



AGENDA

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Wednesday, September, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.

Meeting Attendance is available in person at 61750 Chollita Rd, Joshua Tree, CA 92252, by phone at 1 (669) 444-9171, or virtually by using the following link:

[Zoom Link Board Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 872 8707 9239 Passcode: 61750

OUR 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. **CONSIDERATION OF TELECONFERENCING NOTIFICATIONS OR REQUESTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**
3. **DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM**
4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
5. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

This is the time set aside for public comment on any District related matter, whether appearing on the agenda or not. Under 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, however, comments on a particular Agenized item may be deferred until that item is heard. Please state your name and limit your comments to 3 minutes.

6. **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.

7. **ITEM(S) PULLED FROM CONSENT CALENDAR FOR DISCUSSION**

8. **ACTION CALENDAR**

A. UCM FINDINGS

PRESENTED BY: SARAH JOHNSON, GENERAL MANAGER

RECOMMENDED ACTION: FOR INFORMATION ONLY

B. LIHWAP

PRESENTED BY: DAVID SHOOK, DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION

RECOMMENDED ACTION: FOR INFORMATION ONLY

9. **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS AND REPORTS**

For informational purposes only on subjects not covered by the agenda. No action is to be taken. The Board may provide staff with requests for future agenda items.

A. GENERAL MANAGERS REPORT

B. DIRECTOR REPORTS AND COMMENTS

10. **CLOSED SESSION –**

CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS (Govt. Code § 54957.6)

Agency Designated Representatives: Sarah Johnson, General Manager

Unrepresented Employee: All District Employees

11. **ADJOURNMENT**

CALENDAR REMINDER - FUTURE DIRECTOR MEETINGS	DATE/TIME		ATTENDEE(S)
CITIZEN’S ADVISORY COUNSEL	09/12/23	5:30PM	For information only
JBWD - FINANCE COMMITTEE	09/13/23	9:00AM	Floen/Doolittle
JBWD – WRO COMMITTEE	09/13/23	10:30AM	Doolittle/Jarlsberg
JBWD – REGULAR MEETING	09/20/23	5:30PM	All

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.



Board of Directors Staff Report

MEETING DATE: 09/06/23
PRESENTED BY: Sarah Johnson, General Manager
TOPIC: **Utility Cost Management (UCM) Findings**
RECOMMENDATION: For Information Only

ANALYSIS:

In May 2023, the District engaged Utility Cost Management (UCM) services to analyze the district's electricity, gas, and garbage utility billings to identify charges that do not comply with the rules and regulations governing utility providers in California.

UCM completed the following steps:

- Obtained copies of utility bills for Electricity, Gas, and Waste services
- Reviewed each bill in light of each utility's rates and regulations
- Obtained historical billing data, including 15-minute interval data

After UCM's analysis, UCM discovered no findings for gas and waste services. They did, however, uncover three findings for Southern California Edison (SCE), which include making a change to one account for time-of-use, one account reclassification change, and canceling one account with no use. These three changes to SCE accounts will generate approximately \$8,500 in annual savings. Regardless of which changes are approved, long-lasting benefits are likely to accrue over many years.

See the attached report for more information.

STRATEGIC PLAN ITEM: Goal 1.0 - Maintain and enhance the operational efficiency and reliability of the District's water resources and infrastructure.

FISCAL IMPACT: \$8,500 in annual savings, less 42% UCM portion for 3 years. However, the savings will be 100% to the district after this period.



UTILITY COST MANAGEMENT LLC

www.utilitycostmanagement.com

July 13, 2023

Sarah Johnson
General Manager
Joshua Basin Water District
PO Box 675
Joshua Tree, CA, 92252

Dear Ms. Johnson:

Utility Cost Management LLC (UCM) has completed its review of the Joshua Basin Water District's (the "District") electricity, gas, and waste accounts, and is submitting this "Findings Letter" to summarize the results of our review. UCM has identified three (3) potential beneficial utility billing changes that, if implemented, will reduce the District's ongoing costs by \$8,500 per year. It is clear that District staff have done an excellent job of monitoring utility accounts and rates to minimize costs. Nevertheless, the savings opportunities that UCM has identified are worthwhile and likely long-lasting.

