



**CALAVERAS COUNTY WATER DISTRICT
EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**

**MINUTES
OCTOBER 31, 2023**

The following Committee Members were present:

Director Underhill
Director Thomas

Staff Present:

Michael Minkler, General Manager
Rebecca Hitchcock, Clerk to the Board
Kelly Richards, Customer Service Supervisor
Kelly Gerkenmeyer, Water Resources Specialist
Kate Jesus, Engineering Coordinator
Stacey Lollar, Human Resources Manager
Jesse Hampton, Plant Operations Manager
Pat Burkhardt, Construction and Maintenance Manager
Mark Rincon-Ibarra, District Engineer

Others Present:

Ralph Copeland
Francisco de la Cruz
Mike Rodgers
Mike Castro
Cindy Secada

ORDER OF BUSINESS

CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

1. ROLL CALL

Director Underhill called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mike Rodgers thanked the District for the tour of the Jenny Lind Water Treatment Plant and would like to do more tours.

3. NEW BUSINESS

3a External Affairs Update
(Kelly Gerkenmeyer, External Affairs Manager)

Discussion: Kelly Gerkenmeyer gave a presentation on how he plans to handle public outreach. He wants to focus on community, communication, inform/educate, and metrics. He has recently planned community tours of facilities and would like to broaden that to virtual tours in order to

reach more people. There are plans for town halls and special events as well. He addressed various ways to communicate with customers such as Facebook, Nextdoor, Instagram, and Twitter. There are plans for a newsletter and an updates bill backer with information. He plans on creating documentation on past, current, and future CIP projects to educate customers on what the District is doing. He discussed the tour of Jenny Lind and how informative it was. He reviewed changes that have been made to the website and planned website improvements. He stated the Ops report is not being extracted from the Board meeting videos and posted separately on the Operations page on the website to make it simpler to view the report out. There was discussion between Mr. Gerkenmeyer and the Committee regarding the outreach plan.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mike Rogers asked to be involved in website changes.

Francisco de la Cruz asked about metrics for water quality compared to other agencies and report outs on grants.

3b Customer Service Update
(Kelly Richards, Business Services Manager)

Discussion: Kelly Richards reported on the following items: 1) call queues, emails, and work orders; 2) the Customer Portal update; 3) the Customer Assistance program including the open slots in Water and Wastewater; 4) and the recruitment for the vacant Customer Service Representative. There was discussion between Ms. Richards and the Committee regarding the types of customer service calls the department is experiencing. Director Thomas was very surprised to hear about the openings in the assistance program.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mike Rogers asked about the convenience fee and what type of payments they are assessed on.

Mike Castro asked if the District makes a profit off the convenience fees or if they strictly pay the cost of the transaction. He also asked about the funding behind the Customer Assistance Program.

Francisco de la Cruz commented on how expensive it is to accept credit cards. He also addressed concerns about how long it is taking for the customer portal.

4. GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

Mr. Minkler reported the following items: 1) the Copper Cove Lift Station project is underway and spoke of the outreach plans for residents; 2) the Redwood tank project and West Point Water Treatment project completions and possible ribbon cutting ceremonies; 3) he is presenting at the MCWRA Water Forum regarding infrastructure funding; and 4) legislation that is being tracked such as Water Rights Reform and the Water Bond.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Ralph Copeland asked about the Copper Cove Lift Station project.

5. DIRECTOR COMMENTS OR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Director Thomas thanked the advisory group and would like a customer portal update in December.

Director Underhill also thanked the advisory group and asked if they have any participation from Ebbetts Pass.

6. NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

- Tuesday, November 28, 2023, at 1:00 p.m.- The meeting was moved to December 7, 2023.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:22 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Rebecca Hitchcock
Clerk to the Board