

JOSHUA BASIN WATER DISTRICT  
Minutes of the  
CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING  
Tuesday, October 12, 2021

CALL TO ORDER – Chairperson Delph called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. via Zoom.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM – Chairperson Delph

IN ATTENDANCE – Barbara Delph, David Carrillo, Hannah Campbell, Kathy Carrillo, Paul Frank Coate, Shari Long, Karen Morton, Karyn Sernka, Karen Tracy

STAFF PRESENT – Anne Roman, Director of Finance; James Corbin, Director of Operations

CONSULTANTS PRESENT – Kathleen Radnich, Public Information Consultant

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – MSC<sup>1</sup> (Coate/K. Carrillo 2/0) approved the Agenda for October 12, 2021.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

APPROVE MINUTES OF THE PRIOR MEETING – MSC<sup>1</sup> (Tracy/Coate 2/0) approved the Draft Minutes of August 17, 2021.

AB 148 WATER AND WASTEWATER SYSTEM PAYMENTS UNDER THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 – Director Roman gave the background on appropriation of funds for community water systems to forgive customer arrearages that accrued during a specific COVID period of time, March 4, 2020 through June 15, 2021, and to also provide assistance to agencies for lost revenue. While the District has seen a significant increase in arrearages/bills not paid, it has not seen a decline in revenue/money earned for services provided. Prior to the September 10, 2021 due date on the survey, the District made preliminary calculations of the arrearages and submitted the data to the SWRCB. These calculations indicated that the District may be eligible for up to almost \$105,000 for residential and up to about \$75,000 for commercial customers. The application period closes on December 6, 2021; however, the sooner the District applies, the sooner it will get funded. The SWRCB is planning to begin disbursing funds on November 1, 2021. The program allows a provision for the District to apply for 3% of assistance for administrative costs, up to \$5,392. The Program does entail some compliance. The District would be required to waive approximately \$34,000 in late fees, allocate the credits within six days of receipt of the funds, notify the customers of the credit and advise them of potential tax liability. Director Roman stated that it has been determined the District will not need to issue a Form 1099C. Director Roman added details about other requirements, including payment plans for remaining arrearages, opt-out option, informing customers of additional programs available, reporting expenditures, maintaining records for seven years, being potentially subject to audit by the State, returning uncredited or expended funds, and that there is no application process for the customers involved – they automatically receive the credits. Chairperson Delph added that credit amounts and dates that cover arrearages are set in AB148; therefore, customers cannot dispute the customer credit availability to the District. Director Roman further explained the Bill's eligibility period falls in the middle of the District's billing cycles and detailed which District bills are eligible. Consultant Radnich expressed her need to meet with Director Roman for further information regarding the complicated issues of dates and eligible bills. Consultant Radnich presented a question to the CAC: What is your opinion on what the public would accept in a message from the District on this Program? Chairperson Delph started that what will really help with customers frustrated about any unfairness in credit and forgiveness is the fact that this Program's rules and

guidelines were all set by AB148 and not the District's methodology. Multiple comments followed regarding transparency, making information available, creating a simple and positive explanation for the ratepayers, proactive communication, keeping a government program emphasis on it, tax issues, opt-out option, pros and cons, goodwill to the customers, government requirements, customer push back, stressing that this alleviates District "bad debt" for all ratepayers, and using terms like "qualifiers" while avoiding terms like "parameters." Topic ended with Consultant Radnich stating she will talk with staff in the near future and provide the CAC with a sheet of positive talking points to help when addressing the issue out in the community.

UPDATES ON CURRENT PROJECTS – Director Corbin summarized updates and progress on Well 14 and the Tilford Project. He continued that the District is preparing three to five shovel-ready projects for possible future grant funding. Director Corbin gave a basic monthly report as well as further updates on the progress of the JT Auto Camp, and the District's efforts in trying to stay ahead of and work with the County in conjunction with the Sunburst bike path and future pipeline replacement in that area by the District. Director Corbin shared recent work performed by the Production Department following the State Water Resource Control Board's sanitary survey of the District as well as the Production Department's switch to Geo Viewer, making future reporting easier.

ROUNDTABLE COMMENTS – Chairperson Delph mentioned that GM Ban was on Z107.7's Up Close Show on Friday, October 8, 2021 and what an outstanding job he did covering all the hot topics.

NEXT MEETING DATE – December 14, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT – MSC<sup>1</sup> (Coate/Morton 2/0). Chairperson Delph adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Mark Ban, General Manager

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<sup>1</sup> Motion seconded and carried.