



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT

AGENDA DATE: January 25, 2017

TO: Parks and Recreation Commission

FROM: Administration Division, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: Parks and Recreation Department Strategic Drought Response Plan Update and Water Rate Impacts

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission receive a status report on the Parks and Recreation Department Strategic Drought Response Plan and Water Rate Impacts.

DISCUSSION:

In June 2014, in response to severe drought conditions, the Parks and Recreation Department (Department) developed the Strategic Drought Response Plan (Plan) detailing Department actions to prioritize water use to public facilities and sensitive/historic resources while considering short and long-term impacts.

Water conservation actions include strategic water use in parks, reduced available shower facilities, upgrades to plumbing fixtures, purchase of blowers, installation of pool cover and automatic backwash device, two fountains turned off, public outreach and informational signage, communication to tenants and patrons of recreation facilities, and detailed monitoring of water use. At the same time, the Department prioritized water to sensitive resources, including park and street trees.

With implementation of the Plan, the Department ended 2015 using 104M gallons (recycled and potable) and conserving 33M gallons (23%) compared to base year 2013 (134M gallons). Reductions are measured against the designated baseline year of 2013 per the Governor's Stage 3 mandate.

At the same time the Department reduced water use due to the water shortage, the cost to apply water increased. The Department pays for 124 meters of varied sizes. Meter costs increased 85% on average since Fiscal Year (FY) 2013. For example, a 2" meter is \$179.89/month, an increase of \$74.31/month (70%) from FY 2013, while an 8" meter is \$2,666.07/month, an increase of \$1,054.81/month (153%).

Unit costs increased as well (HCF= hundred cubic feet, 1 HCF= 748 gallons) and depend on the customer class and tier level. Tier 1 potable water rates are \$3.77/HCF, up \$1.30/HCF (52%) from FY 2013, while Tier 2 potable water is \$24.27/HCF, up \$19.02/HCF

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(375%) from FY 2013 rates. Recycled water increased \$1.04/HCF (54%) from \$1.98/HCF in FY 2013 to \$3.02/HCF in FY 2017.

The Department paid \$591K for water in FY 2013. The Department's Fiscal Year 2017 water budget is \$848,949. If, with an end to the drought, the Department returns to 2013 water use (134M gallons and ratio of 72% recycled to 28% potable), the projected cost is \$1.07M, based on FY2017 water rates. This would be a \$227,000 increase over current water costs.

The higher water rates may prevent the Department from reverting to 2013 water use, regardless of water availability from the Desalination Plant and/or end to the drought. The Department will be evaluating water use priorities during the development of the FY 2018 and FY 2019 Financial Plan.

ATTACHMENT: Parks and Recreation Department Drought Update

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