



MINUTES
Board of Water Commissioners
El Estero Wastewater Treatment Plant
520 East Yanonali Street
February 11, 2008 3:00 p.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Kate Rees, James Smith, Landon Neustadt, Russell Ruiz

COUNCILMEMBER(S) PRESENT: Grant House, Iya Falcone

STAFF PRESENT: Paul Casey, Acting Public Works Director; Rebecca Bjork, Acting Water Resources Manager; Cathy Taylor, Water System Manager; John Schoof, Acting Wastewater System Manager; Bill Ferguson, Water Resources Supervisor; Anne Van Belkom, Administrative Assistant

PUBLIC: Rob Almy, Santa Barbara County Water Agency Manager, Steve Little

Prior to the meeting, Water Commissioners were taken on a tour of the El Estero Wastewater Treatment Plant.

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 3:01 p.m.
2. **CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:** After being informed that Rob Almy was running late, it was decided to defer Agenda Item 6 (Cloud Seeding) until Mr. Almy arrived.
3. **COMMENTS BY THE PUBLIC:** Mr. Little asked to be allowed to speak concerning Agenda Item #7 after staff completed its presentation on this agenda item to the Water Commission
4. **MEETING MINUTES, DECEMBER 10, 2007:** MOTION (Ruiz/Smith 4-0-0): to approve the minutes as submitted.
5. **ADOPTION OF AHWAHNEE WATER PRINCIPLES FOR RESOURCE EFFICIENT LAND USE:** Mr. House explained the reasons for the request by Councilmembers House and Williams to have Council formally adopt the Ahwahnee Water Principles, which are very consistent with the City's current objectives related to sustainable urban development and water recycling. MOTION (Neustadt/Ruiz 4-0-0): To approve the Ahwahnee Water Principles For Resource Efficient Land Use and to recommend Council approval on February 12, 2008.
6. **CLOUD SEEDING:** Mr. Rob Almy, Santa Barbara County Water Agency Manager, presented an overview of the County's cloud seeding program. This program requires new bids every three years in order to be renewed. Currently, cloud seeding has been suspended for the rest of the water year but may be looked at again in May or June 2008.
7. **AGRICULTURAL RATE ELIGIBILITY REVIEW:** Bill Ferguson reviewed the results from the Agricultural Water Rate Survey. Mr. Little asked that the Water Commission consider eliminating the water allocation system and reduce the cost of the Block 1 HCF rate from \$1.51 down to around \$1.00. Commissioner Rees reminded the Water Commission that the issue of agricultural water rates had already come before the Water Commission in 2007 where it was decided to not allow any decrease in the Agricultural Water rates, but to allow a carryover provision as a compromise. Water Commissioners decided to stand by the Water Commission's earlier decision. The elimination of the water allocation system is a separate issue that would need to be requested to be placed on a future agenda
8. **GIBRALTAR RESERVOIR:** Ms. Taylor informed the Water Commission that a bathymetric survey was completed in November 2007 (post fire-pre rain) and that an additional bathymetric survey is planned after the rainy season. As a result of this winter's runoff from the burn areas, water quality in Lake Cachuma has deteriorated with elevated concentrations of suspended and dissolved plant-based organic materials. Staff obtained an emergency purchase order for powdered activated carbon to be used in the treatment of water at the Cater Water Plant, and went before Council on 12/12/08 to ask for retroactive approval for the issuance of this purchase order. Ms. Taylor also discussed plans for staff to test for precursors to algae blooms at Gibraltar since algae blooms have a negative impact on the taste and odor of water, and also create problems for the water filters.

9. **PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION OF 2009 BUDGET FOR JOINT POWER AGENCIES:** (Commissioner Rees excused herself during the presentation and discussion of this agenda item.) Ms. Bjork gave Water Commissioners a handout with preliminary budget information on various Joint Powers Agencies, representing a large portion of the Water budget. To benefit the new Water Commissioners, Ms. Bjork described the relationships and interactions between the Cachuma Operation And Maintenance Board (COMB), the Cachuma Conservation Release Board (CCRB), and the Central Coast Water Authority (CCWA). Ms. Bjork informed the Water Commission that once the proposed Water and Wastewater budgets have been completed, they would be presented to the Water Commissioner for review and comment.

10. **WATER RESOURCES MANAGER'S REPORT:** Ms. Bjork distributed and reviewed the Monthly Water Resources report on water production, rainfall, and wastewater influent. Gibraltar Reservoir and Cachuma Lake are full and spilling but both have poor water quality. However, the City has a plan to correct the water quality. The amount of water use in January 2008 was consistent with a return to an annual average demand of 14,000 AFY. Ms. Bjork informed the Water Commission that the new candidate for Water Commissioner was out of the country during the special recruitment interviews and thus not eligible. Since the Water Commission will have only four commissioners until June 2008, Ms. Bjork asked that Water Commissioners give advanced notice of any absences to help avoid quorum issues during upcoming meetings. Ms. Bjork also stated that Council has been very supportive of the Sewer Lateral Inspection Program (SLIP) and has approved the increases in funding to meet the level of demand.

11. **DATE OF NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING:** It was confirmed that the next meeting was scheduled for Monday, March 10, 2008, at 3:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 4.55 p.m.

AVB

Approved: March 10, 2008