

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

April 2, 2020

RUBIDOUX COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

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

DIRECTORS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Jeffrey Sims, Asst. General Manager/District Engineer
Brian Laddusaw, Director of Finance
Brian Jennings, Manager Budgeting & Accounting

Call to order: the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Rubidoux Community Services District by Director Murphy, at 4:00 P.M., Thursday, April 2, 2020, by teleconferencing at District Office, 3590 Rubidoux Boulevard, Jurupa Valley, California.

ITEM 4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Approval of Minutes for March 19, 2020, Special Board Meeting.

Director Trueba moved and Director Skerbelis seconded to approve the March 19, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes.

Roll call:

Ayes – 4 (Murphy, Skerbelis, Trowbridge, Trueba)

Noes – 0

Abstain – 0

Away – 1 (Muniz)

The motion was carried unanimously.

ITEM 5. Consideration to Ratify March 24, 2020, Salary and Retirement Pay; Approve the April 3, 2020 the Salaries, Expenses and Transfers.

Consideration to: Ratify March 24, 2020, Salary and Retirement Pay; Approve the April 3, 2020 the Salaries, Expenses and Transfers.

Director Trueba moved and Director Skerbelis seconded to Ratify the March 24, 2020, Salaries, Expenses and Transfers; Approve the April 3, 2020 Salaries, Expenses and Transfers.

Roll call:

Ayes – 4 (Murphy, Skerbelis, Trowbridge, Trueba,)

Noes – 0

Abstain – 0

Away – 1 (Muniz)

The motion was carried unanimously.

ITEM 6. PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGE OF NON-AGENDA MATTERS

There was no one in the audience to address the board.

ITEM 7. CORRESPONDENCE AND RELATED INFORMATION

The first article was information on COVID-19 from the Mercury News in northern California. A worker at a San Jose wastewater plant tested positive for COVID-19 and 17 employees were in self-quarantine. This resulted in the plant running at 70% staffing.

ITEM 8. MANAGER’S REPORT

Operations Report:

RCSD implemented a modified work schedule on March 23, 2020. Staff has been split into five 8-hr work schedules with a 1-hr lunch. On a rotating weekly basis, half of the staff (field and office) are working remotely from home and on stand-by in case reporting staff runs into a situation where they need support, staff members become sick or need to quarantine due to exposure or suspected exposure to COVID-19. Management staff reports every week and keeping the regular 4/10 work schedule, with three days in the office and one day working remotely. To accommodate remote working, the District worked coordinate with its IT support consultant and purchased VPN (virtual private network) licenses and additional lap top computers. So far remote capabilities are working well.

Staff is still working with Hazen and Sawyer regarding the PFAS compounds. That problem has not gone away. As soon as a revised sampling and reporting Order is received from the State Water Board, the District will have approximately one-year to implement necessary treatment or develop alternative water supplies. Ron Young, the District’s Assistant Engineer, retired March 19, 2020. Two District positions are currently being recruited. The first is for the Assistant Engineer’s replacement. The second is for Director of Engineering position. The recruitments closed on April 3, 2020. The goal is to have the new positions start by mid-May or early June 2020. Benny Manrique has been promoted to the Cross-Connection/Pretreatment position, Miguel Valdez’s previous position.

Emergency and Fire Report:

Presented at second meeting of the month.

ITEM 9. Consider Award of a Professional Services Contract to Blais & Associates for Grant Support Services: DM 2020-20.

BACKGROUND

Rubidoux Community Services District (“Rubidoux”) is faced with the prospect of expending significant funds in the future related to its water and sewer operations.

Examples include:

1. Addition of treatment processes to mitigate PFA Compounds in the District’s water wells. Recent reduction of the Response Limits for PFOA and PFOS by the State Water Resources Control Board creates a situation where the District must add treatment within the next 12 to 18 months. Estimated cost for this is estimated from \$2 to \$4 million.
2. Addition of treatment to mitigate total dissolved solids (“TDS”) in the District’s drinking water wells. Due to relatively high ambient TDS levels in the District’s drinking water wells, sewer discharged to the City of Riverside has a TDS concentration above the City limit of 650 mg/l. Options to remove TDS is through reverse osmosis treatment or to blend with imported low TDS water. Either of these options will have significant expense.

