinquish the podium when requested to do so, or otherwise preventing the Board or Committee from conducting its meeting in an orderly manner. Your cooperation is appreciated.

2024 Director Requests

Routine requests, orally or in writing, for readily available written information or documents shall not require formal board approval. Requests which involve other than routine collection of data from more than one source, compilation of data from one or more sources, or preparation of written reports, studies, analyses, or tabulations, requiring more than two hours of staff time, shall be submitted to the board of directors by the individual director for formal approval. All directors' requests shall be treated uniformly and responded to in a fair and courteous manner.

Fick

Request Date	Request Name	Notes	Status or Date Complete
Dec 2023	Investment Pool	Fick requested staff to research investment pools.	08.07.24
Jan 2024	US Water Alliance	Fick/Doolittle requested they and GM meet with US Water Alliance.	01.22.24
Spring 2024	One Tree Hill	Fick requested information regarding the One Tree Hill Property.	06.19.24 & 07.17.24
11.06.24	Investment Pool Comparison	Fick requested an investment pool comparison with LAIF.	11.20.24
11.11.24	Trash Clean-Up	Fick emailed inquiring about trash cleanup on the One Tree Hill Property. Thompson submitted a request to code enforcement as this is out of JBWD's jurisdiction.	11.12.24

Floen

Request Date	Request Name	Notes	Status or Date Complete

Jarlsberg

Request Date	Request Name	Notes	Status or Date Complete
11.06.24	Future Agenda Items	Jarlsberg requested a separate area on the agenda for future agenda items.	01.15.25
11.06.24	CAAP Revision	Jarlsberg suggested revisiting CAAP policy for customers with unexplained high-use.	Planned for March 2025
11.20.24	Agenda Page Numbers	Jarlsberg requested page numbers of the attachments to the agenda	11.20.24

Short

Request Date	Request Name	Notes	Status or Date Complete
06.19.24	Climate Resilience Bond	Short requested that the Climate Resilience Bond be researched and brought back to the board.	07.16.24
09.04.24	Cybersecurity Grant	Short requested staff to investigate applying for the Cybersecurity Grant.	12.26.24
12.04.24	CAAP Revision	Short requested revisiting the CAAP policy.	Planned for March 2025

Doolittle

Request Date	Request Name	Notes	Status or Date Complete
Dec 2023	Strategic Plan	Doolittle requested an update to the Strategic Plan	12.18.24
01.17.24	USGS Presentation	Doolittle requested a USGS presentation.	11.06.24
Jan 2024	US Water Alliance	Fick/Doolittle requested they and GM meet with US Water Alliance.	01.22.24
02.14.24	Ops Report	Doolittle requested an average column on the Operations Statistics report.	Total column added Jan 2025
02.21.24	Missed Meetings	Doolittle requested a policy on watching meeting recordings as if directors attended and reporting on them as if we attended the meeting.	
02.21.24	Project Presentations	Doolittle requested project presentations at the budget workshops.	05.01.24 & 05.15.24
03.20.24	Budget Video	Doolittle requested budget video production from Director of Finance Anne Roman.	
03.20.24	Director Stipend	Doolittle requested an increase to the director stipend.	04.20.24 & 05.01.24
03.20.24	Board Appreciation	Doolittle requested a board appreciation event.	05.01.24
05.01.24	Operations Statistics	Doolittle requested the WRO Operations Statistics be shared on Zoom.	Added to agenda/minutes
05.15.24	Professional Consulting	Doolittle requested that a professional graphic designer create the JBWD sign outside the office building.	08.01.24
05.15.24	Professional Consulting	Doolittle requested a professional consultant and designer for the exterior building.	07.23.24
05.15.24	Engineer/Permeable Asphalt/Grading Plans	Doolittle requested that we hire a civil engineer to manage stormwater, use semi-permeable asphalt, and get grading plans.	08.07.24
06.05.24	Staff Certifications	Doolittle requested the latest district staff certifications displayed on rotation.	Complete Feb 2025
06.05.24	Plotter Supplies	Doolittle requested staff to research the cost of supplies for the plotter.	06.05.24
06.05.24	Building Expansion	Doolittle requested a study for the expansion of the building.	
06.12.24	Package System	Doolittle requested getting a sewer package system for downtown Joshua Tree.	
06.12.24	Envision Presentation	Doolittle requested an Envision presentation at a future WRO Committee meeting.	We need contact info.
06.19.24	Customer Alerts	Doolittle requested staff to set up alerts for customers with high usage.	Complete - already in practice
06.19.24	Climate Resilience Bond	Doolittle requested a climate resilience bond topic for future board meetings.	07.16.24
06.19.24	Budget Calendar	Doolittle requested staff to develop a budget calendar and create a new budget review process.	Completed during 24/25 budget cycle
08.07.24	Customer Issues Report	Doolittle requested a report on customer issues.	Incorporated into all future Customer Service Board Reports