Please note that the recommended billing changes and estimated savings are based on UCM's review of historical billing information and data during the past 12 to 36 months. Because our findings are based on a great deal of data, we are confident that UCM's rate changes will generate savings. These three (3) billing changes will be achieved without capital outlays of any kind. Keep in mind that UCM's recommendations will have no impact on how or when the District uses service from its utility providers – the only thing that will change is the price paid for those services. The information in this letter is based on tariffs and regulations that govern the rates and charges assessed by each utility provider. If you would like more information regarding these tariffs or on UCM's rationale for recommending any changes, please let me know.

I have summarized the available opportunities on the enclosed chart titled "Joshua Basin Water District – Summary of Savings Opportunities Identified by Utility Cost Management LLC". As UCM moves forward with this project and gathers additional information, this chart may be revised and updated.

Methodology

The process UCM used to reach its conclusions about the District's accounts began with copies of utility bills provided by you and written authorization forms allowing UCM to gather additional information from utility providers – primarily Southern California Edison (SCE).

In examining each bill, UCM's goal was to consider utility charges under the various rate options offered by each utility, to assess whether billing errors had occurred, and to identify cost effective alternatives to the existing metering and billing configurations. For investor-owned utilities like

SCE, rates and regulations are spelled out in tariffs approved by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC).

UCM's general knowledge of the District, information provided by you and utility representatives on facilities, Google Earth, and our own research helped us to assess the specific utility services for each account. Historical billing data, including detailed 15-minute interval data for various electric meters, was obtained from SCE's website, and helped us to understand consumption patterns and to investigate billing irregularities.

Below, I will explain each of the opportunities that UCM has identified. UCM identified three (3) potential changes to SCE accounts. UCM did not identify any savings opportunities for gas or waste services.

Option D for Account with High Load Factor

UCM identified one (1) SCE account on a commercial rate that will realize savings by moving from Option E of SCE's standard rate for small commercial accounts, TOU-GS-1, to Option D of the same rate. Under TOU-GS-1-E, customers pay slightly more for energy but incur no charges for demand. The absence of demand charges becomes advantageous for accounts with low energy usage relative to demand, "low load factor" accounts. TOU-GS-1-D, which does incorporate a demand charge, features generally lower energy charges and tends to be better for "high load factor" accounts, or ones in which energy usage is high relative to demand. The account identified by UCM is the shop located on 6258 Park Blvd. and will save approximately \$3,800 per year.

Commercial Account Reclassification

Currently the High-Desert Medical Center Wastewater Pump is on commercial rate TOU-GS-1-D. However, TOU-GS-1 has a maximum demand limit of 20 kW. If an account crosses this threshold three or more times in a twelve-month period, the account is automatically bumped up to TOU-GS-2. This account is often very close to this threshold, and at risk of surpassing it.

Because this account serves a pump, it qualifies for the pumping rates offered by SCE. The annual costs on one such rate, TOU-PA-2-D, are about the same as TOU-GS-1-D, but TOU-PA-2-D is about \$4,000 better than TOU-GS-2. UCM recommends switching to TOU-PA-2-D, to not only provide the account with protection from TOU-GS-2 but to also recognize some small savings now with the opportunity for even more should this account ever pass the demand threshold.

Account with No Usage

There is one pumping account, labeled as Well 11, that has had no usage for the last few years. If this account is no longer active it may be best to close it, however if the account is still needed, UCM is recommending that this account be switched off the pumping rate is it currently on and switched to a cheaper commercial rate. The reason for this suggested change is that commercial rates have lower monthly customer charges. These are flat fees you pay regardless of energy usage levels. However, a change like this comes with some risk and UCM needs to make sure you are

Sarah Johnson

July 13, 2023

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aware of what that risk is. If this account is truly associated with a water pump and that pump will be used anytime in the future, it is not worth it to make this change. The cost of using a pump on a commercial rate is higher than on a pumping rate and only one month of high usage could wipe out many months of savings. This is because while commercial rates have lower customer charges, they have higher energy usage charges. UCM will work with staff to make sure the best course of action is taken, and whether the risk is worth taking.

Next Steps

To reach its conclusions about the District's utility accounts, UCM relied upon multiple sources of information, including site details you provided, historical billing data (15-minute interval data when needed), and our own extensive knowledge of the utilities' rates and regulations. As a result, UCM is confident of its results. Nonetheless, we realize that consumption can change dramatically from year to year. If you anticipate additional changes in the coming year, it is important that you continue to keep UCM informed of these plans as much as possible. Since UCM's analyses rely heavily on historical consumption, such changes can affect our recommendations and, in some cases, can open new opportunities.

