

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE
COMMITTEE MEETING
OF THE RAINBOW MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
MARCH 4, 2021**

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – The Communications and Customer Service Committee Meeting of the Rainbow Municipal Water District on March 4, 2021 was called to order by Chairperson Shute at 3:33 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 Shute *(via video conference)*, Member Vernon *(via video conference)*, Member Stewart *(arrived at 3:54 p.m. via video conference)*.

Also Present Via Teleconference or Video Conference:

General Manager Kennedy, Executive Assistant Washburn, Alternate Gray, Finance Manager Largent, Information and Technology Manager Khattab, Information and Technology Specialist Espino, Construction and Maintenance Supervisor Lagunas.

Two members of the public were 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 via teleconference or video conference.

5. **SEATING OF ALTERNATES**

There were no alternates seated.

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. February 4, 2021

Motion:

To approve the minutes of February 4, 2021.

Action: Approve, Moved by Member Hamilton, Seconded by Member Vernon.

Vote: Motion carried by unanimous roll call vote (summary: Ayes = 3).

Ayes: Member Hamilton, Member Shute, Member Vernon.

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

Mr. Kennedy stated although vaccinations are rolling out, the District was taken some additional steps to make all staff members eligible to receive the vaccines in hopes the District could start a process for reopening in the near future.

Mr. Kennedy also mentioned after several years, RMWD is scheduled to receive its portion of the amount paid to SDCWA by MWD as a result of their lawsuit. He noted the District's share totals approximately \$1.2 million which should be received soon. He stated once received, it will be up to the Board to determine how the money will be utilized. Discussion ensued.

10. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Vernon requested the committee be provided with an opportunity to review the 2020 Water Quality Report before it is finalized. Mr. Kennedy offered to run a draft by the committee. Mr. Vernon suggested an introductory page on the District's website describing what the document contains may be beneficial.

Discussion returned from Item #11.

Mr. Stewart noted he has been paying attention to recent articles in the local media related to the \$5 billion SDCWA project.

Discussion went to Item #12.

11. WATER SERVICES UPGRADE PROJECT (WSUP) UPDATE

Mr. Kennedy reported the project crested 45% completion in the last week and things were going smoothly. He explained why it was necessary to shift some of the project funds, but that it would be a zero-cost change order.

Mr. Stewart joined the meeting at 3:54 p.m.

Discussion returned to Item #10.

12. PERMANENT SPECIAL AGRICULTURAL WATER RATE (PSAWR) OUTREACH UPDATE

Mr. Kennedy updated the committee on what staff has been working on with SDCWA and the Regional Board regarding the requirements for customers to qualify for this program. He also noted member agencies are asking SDCWA to extend the deadline. Discussion ensued.

13. INITIAL REVIEW OF STRATEGIC PLAN COMMITTEE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Mr. Kennedy displayed the communications portion of the current Strategic Plan recently approved by the Board.

Mr. Shute pointed out the word “education” should be “educated” in the third bullet on the page related to Communications. He stated in looking at the bullet points, it was obvious the committee and staff spends a great deal of time on the first one. He inquired as to what direction the committee should take on the other two. Mr. Kennedy explained Ms. Gray spent a great deal of time working with the local schools up until the pandemic outbreak; however, it is anticipated this work will pick up again once the schools reopen. Mr. Shute asked if the committee should review the initiative and then determine the manner in which it should be addressed.

Mr. Kennedy offered to have Ms. Gray put together information on the activities RMWD has been involved in with the schools as well as for human resources to present a slide show of some of the internal activities that have taken place.

Mr. Shute solicited the committee for input in terms of whether there was a need for more specificity or details to the plan for the committee to rely upon as a guide.

Ms. Gray pointed out RMWD provides education within the confines of what the schools have in their curriculum. Mr. Vernon recommended the information provided to one school be captured in a lesson made available to any school may be a useful tool.

Mr. Shute suggested some steps staff could take to assist the committee in addressing and measuring the strategic objectives. Mr. Kennedy stated these were excellent aspirational calls and although staff time was limited, presenting ongoing and upcoming items to this committee would be available. Mr. Shute clarified one of his recommendations would be for staff to brief the committee on any industry-related training on a quarterly basis which would meet one of the strategic plan initiatives.

14. ONLINE PAYMENT PROCESSOR CHANGE UPDATE

Ms. Largent reported the change was going well and how 3,530 customers have been signed up with autopay which are direct results of staff continually pushing information out to the entire customer base. She stated her goal was to get up to 80% of the customers enrolled in autopay.

Mr. Kennedy pointed out RMWD initially had 1,000 customers enrolled in autopay and how that number has already tripled.

Ms. Largent pointed out it has been helpful to explain to customers how staff took accelerated proactive action to implement a new bill pay system over the holidays in response to customer complaints regarding issues caused with the previous system. Mr. Hamilton suggested there be an article in the newsletter notifying the customers that staff has taken action to address those issues customers brought to the District’s attention.

Mr. Stewart stated he does not sign up for many things online; however, he did sign up for RMWD’s autopay and was very pleased.

15. CONSIDERATION REGARDING CONDUCTING SURVEYS TO RECEIVE CUSTOMER FEEDBACK UTILIZING THE DISTRICT’S TELEPHONE SYSTEM

Ms. Gray asked the committee for clarification on this item. Mr. Shute explained this was to discuss whether the District could implement a means for customers to stay on the line after their discussion concludes to participate in a quick customer satisfaction survey.

Mr. Kennedy stated Mr. Khattab is aware of this request; however, due to other responsibilities, he may not have had time to conduct the necessary research yet. He said he will put a reminder into Mr. Khattab and provide the committee with an update.

Ms. Gray presented the idea of researching what other agencies are utilizing by setting a goal for one her staff members to research and collect data to provide to the committee for their consideration. Mr. Vernon recommended this information be made available to the committee at their May meeting.

16. 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

Ms. Gray mentioned she received an email from the gentlemen who runs the Fallbrook Antique Car Show notifying the District this event will be postponed until Memorial Day 2022.

17. REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF RMWD RELATED MEDIA STORIES

Mr. Hamilton mentioned the article published in the Village News after he was selected to serve as RMWD's Board President.

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

It was noted all of the agenda items discussed today should be on the next agenda with Item #13 being renamed as "Review Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives".

19. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Shute.

The meeting adjourned at 4:29 p.m.

Bill Shute, Committee Chairperson

Dawn M. Washburn, Board Secretary