08.07.24	Customer High Usage Report	Doolittle requested a report showing the number of customers whose usage has increased by 30% over the last five years.	This will require more info and staff time. TBD
09.04.24	Director Comments in Minutes	Doolittle requested more director's comments on agenda items in the minutes. Note: Minutes are a record of actions taken, not a transcript. We strive to capture district-related information accurately.	Complete
09.04.24	AD Hoc Meetings	Doolittle requested Ad Hoc Meetings on the agenda. Note: Admin Code 3.12 The President of the Board from time to time may establish committees to help carry out the Board's responsibilities. To preserve Board integrity, committees will be used sparingly, only when other methods have been deemed inadequate. Committees will be used to minimally interfere with the wholeness of the Board's job.	Board members are responsible for voting on AdHocs.
09.04.24	CAAP Revision	Doolittle requested CAAP revision.	Planned for March 2025
11.06.24	Future Agenda Items	Doolittle requested that a list of items be placed on the agenda for future board meetings.	We have an annual planning calendar that the board president has reviewed
11.13.24	Meter Error Report	Doolittle requested a meter error report.	Criteria for the report would need to be established & a report would need to be created. TBD
12.04.24	Policies	Doolittle requested more policy revisions	In queue
12.04.24	Board Requests	Doolittle requested a document that outlines tracked board requests.	01.15.25
12.18.24	2014 Board Article	Doolittle requested distribution of a 2014 board article signed by former President Victoria Fuller	01.07.25

MEETING MINUTES



REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS February 19, 2025, 5:30 pm

AGENDA ITEMS

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Floen called the meeting to order at: 5:30 pm.

2. DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM & ATTENDANCE

Board Members Present: President Floen, Vice President Doolittle, Director Jarlsberg, Director Short, Director Fick

Staff Present: Director of Finance Roman, Director of Administration Shook, Accounting Supervisor Rich, Executive Assistant Thompson

Consultant(s) Present: Legal Counsel, Jeff Hoskinson, Public Consultant, Kathleen Radnich

Citizens Advisory Council Member(s) Present:

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Director Jarlsberg made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Director Short and approved by the following vote:

1 st / 2 nd	Jarlsberg/Short
Ayes:	Floen, Doolittle, Jarlsberg, Short, and Fick
Noes:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	None

4. PUBLIC COMMENT – Charles Magda on Zoom asked about pipe replacement.

5. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. DRAFT MINUTES – 02.05.25

B. CHECK REGISTER – DECEMBER 2024

Director Jarlsberg pulled the check register for discussion, Director Jarlsberg made a motion to approve the Consent Calendar 02.05.24 draft minutes, seconded by Director Fick and approved the the following vote:

1st/2nd	Jarlsberg/Fick
Ayes:	Floen, Doolittle, Jarlsberg, Fick, Short
Noes:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	None

6. ITEMS PULLED FROM CONSENT CALENDAR FOR DISCUSSION

A. CHECK REGISTER – DECEMBER 2024

Director Jarlsberg had several questions on items on the check register. Afterward, Jarlsberg made a motion to approve the December 2024 check register, seconded by Director Short, and approved by the following vote:

1 st / 2 nd	Jarlsberg/Short
Ayes:	Floen, Doolittle, Jarlsberg, Short, and Fick
Noes:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	None

