

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE  
COMMITTEE MEETING  
OF THE RAINBOW MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT  
JUNE 3, 2021**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – The Communications and Customer Service Committee Meeting of the Rainbow Municipal Water District on June 3, 2021, was called to order by Chairperson Shute at 3:32 p.m. in the Board Room of the District, 3707 Old Highway 395, Fallbrook, CA 92028. (*Due to COVID restrictions the meetings are being held virtually.*) Chairperson Shute presiding.

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

3. **ROLL CALL:**

**Present:** Member Hamilton (*via video conference*), Member Stewart (*arrived at 3:43 p.m.*), Member Shute (*via video conference*), Member Vernon (*via video conference*), Alternate Gray (*via video conference*).

**Also Present:** General Manager Kennedy, Executive Assistant Washburn, Information Technology Manager Khattab.

**Also Present Via Teleconference or Video Conference:**

Finance Manager Largent.

One member of the public was present via teleconference or video teleconference.

4. **INSTRUCTIONS TO ALLOW PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS FROM THOSE ATTENDING THIS MEETING VIA TELECONFERENCE OR VIDEO CONFERENCE**

Mr. Shute read aloud the instructions for those attending the meeting via teleconference or video conference.

5. **SEATING OF ALTERNATES**

Ms. Gray was seated as an alternate.

6. **ADDITIONS/DELETIONS/AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA (Government Code §54954.2)**

There were no changes to the agenda.

7. **PUBLIC COMMENT RELATING TO ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA (Limit 3 Minutes)**

There were no comments.

\*8. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. May 6, 2021

**Motion:**

**To approve the minutes as written.**

**Action: Approve, Moved by Member Vernon, Seconded by Alternate Gray.**

**Vote: Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote (summary: Ayes = 4).**

**Ayes: Member Hamilton, Member Shute, Member Vernon, Alternate Gray.**

**Absent: Member Stewart.**

**9. GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS AND UPDATE ON REOPENING THE RMWD HEADQUARTERS**

Mr. Kennedy reported CalOSHA continues to meet regarding reopening requirements as well as workplace requirements. He stated RMWD was planning to open the offices on June 15, 2021; however, the matter of public members attending meetings in person still needs to be addressed.

**10. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS**

There were no comments.

**Mr. Stewart joined the meeting at 3:43 p.m.**

Mr. Stewart apologized for missing a couple meetings lately noting it was due to personal matters.

**\*11. REVIEW OF THE FOLLOWING COMMUNICATIONS:**

- A. Rates**
- B. Backflow Charge**

Ms. Largent mentioned a customized letter will be sent notifying the customers backflow charges will commence in July. Discussion ensued regarding the costs associated with backflow testing.

Mr. Vernon suggested removing the word “do” in the sentence “you do have the option”. Mr. Kennedy recommended adding a sentence that failure to test in a timely basis can result in discontinuation of water service. Mr. Stewart suggested referencing the state law.

Discussion ensued regarding the investigation process and results.

**C. Customer Survey Questionnaire**

Mr. Vernon asked staff to explain the plan. Mr. Kennedy described some of the challenges experienced with calls not being queued properly and how staff was looking into alternative phone service options. Ms. Gray pointed out the plan was to email customers the questionnaire provided; however, this may be deferred until after the phone system issues have been resolved.

Mr. Hamilton inquired as to whether the questionnaire would be sent through an online survey service as opposed to being sent by email. Ms. Gray stated the distribution would be through Survey Monkey. She pointed out the ideal process would be to offer opportunities for customers to participate in a survey before their call concludes; however, this was not available with the current phone system.

Mr. Shute asked if an email would be generated at the conclusion of each call. Ms. Gray stated the idea was to implement a soft rollout of the questionnaire in that when customers contact the Customer Service Department via email, all emailed responses would include a link providing opportunities for those customers to complete a survey and provide feedback.

Ms. Gray solicited input from the committee members in terms of what questions should be included in the questionnaire. Mr. Shute recommended the number, type, and continuity of questions be considered to avoid not being able to track trends. Ms. Gray inquired as to the preference was to allow customers to identify the staff member with whom they spoke. Mr. Vernon suggested writing this in a complimentary manner. Mr. Hamilton agreed with including commonality questions but encouraged staff to recognize there may be a future need to implement tailored questions to the departments with whom the customer spoke.

#### **D. TSWAR Rate Change Notice**

Ms. Largent pointed out this communication will notify customers that have not remitted an application will be defaulted to the agricultural rate and how they will need to self-certify by a specified deadline. Discussion followed.

Mr. Hamilton asked how RMWD will determine which rates to drop customers into should they fail to self-certify by the deadline. Ms. Largent explained those customers who have not completed the PSAWR application nor self-certified will be placed under the applicable agricultural rate category.

Mr. Hamilton pointed out any agriculture customers under a certain lot size could apply for a variance. Mr. Kennedy stated this was true for the meter size; however, the rate structure is slightly different.

### **12. WATER SERVICE UPGRADE PROJECT (WSUP) PROGRAM UPDATE**

Mr. Kennedy reported the project was 56% complete. Discussion ensued.

### **13. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH ITEMS**

- A.** Topics
- B.** Calendar
- C.** Snipes Calendar
- D.** Updates from Other Committees
- E.** Customer Relations
- F.** Monthly Newsletter Review
- G.** Social Media Post Updates

Discussion went to Item #14.

Discussion returned from Item #14.

Mr. Hamilton pointed out there will be communications related to proposed rate increases. Ms. Largent confirmed letters will need to be mailed no later than July 12, 2021, to comply with regulatory requirements. Discussion ensued.

Discussion went to Item #15.

**14. REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF RMWD RELATED MEDIA STORIES**

Mr. Kennedy noted there has been a series of media publications related to the detachment matter lately which have created some minor controversy. He also pointed out he recently recorded a broadcast with KPBS.

Discussion returned to Item #13.

**15. LIST OF SUGGESTED AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT SCHEDULED COMMUNICATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE COMMITTEE MEETING**

It was noted the rate letter, as well as updates on WSUP, District reopening status, and the phone system should be on the next committee agenda.

**16. ADJOURNMENT**

*The meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Shute.*

The meeting adjourned at 4:41 p.m.

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**Bill Shute, Committee Chairperson**

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**Dawn M. Washburn, Board Secretary**