A strategy to mitigate expenses on major projects is to seek and obtain approval for grants and low interest loans through local, state, and federal programs. Given competition for grant funding is high, it is advisable to obtain professional support with expertise in research and preparation of grant/loan applications. Staff has discussed its’ situation with Blais & Associates (“Blais”). Blais is a specialty consulting firm with expertise in researching disadvantaged community status, looking for and researching various grant/loan programs, and application development.

Blais has provided the District with a time and materials proposal, attached. Tasks 1 through 3 are more research and guidance related with a cost of \$5,250. Task 4 in the amount of \$8,400, is an estimated amount for assistance in the development and preparation of grant/loan application(s). The total is \$13,650. Staff is recommending approval for the entire amount, but initially authorizing Blais for Tasks 1 – 3 (\$5,250), with Task 4 authorized after a viable grant/loan opportunity is identified and the District decides to apply.

Funding for this work is proposed to come from Water Fund Reserves.

Director Trueba moved and Director Skerbelis seconded the Board of Directors authorize the Assistant General Manager to:

1. **Execute a professional services agreement with Blais and Associates in the amount of \$13,650 for grant/loan support services.**
2. **Amend the FY 2019-2020 District Budget by allocating \$13,650 for this effort to the District’s Water Capital Improvement Project Fund for a new line item under Operating Expenses entitled – “Water Supply Projects.”**

Roll call:

Ayes – 4 (Murphy, Skerbelis, Trowbridge, Trueba)

Noes – 0

Abstain – 0

Away – 1 (Muniz)

The motion was carried unanimously.

ITEM 10. Consideration to Approve and Authorize Staff to Set Solid Waste Hearing Pursuant to Prop 218 for Trash Rate Increase for FY 2020-2021: DM 2020-21.

BACKGROUND

The Solid Waste (“Trash”) Committee of the Board (Directors Trueba and Skerbelis) has met with staff and a representative of Burrtec Industries (“Burrtec”) to discuss Burrtec proposed rate increases to the trash rates.

Burrtec proposes a rate increase for District trash services for the upcoming FY 2020-2021. Burrtec attributes the bulk of the increase to:

1. Continued uncertainty and instability related to disposition of recyclables
2. Increases to tipping fees by the County of Riverside for solid waste and green waste that are being passed through without markup
3. Annual inflator consistent with the District’s agreement with Burrtec negotiated in 2008

The District is not proposing an increase to its Administrative Fee of \$0.25/month per customer.

With respect to the residential solid waste rates, a 7.04% rate increase is proposed for 90-gallon barrels for FY 2020-2021. Customers with 90-gallon barrels represent the bulk of the District’s Trash customers. Commercial customers will see increases based on their level of service (bin size and pickup frequency).

Below is a breakdown showing the current and proposed rates by cost component for 90-gallon customers:

Cost Component	Current	Proposed	Change	Change
	(\$)	(\$)	(\$)	(%)
CPI	\$ 16.41	\$ 16.88	\$ 0.47	2.86%
Landfill tipping fee	\$ 7.07	\$ 7.67	\$ 0.60	8.49%
Recycling	\$ 0.99	\$ 1.91	\$ 0.92	92.93%
Greenwaste	\$ 3.26	\$ 3.24	\$ (0.02)	-0.61%
RCSD Admin Fee	\$ 0.25	\$ 0.25	\$ -	0.00%
Total	\$ 27.98	\$ 29.95	\$ 1.97	7.04%

If authorized, the following rate implementation schedule is proposed:

- April 2, 2020 – Board consideration to authorize staff to initiate Prop. 218 process for increase in trash rates
- April 3, 2020 – Prepare Prop. 218 Notice & Rates and update property tax ownership rolls
- No later than April 3, 2020 – Mail Prop. 218 Notices to property owners and renters
- May 1, 2020 – Draft Resolution available at the District Office and on the District website
- June 18, 2020 (Board Meeting) – Protest Election and Hearing for the proposed solid waste rates
- June 18, 2020 (Board Meeting) – Adopt the Rate Adjustment Resolution
- July 1, 2020 – New solid waste rates in effect