7. DISCUSSION/ACTION CALENDAR

A. COPPER MOUNTAIN MESA (CMM) ASSESSMENT DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT

PRESENTED BY: DIRECTOR OF FINANCE ANNE ROMAN

RECOMMENDED ACTION: RECEIVE FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES

Director of Finance Anne Roman presented the Copper Mountain Mesa (CMM) Assessment District Annual Report. Roman explained that CMM was established in 1996 to fund water improvements through USDA-issued bonds, set for full repayment by 2036. As of June 2024, Roman reported the remaining bond balance. Roman also noted that the 2023/2024 Annual Report and Continuing Disclosure Annual Report in the packet were summaries, with full versions available online.

For informational purposes only. No board action taken.

8. REPORTS AND COMMENTS

President Floen

- Floen informed the public on Zoom that every check issued by the district is reviewed and signed by two directors, with the check register reviewed monthly by the board. Floen emphasized the importance of public visibility and noted redundancy in committee functions and staff time. Floen also stated that, according to the Administration Code policies, the Board President has the authority to dissolve committees without consulting the board.
- Floen attended the CMMA board meeting and informed their board president that the CMM bond was going to be discussed at tonight’s board meeting.
- Floen attended the Landers Homestead Association meeting, where discussions covered nonprofit certification issues and a presentation by Marina West on Western Joshua Trees.

Vice President Doolittle

- Doolittle asked the Director of Administration, David Shook, if he can find out from General Manager Sarah Johnson if the Directors can be added to the District’s Evernote license to take notes at meetings she attends.

- Doolittle asked that the check register be pulled from the consent calendar since we no longer have the Finance Committee.
- Doolittle inquired to find out if we have a schedule for uploading meeting recordings to the website.
- Doolittle expressed appreciation for Director of Finance Anne Roman, noting her cheerful and willing approach to board requests. Doolittle observed that, in contrast, there is a general attitude from the district that board requests are burdensome or excessive. Emphasizing the board's obligation to conduct due diligence, she valued Roman's openness and responsiveness to director requests.
- Doolittle requested to set up a time to review the general ledger.
- Doolittle raised concerns about the permanent cancellation of the Finance and WRO Committees, arguing that it reduces transparency and board oversight while primarily benefiting the district by eliminating preparation requirements. Doolittle questioned the necessity of removing the Finance Committee, emphasizing its value due to content richness. She also expressed concern over losing valuable reports and insights from the operations team without the WRO Committee. Referring to the 02.05.25 meeting minutes, she noted that while the GM mentioned the possibility of forming Ad Hoc Committees, none had been established in the past four years except for GM performance reviews. Doolittle disagreed with the unilateral decision and expressed disappointment in how it was handled.

Director Jarlsberg

- Jarlsberg responded to Vice President Doolittle's concerns about canceling the Finance and WRO Committees, stating that she supported the decision based on the understanding that their content would be incorporated into board meetings with the same reports and discussion time. Jarlsberg did not view this change as eliminating report review. Jarlsberg also noted that the public was not attending these committee meetings, their recordings were not published, and only two directors participated.
- Jarlsberg attended the MWA TAC meeting on February 6th and appreciated the use of a microphone and participant introductions. The meeting included updates on the Air Force base and jet fumes rising from groundwater, a controversial topic, as well as an update on the Mojave River groundwater.

Director Short

- Short mentioned that at the last board meeting, General Manager Sarah Johnson discussed a freeze on funding with US Water Alliance. Short wanted an update on the current status.

Director Fick

- None

Staff Reports

Director of Finance Anne Roman reported on the following:

- Roman reported that the transfer of funds from LAIF to CAMP is an ongoing process and now fully set up. Extensive testing was conducted to verify wiring and ACH instructions before transferring substantial funds. The Emergency Capital Replacement Funds will be in CAMP by tomorrow, with interest rates remaining comparable between LAIF and CAMP.

Director of Administration David Shook reported the following:

- Shook announced that he will present information on meters and revisit the CAAP at the March 5th board meeting.