Once you have authorized UCM to move ahead with the changes, UCM will initiate the implementation process with each SCE. UCM will submit all paperwork and monitor SCE's progress in implementing the changes. UCM will oversee all dealings with the utilities beyond submitting the initial notifications, including responding to requests for information, persuading providers of the regulatory support for the changes requested, and ensuring that changes are made timely. Throughout these efforts, UCM will keep you apprised of our progress. Once a change has taken effect, UCM will begin to monitor monthly bills and secure data needed to calculate the District's actual savings.

We are pleased that UCM has been able to identify savings opportunities for the District, and we look forward to working with the utilities to implement these changes in the coming weeks and months. Thank you for allowing UCM to work with Joshua Water Basin District thus far.

Sincerely,

Timothy Christiansen

Timothy Christiansen

enclosure

**JOSHUA BASIN WATER DISTRICT
SUMMARY OF SAVINGS OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED BY UTILITY COST MANAGEMENT LLC**

<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>	<u>VENDOR</u>	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>CUSTOMER ACCOUNT #</u>	<u>SERVICE ACCOUNT #</u>	<u>CURRENT RATE</u>	<u>NEW RATE</u>	<u>ANNUAL SAVINGS (A)</u>
Option D for Account with High Load Factor								
Shop	6258 Park Blvd	SCE	ELEC	700125892102	8003653670	TOU-GS-1-E	TOU-GS-1-D	\$3,800
Commercial Account Reclassification								
HDMCWW	6878 Mojave Ranch Rd	SCE	ELEC	700125860877	8002606930	TOU-GS-1-D	TOU-PA-2-D	\$4,000
Account with No Usage								
Well 11	6227 1/2 Sunburst St.	SCE	ELEC	700125860877	8000391511	TOU-PA-2-E	Close Account	\$700
TOTAL SAVINGS								\$8,500

NOTE: (A) All amounts are estimates. Actual savings will vary. In some cases, requested changes may be denied by utility or regulatory authorities.



Board of Directors Staff Report

MEETING DATE: September 9, 2023
PRESENTED BY: David Shook – Director of Administration
TOPIC: Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)
RECOMMENDATION: For Information Only

ANALYSIS:

To assist customers who needed assistance with past due water bills. We recruited members of Community Action Partnership with San Bernardino County (CAPSBC), who came to visit our district with the sole purpose of providing funds back to the district on behalf of customers with past due notices.

LIHWAP Event Day 1 took place on June 20, 2023, during which we had approximately 40 visitors and were able to assist 23 actual customers, totaling \$16,538.54. This was an average of \$719.06 per customer. The lowest amount was \$323, and the highest was \$2,272. We also assisted a customer of High Desert Water District (HDWD also applied to take part in LIHWAP), and that person's assistance was \$298. The members of CAPSBC were more than willing to help this individual as well. Coincidentally, during this event, the storage shed was being cleaned out. We were able to provide visitors with JBWD items like low-flow shower and faucet heads and refillable cups with straws.

LIHWAP Event Day 2 took place on July 20, 2023, during which we had approximately 35 visitors and were able to assist 22 actual customers, totaling \$17,384.26. This was an average of \$790.19 per customer. The lowest amount was \$269, and the highest amount was \$1,197.29. We again provided visitors with JBWD items.

LIHWAP Event Day 3 took place on August 10, 2023, during which we had approximately 12 visitors and were able to assist 6 actual customers, totaling \$13,905.05. This was an average of \$2,317.50 per customer. The lowest amount was \$353, and the highest amount was \$6,975.23.

Overall: The LIHWAP events helped 51 customers for a total of \$47,827.80, averaging \$937.80.

The district invested \$202.19 in coffee and donuts as incentives; and helium for balloons as attention grabbers to draw customers in to meet our amazing staff and get the help they needed. This small investment saved \$47,827.80 in potential bad debt in the near future but more importantly, provided relief to low-income families. This process allowed our staff to avoid implementing penalties for non-payment and alleviated the burden of sending out notices pertaining to service shut-off. Many received email invitations for these events, yet multiple visitors said, "I saw the sign outside that said, 'Water Bill Help', so I stopped in," and similar.

In my opinion, another important factor was hosting customers in-house, contributing to our transparency and improved optics.

STRATEGIC PLAN ITEM: 5.0 Educate and engage with customers, community, and partners.

5.1 Continue Public Information Outreach Program

5.2 Establish Effective Protocols for Communication with Customers and Partners

5.3 Enhance Relationships with External Partners and Agencies

FISCAL IMPACT: \$47,827.80 to receive on behalf of 51 customer accounts