

JOSHUA BASIN WATER DISTRICT
Minutes of the
REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

November 18, 2015

1. CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 PM

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:

Victoria Fuller	Present
Bob Johnson	Present
Mickey Luckman	Present
Mike Reynolds	Present
Rebecca Unger	Present

STAFF PRESENT:

Curt Sauer, General Manager
Susan Greer, Assistant General Manager/Controller
Seth Zielke, Director of Water Resources and Operations
Keith Faul, GIS Coordinator

CONSULTANTS PRESENT:

Kathleen Radnich, Public Outreach Consultant
Gil Granito, District Counsel, Redwine & Sherrill

GUESTS 28

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MSC Luckman/Reynolds, 5/0 to approve the agenda for the November 18, 2015 meeting.

Fuller	Aye
Luckman	Aye
Johnson	Aye
Reynolds	Aye
Unger	Aye

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

Al Marquez, Sunfair area, Joshua Tree: Mr. Marquez stated that his calculations for evaporation from a public comment he made during a previous JBWD board meeting were not correct. Mr. Marquez stated Board members should consider the Joshua Tree Community Plan in addition to the General Plan and Water Management Plan when making decisions.

6. CONSENT CALENDAR

MSC Luckman/Johnson, 5/0 to approve Draft Minutes of the November 4, 2015 Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors.

Fuller	Aye
Luckman	Aye

Johnson	Aye
Reynolds	Aye
Unger	Aye

7. PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER ADOPTION OF A BASIC MONTHLY FEE ON INACTIVE ACCOUNTS

GM Sauer gave the presentation describing the process of adopting a basic monthly fee on inactive accounts and a potential opt out option that is being designed for inactive accountholders who do not wish to maintain a water meter or pay the basic monthly fee.

Public Comment:

Karen Tracy, Citizens Advisory Committee member, and Joshua Tree resident: The Citizens Advisory Committee supports the basic monthly fee for inactive accounts.

Shirley Vickers, Joshua Tree: Ms. Vickers discussed her property taxes, noting how large of a portion of the taxes are water related. Ms. Vickers opposes the inactive meter fee.

Richard Locicero, Copper Mountain home owner, out of town resident: Mr. Locicero disputed the figures listed on the notice of potential money coming into the District as a result of inactive meter fees. Mr. Locicero opposes the inactive meter fee.

Kathryn Davis, Copper Mountain College area: Ms. Davis stated that she opposes the inactive meter fee. Ms. Davis stated she paid a one-time fee in 2005, and there are no service connections.

Bob Crawford Aberdeen area, Joshua Tree: Mr. Crawford opposes inactive meter fees.

Cookie Bells Burrow, Joshua Tree home owner, out of town resident: Ms. Bells Burrow opposes the full basic monthly fee for inactive accounts, and suggests the Board consider a smaller fee for inactive accounts.

Deborah Rucker, Monument area, Joshua Tree: Ms. Rucker has 3 parcels and is opposed to inactive meter fees.

Al Marquez, Joshua Tree resident: Mr. Marquez opposes inactive account fees. Mr. Marquez also stated that he does not believe the Citizens Advisory Committee represents ratepayers.

Kenny Pitcher, Joshua Tree resident: Mr. Pitcher opposes the inactive meter fee.

Jeffrey Wells, out of town resident: Mr. Wells stated he purchased property as an investment, that there is no meter in the box on his property, and suggests a smaller fee for inactive meters.

Zubir Edmond (Zak), Joshua Tree property owner, out of town resident: Mr. Edmond states he purchased property as an investment, and does not believe the basic monthly fee for inactive accounts to be affordable. Mr. Edmond opposes the inactive account fee.

David Holly Sunfair area, Joshua Tree: Mr. Holly states the basic monthly fee for inactive accounts is not affordable; Mr. Holly opposes the inactive account fee.

Luke Sabala, Citizens Advisory Committee member, and Joshua Tree resident: Mr. Sabala states the fees are needed by the District because of increased costs for things such as the aquifer, the need to buy water, and to pay into an aging infrastructure. Mr. Sabala states we should consider the future.

Shari Long, Citizens Advisory Committee member, and Joshua Tree resident: Ms. Long states there should be consideration for the costs of recharge water, the Chromium 6 issue, that costs are going up, and all people who have the benefit of meters need to chip in.

Bob Crawford, Joshua Tree: Mr. Crawford commented that he believes there should be an increase in fees for users of water, not for those who are not using water.

Cookie Bells Burrow, Joshua Tree homeowner, out of town resident: Ms. Burrow suggested building water towers to store water.

Richard Fountain, past JBWD Board Director, and Joshua Tree resident: Mr. Fountain suggested a fee of 50% of the basic monthly fee, as was done in previous years. Mr. Fountain suggested that if a person is paying the full rate for a meter that they put it in the ground.

Kenny Pitcher, Joshua Tree resident: Mr. Pitcher questioned the difference between a prepaid meter and no meter, since both are paying standby fees.

