

**VALLEY SANITARY DISTRICT
MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING
May 12, 2020**

*******SPECIAL NOTICE – Telephonic Accessibility*******

Pursuant to Paragraph 11 of Executive Order N-25-20, executed by the Governor of California on March 12, 2020, as a response to mitigating the spread of coronavirus known as COVID-19, during the May 12, 2020 regular meeting of Valley Sanitary District Board of Directors, members of the public will be allowed to attend and address the Board of Directors during the open session of the meeting telephonically.

Members of the public wanting to listen to the open session of the meeting were able to do so by calling (425) 436-6376 and when prompted, enter access code 166514. Members of the public wanting to address the Board, either during public comment or for a specific agenda item, or both, were requested to send an email notification no later than 12:30 p.m. on the day of the meeting to the Valley Sanitary District's Clerk of the Board at hevans@valley-sanitary.org.

A regular Board Meeting of the Governing Board of Valley Sanitary District (VSD) was held at the District offices, 45-500 Van Buren Street, Indio, California, on Tuesday, May 12, 2020.

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Mike Duran called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

1.1 Roll Call

Directors Present via Telephone:

Debra Canero, Dennis Coleman (via telephone), Mike Duran, Scott Sear, William Teague

Staff Present:

Beverli A. Marshall, General Manager, Holly Gould, Tino Tijerina, Anna Bell, Nick Dean; Via Telephone: Ron Buchwald, Joanne Padgham, Ian Wilson; Karen Hopper, Steve Shepard, Ivan Monroy, Ryan Williams; Legal Counsel: Robert Hargreaves, Best Best & Krieger (via telephone)

Guests via Telephone:

Haki Dervishi, One Stop Shoppe

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

1.3 May Employee Anniversaries

- Tino Tijerina 30 years
- Anna Bell 7 years
- Austin Lopanec 5 years

1.4 New Employee Introduction

- Nick Dean, Electrical/Instrumentation Technician

The Board congratulated Tino Tijerina, Anna Bell, and Austin Lopanec on their years of service and thanked them for their continued hard work and dedication. The Board also

welcomed the District's newest staff member, Nick Dean, Electrical/Instrumentation Technician.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

This is the time set aside for public comment on any item not appearing on the agenda. Please notify the Secretary in advance of the meeting if you wish to speak on a non-hearing item.

Haki Dervishi, business owner, Indio, CA, stated that he felt bullied by the District over issues with his wife's business and requested that his wife not be targeted. He offered to give the board members his phone number.

3. CONSENT CALENDAR

3.1 Approve April 28, 2020, Regular Meeting Minutes

3.2 Approve Warrants for April 23 to May 6, 2020

ACTION TAKEN:

MOTION:

Director Teague made a motion to approve the consent calendar as presented. Secretary Canero seconded the motion. Motion carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Canero, Coleman, Duran, Sear, Teague

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

MINUTE ORDER NO. 2020-3013

4. PUBLIC HEARING

4.1 Public Hearing to Receive Input from the Community Regarding the Proposed Sewer Service Charge Increase and Consider Adopting Resolution No. 2020-1129

- ✓ General Notice and Call
- ✓ President Announces Public Hearing Procedures
- ✓ General Manager's Report
- ✓ President Declares Public Hearing Open
- ✓ Public Comments
- ✓ President Declares Public Hearing Closed
- ✓ Board Discussion
- ✓ Consideration of Resolution

President Duran asked Ms. Marshall to give a brief summary of the actions leading up to the Public Hearing. Ms. Marshall stated that in accordance with California Proposition 218, the Valley Sanitary District duly advised all customers via U.S. Mail of a Public Hearing in order to consider an increase to the Sewer Use Rate. Additionally, a notice of the Public Hearing was published in the Desert Sun newspaper on March 22, 2020 and March 29, 2020 and posted on the District's website. President Duran read

the procedures to be followed during the hearing and asked Ms. Marshall to summarize any written communications regarding the increase and proposed Resolution 2020-1129. Ms. Marshall informed the Board that seven (7) letters of protest had been received, and twenty-four (24) returned Prop 218 notices for a total of thirty-one (31). President Duran declared the Public Hearing open at 1:29 p.m. and asked Ms. Marshall to give a brief staff report which would be followed by any public testimony. Being no comments from the public, President Duran declared the Public Hearing closed at 1:57 p.m. Discussion took place on the current state of the economy due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the sensitivity of the board members to the situation. They weighed the option of holding off on the increase however by doing so would hit the rate payer harder with a larger increase in the future. It was the consensus of the board to approve the rate increase from \$313 to \$330 annually beginning July 1, 2020.

“A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF VALLEY SANITARY DISTRICT ADOPTING SEWER SERVICE CHARGES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020/21”

ACTION TAKEN:

MOTION: Director Teague made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2020-1129, setting the sewer service charges for Fiscal Year 2020-1129 and repealing Resolution No. 2019-1115. Director Coleman seconded the motion. Motion carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: Canero, Coleman, Duran, Sear, Teague

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

RESOLUTION NO. 2020-1129

5. NON-HEARING ITEMS

5.1 Discuss Ad-Hoc Budget Committee Recommendations and Provide Direction to Staff

At the April 28 meeting, the Board created an ad hoc Budget Committee, consisting of Directors Sear and Canero, to discuss the impacts that COVID-19 is having in the Coachella Valley economy and the steps that other public agencies are taking in response to those impacts. The Board directed staff to meet with the Committee to discuss their concerns regarding the draft proposed budget considering the current and anticipated economic downturn. Staff took this feedback and applied changes based on discussions with management team. The proposed changes equal an approximate reduction on the Fiscal Year 2020/21 of \$1.2 million. The board discussed the proposed changes and directed staff to meet again with the ad-hoc budget committee to continue progress.

5.2 Discuss Director's Request for Staff Input on Comprehensive Budget for Fiscal Year 2020/21 and Other Operational issues and Provide Direction to Staff

This item was included in the previous item's discussion.

5.3 Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2019

The Certificate of Achievement is a prestigious national award and represents the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting. This achievement is intended to recognize a significant accomplishment by a government and its management. Receiving the Certificate of Achievement can only be accomplished upon completion of a Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), which is a more accurate and meaningful report on the District's financial condition than the basic financial statement typically completed. The District has achieved this recognition for the past eight consecutive years. Director Coleman thanks staff for their hard work in continuing to achieve this accomplishment. Joanne Padgham thanked her staff. Director Teague requested the ad-hoc budget committee to take a close look at the equity adjustments of staff positions when they meet to discuss the budget.

6. **GENERAL MANAGER'S ITEMS**

General Manager's items not listed are for discussion only; no action will be taken without an urgency vote pursuant to State law.

6.1 Oral Update on COVID-19 and Potential Direction to Staff

6.2 Monthly Staff Notes for April 2020

With the County of Riverside rescinding its COVID-19 order, the District is following the requirements of the State. Starting May 11, 2020, the District will be back to full staff with the exception of the high-risk staff members who will continue to work from home.

7. **DIRECTOR'S ITEMS**

Director's items not listed are for discussion only; no action will be taken without an urgency vote pursuant to State law

Director Coleman thanked staff and the budget committee for their efforts. Secretary Canero appreciates the teamwork.

8. **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

8.1 Water and Sewer Affordability in the United States: a 2019 update, *AWWA Water Science*, by Manuel P. Teodoro and Robin Rose Saywitz

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 3:36 p.m. The next regular board meeting will be held May 26, 2020.

Respectfully submitted,
Holly Gould, Clerk of the Board
Valley Sanitary District