9. ADJOURNMENT

On motion by short, seconded by Director Jarlsberg and approved by the Board, the meeting was adjourned at: 6:49pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Johnson, General Manager & Board Secretary



AGENDA ITEM NO:	7A
MEETING DATE:	03.05.25

Staff Report

PRESENTED BY:	Public Outreach Consultant, Kathleen Radnich
TOPIC:	MEMORANDUM OF INTENT (MOI) BETWEEN JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK ASSOCIATION & JOSHUA BASIN WATER DISTRICT
RECOMMENDATION:	Recommend the Board of Directors authorize the General Manager to execute the MOI between Joshua Tree National Park Association and Joshua Basin Water District

SUMMARY: Staff recommend entering into a Memorandum of Intent (MOI) with the Joshua Tree National Park Association (JTNP) to continue supporting conservation education and native plant landscaping initiatives.

Key Details:

- Profit Sharing: JBWD will donate 50% of the profits from its annual native plant sale to JTNP.
- Fund Allocation: These tax-deductible contributions will be deposited into restricted accounts managed by JTNP, ensuring funds are used exclusively for restoration efforts at Joshua Tree National Park’s (JTNP) native plant nursery.
- Community Engagement: JTNP and JBWD intend to collaborate on the annual plant sale.

Reason for the MOI:

Previously, JBWD had a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) directly with Joshua Tree National Park (JTNP) for this initiative. However, recent policy changes prevent JTNP from entering into an MOU directly with JBWD. Partnering with JTNP, the nonprofit partner of JTNP, provides a practical solution to continue this important collaboration.

Benefits:

This agreement reinforces both organizations’ commitment to sustainability, environmental education, and responsible land management.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Recommend that the Board of Directors approve the MOI between Joshua Tree National Park Association and Joshua Basin Water District.

FISCAL IMPACT: N/A

MEMORANDUM OF INTENT

Between

JOSHUA BASIN WATER DISTRICT

And the

JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK ASSOCIATION

Joshua Basin Water District enters into a partnership with the Joshua Tree National Park Association (JTNPA) with the collateral intent and purpose of educating consumers about the values and uniqueness of Joshua Tree National Park, which is owned and managed by the National Park Service (NPS), and the need for its care, preservation, and stewardship. This is in harmony with Joshua Basin Water District's goal to educate on water conservation derived from embracing native plant gardening.

Joshua Tree National Park (Park) protects 790,634 acres in southern California characterized by rugged rock formations and stark desert landscapes. Named for the region's twisted, bristled Joshua trees, the Park straddles the cactus-dotted Colorado Desert ecosystem and the Mojave Desert ecosystem which is higher and cooler. Keys View looks out over the Coachella Valley. Hiking trails weave through the boulders of Hidden Valley. A fascinating variety of plants and animals make their homes in a land sculpted by strong winds and occasional torrents of rain. Dark night skies, a rich cultural history, and surreal geologic features add to the wonder of this vast Park wilderness. The Park is a mecca for rock climbers and wildlife viewers. In recent years the Park has been experiencing spikes in annual visitation and especially during its highest visitation months that have put stress on Park resources. There is growing need to provide better protection and restoration of the Park's remarkable resources and to cultivate their sustainability and stewardship by better informing the Park's visitors.

The Joshua Tree National Park Association (JTNPA) serves as the non-profit philanthropic partner for Joshua Tree National Park. Its mission is as follows: the Joshua Tree National Park Association is a private, non-profit organization working in partnership with Joshua Tree National Park to help in its achievement of programming goals in education, interpretation, scientific and historic research and activities.

Joshua Basin Water District will donate 50% of profits from their annual community native plant sale of plants to JTNPA for the Joshua Tree National Park native plant nursery.

All charitable donations to the JTNPA from Joshua Basin Water District for the Joshua Tree National Park plant nursery are tax deductible and will be deposited in the appropriate restricted donation accounts to be used exclusively for the intended purposes. Restricted accounts are managed by the JTNPA for the benefit of the Park. The Joshua Tree National Park Association's Tax-Exempt Identification Number is 95-2312513.