Staff has evaluated the impact if customer rates are not adjusted consistent with the proposed Burrtec rate increases. In the absence of adjusting customer rates, the District would experience an approximate \$9,500 per month deficit of revenue versus monthly billing from Burrtec for services provided. Built into the current rate structure is an approximate \$100,000 transfer from the Trash Fund to the General Fund. This transfer covers expenses the District incurs to provide trash service to its customers. For example – billing, responding to customer concerns, managing the Burrtec contract, postage, etc. Any prolonged implementation of increasing the trash rates may result in other enterprise funds subsidizing the Trash Fund, which is not recommended.

Director Trueba moved and Director Trowbridge seconded the Board of Directors authorize Staff to prepare and set the solid waste Protest Hearing pursuant to Proposition 218 for consideration of increased solid waste customers rates.

Roll call:

Ayes – 4 (Murphy, Skerbelis, Trowbridge, Trueba)

Noes – 0

Abstain – 0

Away – 1 (Muniz)

The motion was carried unanimously.

***Director Muniz joined back in on the teleconference meeting.**

ITEM 11. Consider Weed Abatement Contractor Fulfillment. DM 2020-22.

BACKGROUND

The District contracts with County of Riverside (County), on behalf of the Fire Department, through its Cooperative Fire Programs Fire Protection Reimbursement Agreement (“Agreement”). The Agreement is in effect until June 30, 2021.

This Agreement provides fire protection, hazardous materials mitigation, technical rescue response, fire marshal, medical emergency services and public service assists.

The Fire Marshal has an assigned Fire Prevention Technician (Weed Abatement Officer) for the District.

The Weed Abatement Officer duties for the District include but are not limited to, weed abatement contractor fulfillment, noticing parcel owners of violation(s), direction and oversight of weed abatement contractor(s), inspections and re-inspections, weed abatement contractor invoice review, and reporting to County Assessor Office parcel assessments to tax roll for weed abatement efforts undertaken due to non-response by the property owner.

CONTRACTOR FULFILLMENT:

Historically, each February/March the Weed Abatement Officer prepares a Weed Abatement Bid package for soliciting abatement contractors. A Public Notice is published in the Press Enterprise. As the Board is aware, contractor participation has been limited, at best, often with only one contractor submitting a bid. This year, District staff reached out to the Fire Marshal office for assistance with this process.

The County of Riverside Fire Marshal has indicated they can provide Weed Abatement Contractor Service on the District’s behalf using bidding process the County of Riverside undertook in 2016 to secure County wide weed abatement services. Staff contacted District Counsel, John Harper to confirm if this would be acceptable for the District as an alternative to conducting its own Weed Abatement Contractor bidding process. Mr. Harper

indicated the District can utilize weed abatement contractor(s) identified through the County's bidding process.

In 2016, County Contracts department opened and completed the bidding process for Weed Abatement Contractor services. The County currently has a five (5) year Service Agreement effective June 1, 2017 through June 30, 2022.

The County Weed Abatement Agreement has one (1) primary and four (4) secondary On-Call contractors available. Of the listed bidders, it's noted that Scott Tractor and Inland Empire Property Services have provided weed abatement services for the District in the past.

The Fire Marshal office indicated the District's unit pricing would be based on "Area 3" of the pricing schedule. The Unit Price for the Primary, 2nd and 3rd contractors are all in line with District pricing from the past.

Going forward County Fire Marshal will provide Weed Abatement Contractor Services on behalf of the District.

Director Murphy moved and Director Trowbridge seconded the Rubidoux Community Services District Board of Directors Receive and File.

Roll Call:

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

Noes – 0

Abstain – 0

The motion was carried unanimously.

ITEM 12. CLOSED EXECUTIVE SESSION – Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9: Legal Counsel Status on Litigation Case No. CIVDS 1310520, City of Riverside vs. Rubidoux Community Services District.

The courts are closed.

ITEM 13. Directors Comments.

Director Murphy adjourned the meeting at 4:43 pm.