General Manager, Curt Sauer stated that he read all protest letters received by 4:45 this afternoon. GM Sauer clarified that every property owner pays a standby fee – and the amount of standby fees for active or inactive meters is lower than the standby fees for properties without a meter. GM Sauer invited anyone with questions to contact him to discuss further after the meeting.

Director Unger pointed out the transparency of the JBWD with meetings, described the District tours as an opportunity to learn about the District and what is required for water service. Director Unger pointed out that a property is of a higher value with a meter than without a meter.

Director Johnson stated the funds from inactive meter fees are a means necessary to fund the numerous expenditures the JBWD is facing.

Director Fuller stated that regarding equity and fairness – everyone should share in the responsibility of maintaining our infrastructure.

Director Reynolds stated he believes charging for inactive accounts to be an unethical attempt to increase revenue. Director Reynolds would support charging future inactive accounts, but not current inactive accounts.

Director Luckman stated policies of the District need to be followed as they are in place. Luckman described some of the costs to running the District, including the rising costs of electricity. Director Luckman said she supports fees for inactive accounts and has from the beginning. Director Luckman pointed out that according to the current District rules and regulations that a meter cannot be purchased and not installed, thus, there are not future inactive accounts.

MSC Luckman/Fuller, 4/1 to adopt Resolution 15-952

Fuller	Aye
Luckman	Aye
Johnson	Aye
Reynolds	No
Unger	Aye

8. HOLIDAY OFFICE SCHEDULE

Susan Greer, Assistant General Manager/Controller gave the report.

Public Comment:

None.

MSC Unger/Luckman, 5/0 to authorize the District office to close on Christmas Eve, Thursday December 24, and on New Year's Eve, Thursday, December 31, and offer employees one half day off with pay (4 hours) either on Christmas Eve or New Year's Eve as has been the tradition for many years.

Fuller	Aye
Luckman	Aye
Johnson	Aye
Reynolds	Aye
Unger	Aye

9. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. LEGISLATIVE AND PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE: Vice President Luckman and Director Unger: Kathleen Radnich, Public Outreach Consultant, gave the report. JBWD will be at the Farmers Market on Saturdays in November and off from the Farmers Market in December, January, and February. The Fall Native Plant Sale on November 14th at the Mojave Desert Land Trust was a success. JBWD will have a booth at the holiday market on November 27 – 29. Next meeting is scheduled for January 6, 2016.
- B. FINANCE COMMITTEE: President Fuller and Director Johnson: Discussion of finance planning with regards to financing Chromium VI, and possible inactive meter revenue. Next meeting is scheduled for November 30th.
- C. WATER RESOURCES & OPERATIONS COMMITTEE: Vice President Luckman and Director Johnson: Seth Zielke gave the same presentation at the committee meeting as in Item 8 today. Next meeting is scheduled for November 24th.

10. DISTRICT COUNSEL REPORT

Counselor Granito reported on SB 555 effective January 1, 2016, which requires each urban water supplier to submit a water loss audit annually beginning October 1, 2017 to the Department of Water Resources.

11. GENERAL MANAGER REPORT

General Manager Curt Sauer shared an update about Nextera. GM Sauer met with Nextera representatives on November 12, as they are considering ways to obtain water for their solar project. Nextera is considering buying water outside the JBWD and trucking it in, and/or buying soil stabilizer that will reduce their water requirements by 66%, as well as pursuing a state exemption from the emergency conservation regulations from SWRCB office of enforcement.

Nextera has contacted private well owners in an attempt to purchase water, and has also looked into digging a new well through the County.

Seth Zielke, Director of Water Resources and Operations, reported on the groundwater recharge project – 684 acre feet of water from the State Water project has been received.

12. FUTURE DIRECTOR MEETINGS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Mojave Water Agency BOD Meeting: December 10th : Mickey Luckman
Mojave Water Agency BOD Meeting: November 19th: Victoria Fuller
Colorado Regional Board Meeting November 19th: Mickey Luckman
ACWA 2015 Fall Conference: December 1-4

13. INDIVIDUAL DIRECTOR REPORTS ON MEETINGS ATTENDED

Victoria Fuller and Mickey Luckman reported on a webinar regarding 218 and the ACWA bill to make tiered rates legal and Lifeline water rates.

Mike Reynolds and Mickey Luckman reported on the ASBCSD meeting hosted by MWA.

Mickey Luckman attended a Groundwater Management Act teleconference with Department of Water Resources discussing what it takes to form a groundwater management agency, and about the Groundwater Management Act.

14. DIRECTORS COMMENTS/FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

All directors expressed appreciation to the public for their participation.

15. ADJOURNMENT

MSC Fuller/Reynolds, 5/0 to adjourn the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of November 18, 2015 at 9:15 PM.

Fuller	Aye
Luckman	Aye
Johnson	Aye
Reynolds	Aye
Unger	Aye

Respectfully submitted:


Curt Sauer, General Manager and Board Secretary