The NPS and the JTNPA will review and vet all donations and contributions of cash and in-kind goods and services intended to benefit the NPS/Park as outlined in the Department of the Interior's Director's Order # 21 - Donations and Philanthropic Partnerships to ensure the sources of the donations are acceptable and can support identified Park needs and will not imply endorsement of an individual, organization, or product. It is understood that donations to the NPS from the following sources will be declined, and cannot fall into any of these categories:

- Sources that would identify the NPS with tobacco or any illegal substances,
- Sources that would generate controversy, the appearance of a conflict of interest; harm public confidence, or associate the NPS with products that are inconsistent with its mission, or require activities that circumvent Federal regulations or ethics rules; and,
- Donors involved in litigation with the Department of the Interior or its bureaus.

All branding, labeling, promotional, cause marketing fundraising related materials that are intended for public distribution and sales and that refer to the NPS, the Park, JTNPA, or to this cause marketing/fundraising effort, will be submitted to the NPS and the JTNPA for advance review and approval. This review is to ensure that information in all materials for public distribution: is accurate; does not commit any Signature Party to this MOI to an inappropriate action or funding; and, does not lead to false expectations for prospective customers, purchase or donors or misrepresent NPS policy or JTNPA Bylaws. Joshua Basin Water District would request JTNPA to help promote their plant sale in their membership newsletter.

Materials that require advance review and approval include, but are not limited to: donation solicitation materials, website information, press releases, and brochures where the material references the relationship. Internal communications within the NPS or the JTNPA are not subject to this review.

The Parties may develop standard language that does not require approval beyond the initial approval. Where standard language has not been developed, the Parties will use best efforts to review, approve, or deny such materials within 10 business days of receipt. Each Party agrees that failure on its part to meet the 10-day target will serve as an automatic approval of that proposed language.

Language on marketing materials, packaging (if any), and promotions generated by Joshua Basin Water District may include the following – "Joshua Basin Water District contributes to Joshua Tree National Park Association to help support the native plant nursery at Joshua Tree National Park.

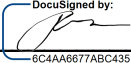
JTNPA grants permission for Joshua Basin Water District to feature the JTNPA logo on their website and in marketing materials, with the caveat that all marketing materials are reviewed and approved by the JTNPA prior to posting, publication, or release (see above).

This Agreement will expire one year after the date of the last signature hereto, provided that unless a Party provides notice of termination at least thirty (30) days prior to the end of such one-year period, this Agreement shall automatically renew for another year, repeatedly, unless terminated. Either Party may terminate this Agreement based on breach of this agreement or if the Party reasonably can show that the association with the other Party hereunder is not or will not substantially promote the causes associated with it as presented above, in either case upon thirty (30) days' notice to the other Party.

It is agreed that any use of the NPS, Park, and/or JTNPA names in promoting and selling products must be reviewed and approved in writing, prior to publication, posting or display by all the Signatory Parties to this Memorandum of Intent.

Approval Signatures: The signatures below indicate understanding of and adherence to the above-named terms. The Memorandum of Intent is officially approved on the date of the last signature.

For the Joshua Tree National Park Association:

 <small>6C4AA6677ABC435...</small>	2/12/2025
_____ Jacqueline Guevara, Executive Director	_____ Date

Joshua Basin Water District:

_____ Sarah Johnson, General Manager	_____ Date
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AGENDA ITEM NO:	7B
MEETING DATE:	03.05.25

Staff Report

PRESENTED BY:	DAVID SHOOK, DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION
TOPIC:	Workshop - Meters 101
RECOMMENDATION:	For Information Only

BACKGROUND: In 2019, the Board selected Sensus iPerl electromagnetic meters over three other options (Badger, Master, and Zenner) for district-wide implementation. The decision was based primarily on the superior accuracy of the Sensus iPerl meters in detecting low flow water usage, a critical issue that previous Sensus SR11 meters failed to address.

