

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
February 4, 2021
RUBIDOUX COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Armando Muniz
Bernard Murphy
John Skerbelis
F. Forest Trowbridge
Hank Trueba, Jr.

DIRECTORS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Jeffrey Sims, General Manager
Ted Beckwith, Director of Engineering
Brian Laddusaw, Director of Finance
Brian Jennings, Manager Budgeting and Accounting
Miguel Valdez, Manager M & O
L. Bugbee, System Operator III

Call to order: the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Rubidoux Community Services District by President Skerbelis, at 4:00 P.M., Thursday, February 4, 2020, by teleconferencing at District Office, 3590 Rubidoux Boulevard, Jurupa Valley, California.

ITEM 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of Minutes for January 21, 2021, Board Meeting.

Director Trueba moved, and Director Trowbridge seconded to approve the January 21, 2021 Regular Board Minutes.

Roll call:

Ayes – 5 (Muniz, Murphy, Skerbelis, Trowbridge, Trueba)

Noes – 0

Abstain – 0

Away – 0

The motion was carried unanimously.

ITEM 5. Consideration to Approve the February 5, 2021 Salaries, Expenses and Transfers.

Consideration to Approve the February 5, 2021 Salaries, Expenses and Transfers.

Director Muniz moved, and Director Trowbridge seconded to Approve the February 5, 2021 Salaries, Expenses and Transfers

Roll call:

Ayes – 5 (Muniz, Murphy, Skerbelis, Trowbridge, Trueba)

Noes – 0

Abstain – 0

Absent – 0

The motion was carried unanimously.

ITEM 6. PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGE OF NON-AGENDA MATTERS

There were no members of the public at this time.

ITEM 7. CORRESPONDENCE AND RELATED INFORMATION

The first item was a letter of correspondence to the Riverside County’s Board of Supervisors regarding the inclusion of past-due water customers in Riverside County’s COVID-19 renter relief distribution. This letter dated January 22, 2021 is signed by the general managers of WMWD’s eleven (11) retail agencies looking to get help from the Federal Government from the COVID-19 relief to be used towards rental assistance and water utilities. The next piece of information was an article from the California Water News Daily stating that the water-debt is up to \$1 billion statewide.

ITEM 8. MANAGER’S REPORT

Operations Report:

Presented at the second board meeting of the month.

Emergency and Fire Report:

Presented at the second board meeting of the month.

ITEM 9. Consider Approval of Purchase Order with Center Electric for SCADA System Upgrades. DM 2021-07.

BACKGROUND

The District installed its current SCADA several years ago and certain components have become outdated and obsolete. For example, the PLC boards at several sites are not available new from the OEM vendor and must be procured on eBay. This does not represent a reliable source for the District. Additionally, the computer that provides update notifications of alarms runs on an operating system that is outdated causing the SCADA software to lock up and present a “blue screen”. In layman terms, the computer freezes and goes into a “Check Disk” mode to check the data disk for errors. While in this mode, District staff is blind on functionality of District systems – tank levels, lift station operation, and if wells and treatment systems are operating.

To correct, the computer must be manually reset, and data is not recorded nor are alarms sent out. The District is a 24 hour, 7 days a week, 365 days a year operation and has critical infrastructure serving the community and customers. It relies on accurate and timely data to operate efficiently and safely. The current SCADA computer runs on Windows XP which is far beyond the End-of-Life date of April 8, 2014. The End-of-Life date is the date Microsoft stopped supporting it. The current SCADA software is also no longer supported. In the last week, the state of this computer and implications on the SCADA system operability came to bear when tank levels were found to be very low over a weekend. The current SCADA is at a point now where it needs to be updated to run on current hardware and software with real-time data reporting and alarms available to staff to run the system. Delay puts the District at risk of operational failure and significant regulatory consequences.

Staff proposes a two-pronged approach to provide new equipment and much needed redundancy in the SCADA system.

