

**VALLEY SANITARY DISTRICT
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

December 1, 2020

Valley Sanitary District conducted this meeting in accordance with California Governor Newsom's Executive Orders N-29-20 and COVID-19 protocols.

A regular Meeting of the Valley Sanitary District (VSD) Operations Committee was held at the District offices, 45-500 Van Buren Street, Indio, California, on Tuesday, December 1, 2020.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Ron Buchwald called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

1.1 Roll Call

Directors Present:

Debra Canero (via telephone), William Teague

Staff Present:

Ron Buchwald, Engineering Services Manager, Ian Wilson, Facility Operations Manager, Holly Gould

Guests:

Valeria Houchin, Schneider Electric, Brian Pottenger, Schneider Electric

1.2 Pledge of Allegiance

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.

None.

3. DISCUSSION / ACTION ITEMS

3.1 Assign Committee Chair

Director Teague and Director Canero appointed Ron Buchwald as Chair of the Operations Committee.

3.2 Project Update: Reclaimed Water Project – Phase I

Valerie Houchin of Schneider Electric gave a presentation to the committee on Phase I of the Reclaimed Water Project. She went over the seven (7) measures of the scopes of work and the financial considerations for the project. Phase I is the initial project of three phases that will allow VSD to be able to produce reclaimed water. This project will replace and improve some treatment structures and provide redundancy for other treatment structures so that we can eventually decommission the ponds which will

provide the needed area to construct additional treatment systems to be able to produce reclaimed water. Phase I is estimated to cost \$46-\$50 million and expected to be completed by early 2025.

3.3 Discuss Reclaimed Water Project – Phase II & III

Ron Buchwald gave an update to the committee on Phase II and III of the Reclaimed Water Project. Phase II will include the expansion of the sludge drying area and is estimated to cost about \$7.3 million. Phase III of the project will consist of upgrading the treatment plant to produce tertiary level of treatment effluent. The effluent will then be further treated to produce Title 22 or reclaimed water. Phase III is estimated to cost about \$55 million.

3.4 Discuss Whole Effluent Toxicity Update and Toxicity Reduction Evaluation Workplan

Ian Wilson updated the committee on the ongoing Whole Effluent Toxicity (WET) test results and the Toxicity Reduction Evaluation (TRE) workplan. As a requirement set forth in the current National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, VSD is required to run quarterly WET tests. VSD had a “fail” on the first test of accelerated monitoring. This result initiated the implementation of the TRE workplan. Part of the TRE is the Toxicity Identification Evaluation (TIE). The results suggested that there is a potential for the polymers used in the biosolids dewatering process to cause toxicity. Staff also sent separate effluent samples from the pond and activated sludge plant. The results from those samples showed that the ponds are the significant source of the toxicity making it to the outfall. This information strengthens the suggestion that polymers are the source of toxicity. To mitigate the spread of the toxicity to the activated sludge plant, a change was made to waste the chlorine contact chamber to the ponds instead of the head of the plant. VSD has continued to sample for required WET testing to be conducted quarterly. Quarter 3 results were less toxic than quarter 2, but still resulted in a fail. Results for the Quarter 4 test are not available yet. The Regional Board has been notified of the steps taken along the way to help resolve the issue of toxicity in the outfall effluent and is waiting on VSD to resolve this toxicity issue before any determination is made on their part. Staff believes the Regional Board is satisfied with our efforts to date, but treatment plant modifications, violation(s) or additional testing may result at the conclusion of this process of resolving the toxicity issue.

4. FUTURE MEETING ITEMS

The next Operations Committee meeting is scheduled for February 2, 2021 and will include an update on the Collection System Rehabilitation Project.

5. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 2:24 p.m. The next regular committee meeting will be held February 2, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly Gould, Clerk of the Board
Valley Sanitary District