ANALYSIS:

KEY FINDINGS:

- A review of existing meters revealed that more than 75% of tested meters were failing to meet AWWA (American Water Works Association) standards by under-reporting water usage.
- Some meters were found to be under-reporting by up to 15%, leading to significant revenue losses for the district.
- Public input and staff recommendations at the time emphasized maintaining the current Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) system while considering a future transition to Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI).
- The Board approved the selection of Sensus iPerl meters with a 4-0-1 vote (one member absent).

RATIONALE FOR SENSUS IPERL METERS:

- Higher accuracy, particularly in detecting low-flow water consumption.
- Long-term cost-effectiveness due to reduced revenue loss from unreported water usage.
- Support for future transition to AMI technology, offering potential operational efficiencies.
- Positive public and staff feedback regarding the meters' performance and capabilities.

FISCAL IMPACT: N/A



AGENDA ITEM NO:	7B
MEETING DATE:	03.05.25

Staff Report

PRESENTED BY:	DAVID SHOOK, DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION
TOPIC:	Customer Account Assistance Program (CAAP) Revisit
RECOMMENDATION:	Receive information and consider action

BACKGROUND: The customer account assistance program (CAAP) was established about 27 years ago to assist customers that experience large bills from unknown or accidental circumstances, such as leaks or water theft.

The general guidelines for CAAP qualifications are:

- The property must be the primary residence of the owner or long-term tenant. Vacation homes and short-term rentals (i.e., Airbnb & VRBO) are not eligible for CAAP. Proof of residency may be required.
- The bill in question must be at least \$700 more than last year's bill for the same period.
- Proof of leak repair.
- The same customer is limited to two (2) CAAP's within a five (5) year period at the same service address. A new customer at the same service address may be considered for CAAP.

The CAAP program was last reviewed in Fall 2018, during which the Community Advisory Committee (CAC) recommended eliminating it. Their decision was based on several key concerns:

- Personal responsibility and accountability – Emphasizing that customers should take ownership of their water usage and potential leaks.
- Significant cost increase – The program's expenses grew tenfold between 2013 and 2017.
- Potential claims of bias – The program created challenges in distinguishing between primary residences, home-based businesses, and vacation rentals, raising concerns about fairness in eligibility.

From 2013 to 2017, financial assistance provided through the CAAP program increased by 1009.62%, rising from \$609.34 to \$6,761.36 annually.

Key data points:

- In 2020, CAAP funding peaked at \$10,180.95.
- The average annual assistance since 2013 has been \$4,639.24.
- Before CAAP was established, requests for assistance were rare and required a public hearing before the Board of Directors.
- The current budget for FY24/25 is \$12,000, with year-to-date (YTD) usage at \$5,530.
- The Inland SoCal United Way low-income assistance program has a budget of \$6,000 for FY24/25, with YTD activity at \$1,100.

ANALYSIS:

Joshua Basin Water District’s CAAP program is unique compared to other districts of similar size and service area. Most other districts only provide payment plans and referrals to county resources, while only a few larger districts offer a program comparable to CAAP.

In 2018, a customer would need to use 152 units of water to reach a \$700 difference in their bill. Now, in 2025, that threshold has significantly decreased to 72.5 units, meaning customers no longer need to experience as significant of a leak to qualify for assistance.

Short-Term Rentals (STRs) are not eligible for the CAAP program. However, a significant number of applications have been submitted by STR owners falsely claiming the property as their primary residence. This has created a substantial administrative burden for staff, who must verify the legitimacy of each request.

Note: STR owners may be eligible for an income tax reduction on utility expenses, including water. It is recommended that they seek professional tax advice for further guidance.

Because the CAAP program is both unique and highly generous compared to similar agency offerings, staff does not recommend modifying the current policy.

Instead, staff recommends expanding the Inland SoCal United Way assistance program to provide additional support to low-income customers, rather than altering the CAAP program.

RECOMMENDATION:

Considerations:

- Maintain the current Customer Account Assistance Program (CAAP) as is.
- Increase Inland SoCal United Way low-income assistance program to \$200/year.

- Provide a presentation to the Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) for input and return to the Board with further recommendations.

ATTACHMENTS:

FISCAL IMPACT: N/A