

**VALLEY SANITARY DISTRICT
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**
October 4, 2022

A regular meeting of the Valley Sanitary District (VSD) Operations Committee was held at Valley Sanitary District, 45-500 Van Buren St, Indio, CA, on Tuesday, October 4, 2022.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Ron Buchwald called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

1.1 Roll Call

Committee Members Present:
Chairperson William Teague
Committee Member Mike Duran

Staff Present:
Beverli Marshall, Holly Gould, Ron Buchwald, Dave Commons, Jeanette Juarez, and Anna Bell

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 Approve Minutes for August 2, 2022, Regular Committee Meeting

Committee member Mike Duran motioned to approve the minutes of the August 2, 2022, Operations Committee Regular Meeting. Chair William Teague seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

3.2 Provide Update on CIP Projects and the Need for a New Rate Study

Ron Buchwald, District Engineer, gave an update on the Influent Pump Station, Collection System Rehabilitation and Replacement Downtown project, and Recycled Water Project – Phase 1. He stated that the Influent Pump Station project is seeing delays of up to six months for certain parts and equipment, such as ductile iron pipe and the new pump. The project will require a sewer main bypass for about six months. So far, project costs have not increased due to the delays in acquiring parts, but if this continues, there may be no other choice. The current budget for this project is \$3,300,000. Mr. Buchwald informed the Committee that the Collection System Rehab and Replacement Downtown Project is currently out to bid. The bid opening is scheduled for October 12, 2022. The Engineer's Estimate is \$2,745,358, which includes a 10% contingency. The concern is that the delays in finding certain materials, including PVC pipe, will cause bid prices to increase. The current construction budget for this project is \$3,666,667.

The Recycled Water Project – Phase 1 is also moving towards construction with an anticipated date to begin construction in February 2023. This project is currently completing the design portion. This project is also experiencing delays in parts and equipment. On October 6, 2022, Schneider Electric will provide the anticipated construction cost for the Rotary Screw Thickener (RST) at 30%, the last remaining item in the project design. We will learn then of the upward price pressures the delays in equipment are having on the construction costs. The original estimated construction cost of the RST was \$10,000,000. The increasing cost of construction projects is affecting the VSD's Capital Improvement Program. The budget is already unable to keep up with all the projects VSD wants to accomplish, such as the Office & Training Building and Laboratory Building. The Collection System Rehabilitation and Replacement project will most likely need to be extended from the original 10-year program to the current 12-year program or longer. A new rate study is being planned with NBS to review the CIP projects, and what rate adjustments would be necessary under different scenarios, such as moving forward with all projects or delaying some and moving forward with others.

3.3 Discuss the Need for Additional Laboratory Technician

With the upcoming implementation of the Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS), the compliance requirements of the ELAP-TNI certification renewal, the additional sampling that is now taking place, and the need for redundancy for the Environmental Compliance Technician, it has become clear that the Laboratory and Compliance Department needs additional staff. Another staff member in the department will allow schedule flexibility for additional programs and events like wastewater surveillance, outreach programs, and attending conferences. The added position will reduce the need for assistance from the Operations Department during times of conferences and leave requests (i.e., sick, vacation, FMLA, jury duty, etc.) – which requires prior preparations in ensuring Operations staff are fully trained and documented to assist in the Laboratory functions. The additional member will also create more flexibility for trained staff that can function in the capability of the laboratory or the pretreatment program. The District can help offset the cost of hiring an additional laboratory worker by \$31,200 by utilizing the stipend provided by the Verily WastewaterSCAN program. Anna Bell, Laboratory & Compliance Supervisor, gave a presentation to the Committee detailing the departmental and District need for additional support. Staff will bring this item before the board on October 11, 2022.

Ron Buchwald, District Engineer, informed the Committee that staff would bring the Vactor purchase to the Board on October 25, 2022.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 2:06 p.m. The next regular committee meeting will be held on December 6, 2022.

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