

CALAVERAS COUNTY WATER DISTRICT External Relations Committee Meeting

**MINUTES
AUGUST 22, 2023**

The following Committee Members were present:

Director Underhill
Director Secada

Staff Present:

Michael Minkler, General Manager
Rebecca Hitchcock, Clerk to the Board
Jeffrey Meyer, Director of Admin Services
Damon Wyckoff, Director of Operations
Kelly Richards, Customer Service Supervisor
Kelly Gerkenmeyer, Water Resources Specialist
Kate Jesus, Engineering Coordinator

Others Present:

Ralph Copeland
Francisco de la Cruz
Michael Rogers

ORDER OF BUSINESS

CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

1. ROLL CALL

Director Underhill called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Francisco de la Cruz stated the outreach for the rate increase was a failure. He addressed the need for a District wide dashboard showing metrics on the District.

Michael Rogers asked the Committee about past District consolidations.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3a Approval of Minutes for July 20, 2023, Committee Meeting

Directors Secada/Underhill approved the Minutes for the July 20, 2023, Committee Meeting.

4. **NEW BUSINESS**

- 4a External Affairs Update and Rate Communication Strategy
(Michael Minkler, General Manager)

Discussion: Michael Minkler updated the Committee on the rate communications. He stated that the rate increase has been discussed at many public meetings since late 2022 including three town hall meetings at the beginning of 2023. He added that information regarding rate increases has been included in the customer billings for several months.

He reviewed items that were covered in the rate workshop presentations. He addressed some of the rumors circulating around regarding the District. Staff are responding to emails and questions stemming from the rate workshops.

He addressed the request for a District Dashboard with metrics. He stated many of the items requested are covered regularly at the various Committee meetings such as Finance and Engineering Committees. There was extensive discussion between Mr. Minkler and the Committee regarding metrics.

There was discussion regarding the protest letters and how they are being tallied.

Public Comment:

Francisco de la Cruz stated the presentations for the rate public hearings were too complicated for general consumption. He also stated that the District should post the totals of protest letters received daily on the website.

Mike Rodgers stated that he felt measures taken to reduce costs were a missing item from the presentations.

Kelly Gerkenmeyer addressed the Committee about the rate increase. He talked about how unique the District is and how hard staff worked to try to tell the story of the need for the increase.

Damon Wyckoff addressed the Committee regarding the winter storms and how dedicated staff are to keep the community in service with water and wastewater.

- 4b Customer Service Update
(Kelly Richards, Business Services Manager)

Discussion: Kelly Richards reported on the following items: 1) work going on to prepare for the customer portal and what the portal offers; 2) quality control on AMI meter data 3) the Customer Assistance Program renewals; 4) the LIWAP program through the state; 5) campaign to ask customers to update their contact information; and 6) the cost of trying to reach customers through the mail versus social media.

5. **GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS**

Mr. Minkler commended the outreach team for their hard work over the past few months.

6. **DIRECTOR COMMENTS OR FUTIRE AGENDA ITEMS**

Director Secada stated she really likes the format of this committee meeting with the open dialog with the members of the public.

Director Underhill had nothing additional to report.

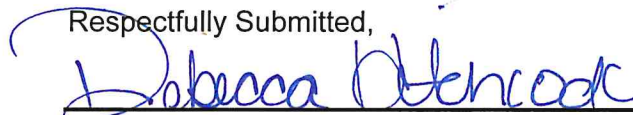
7. **NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING**

- Tuesday, September 26, 2023, at 1:00 p.m.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:32 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Rebecca Hitchcock
Clerk to the Board