Now available are cellular data connected devices that report data to a cloud server. This data is accessible to staff anywhere there is an internet connection, a feature not available when the current SCADA system was installed. This system is a web based "Internet of Things" (IoT) from Samsara and is easy to deploy and can be set up quickly to meet immediate needs. This system is proposed to be utilized at the new Ion Exchange Treatment System being installed at the Leland Thompson WTF starting construction in the next few weeks. The devices in this system use their own cell service which is included in the purchase price and connect to cloud-based web servers to relay data back to District staff allowing the system to be monitored and staff to make quick, data based informed decisions. Thus, the first prong of approach is to add the Samsara devices at four water tanks and three lift stations.

Although this request is to update to this new web-based system, staff believes SCADA redundancy is a necessity in providing clean drinking water and a sanitary sewage disposal system. As such, staff is recommending as the second prong of this approach that the original SCADA system be retained and the current PC running this system upgraded to avoid blue screens (system freezes) from occurring. This will be a short-term fix since this system is old and reaching its end-of-life making replacement necessary in the next year or so. The District's current SCADA system operates by radio on a frequency the District owns and runs independently of other communication systems, such as cellular/cloud-based systems. This redundancy would be helpful in the event of the failure of cellular/cloud-based systems due to natural disaster or other calamity that may occur as the current SCADA relies on both land line and cell service to send out alarms and notifications. Staff is in process of investigating the needs of the SCADA, both functional requirements and in material requirements, and will propose an upgrade and replacement program with the 2021-2022 Fiscal Year Budget. In the event of an emergency, the District has backup generators to run this system from our Administrative Office, and with radio technology communication, is not wholly reliant on cell, or the internet. It is for this reason staff will later be updating this system to be current.

Each Samsara device has its own cell service and contains an internal hard drive for distributed data storage. With ability in the event of cell service being out, when cell services resume the stored data will upload to the web server. Each device has a cost of \$9,000 including installation and programming. There is currently one in use at the Jurupa Hills Lift Station on a trial basis and it is working very well.

This current request is to obtain seven (7) additional Samsara devices, each one to be located at the District's four reservoir (tank) sites (Watson, Atkins, Hunter and Perone) and three additional devices to be located at the remaining lift stations at Belltown, Fleetwood, and Exmoor Lift Stations. This is a cost of \$36,000 for Water and \$27,000 for Sewer for a total of \$63,000.

At the January 21, 2021 Board Meeting staff requested and the Board approved \$200,000 for Electrical Work, including SCADA, as part of the new Ion Exchange Project at the Leland Thompson WTF under DM 2021-04. The proposal from Center Electric to do this work has been fine tuned to be only \$135,000, leaving \$65,000 remaining. It is proposed to re-direct some of this \$65,000 from the Ion Exchange Project to providing new Samsara SCADA devices at all District reservoirs for \$36,000.

At the January 21, 2021 Board Meeting staff requested and the Board approved \$70,000 for the purchase of a Sewer Bypass Pump under DM 2021-05. Staff revisited this and has determined due to the anticipated infrequency of use it would be better to rent a sewer bypass pump on an as needed basis rather than purchase one to sit at our Field Office unused for long periods of time. This previously appropriated money would better serve the District being deployed for upgrading the SCADA for the lift stations. It is proposed here to re-direct this already approved sewer funding from the purchase of a sewer bypass pump to providing new Samsara SCADA devices at the balance of our sewer lift stations for \$27,000.

Director Trowbridge moved, and Director Muniz seconded the Board of Directors approve the General Manager to:

- 1. Reallocate previously approved funding for Electrical Work at the Ion Exchange project in the amount of \$36,000 for SCADA for Water Production.**
- 2. Reallocate previously approved funding for a Sewer Bypass Pump in the amount of \$27,000 for SCADA for Sewage Disposal.**
- 3. Authorize the General Manager to procure seven (7) Samsara SCADA devices, four (4) for Water and three (3) for Sewage Disposal from Center Electric, which price includes installation and programming.**

Roll call:

Ayes – 5 (Muniz, Murphy, Skerbelis, Trowbridge, Trueba)

Noes – 0

Abstain – 0

Absent – 0

The motion was carried unanimously.

ITEM 10. Closed Session: Closed Session: REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATIONS – Discussion concerning price and terms. Negotiator: Jeffrey D. Sims.

5:12 - No Reportable Action.

ITEM 11. Directors Comments

Director Skerbelis adjourned the meeting at 5:21 PM.