

## MEMORANDUM

**Date:** May 18, 2021  
**To:** Board of Directors  
**From:** Tom Hennig, General Manager  
**Subject:** General Manager's Report

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### **COVID-19 RESPONSE**

As the situation with COVID-19 continues to unfold the District has responded to the pandemic in a number of ways. District offices continue to be closed to the public, in response to COVID-19 as a best practice. The latest Sacramento County Health directive issued April 15, 2021 has continued to place Sacramento County in the red tier and allows some indoor businesses to resume with modifications, and some water districts in the area have begun to reopen. We are waiting for confirmation that we are allowed to reopen, while we are determining best practices for returning to live Board and Committee meetings. We have the infrastructure in place to reopen our lobby to the public as soon as it is allowed.

We have made contact with the County, and we are still unable to hold public meetings. As the County moves to a less restrictive tier, we will coordinate with the Board on converting back to live meetings. There have been discussions related to continuing the Committee Meetings on Zoom going forward regardless of County guidelines. During the pandemic, we have seen greater public participation on the Committee Meetings via Zoom than before. This has improved our transparency which is something we would like to continue.

Under the recent changes in the vaccine protocols our utility workers are now eligible to receive the vaccine and have been encouraged to do so. We look forward to the time when all staff will be eligible.

### **QUICK BUDGET UPDATE**

As the budget for fiscal year 2021-22 was developed, the former Director of Field Operations had requested that we add a position to his division to support inspections and compliance. We had initially included this as part of the April 1<sup>st</sup> proposed budget. The total cost of the position was budgeted at \$175,000. Since Mr. Siebensohn has left the District, I want to pull the position from the budget and evaluate the structure of District Water and Wastewater Operations before making any further decisions on hiring for any new positions. I plan to update the Personnel and Improvements Committees as we progress through this evaluation.

### **CFD 2014-1 Accounting Adjustment**

Since the completion of the new water treatment plant in 2015, there have been numerous attempts to reconcile the accounting for the project. Part of this reconciliation will involve replenishing funds spent by the District during the construction phase of the plant build-out. The

District Finance staff will continue to review the history of this project and then bring closure to the accounting within the next few months.

### **LAGUNA JOAQUIN UPDATE**

The RMA has begun treating Laguna Joaquin for midge flies on a prescriptive cycle with BTi bacteria this spring. They have also received and will soon install additional air diffusers/bubblers to improve on the basin's oxygen level, which, according to their research, is also expected to lessen the midge fly problem. The RMA GM has reached out to me to discuss how we can address maintaining the basin later in the summer. We are planning to analyze the material in the basin and determine the strategy and timing.

### **OUTREACH/ADVOCACY**

**CSD/MVA (Murieta Village)** – The timing of potential roadwork within the Village has been discussed, including how we would coordinate the timing of work on the water delivery system with their schedule. The Village currently has no tentative dates for this roadwork. At this time, I will be recommending that we remove the replacement of the water pipes at the Village as an active capital replacement project. When the management of the Village begins to prepare for major road repair, we will review our options and return to the Board with recommendations.

**CSD/RMA**– During the past month, I have met several times with the RMA GM on issues related to Laguna Joaquin and security. We continue to collaborate on various issues.

### **NORTHERN CALIFORNIA DROUGHT WATCH**

Regional Water Authority, Water Caucus, held a virtual meeting yesterday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, to discuss drought related plans. Overall, the water agencies that rely on water from Folsom and the lower American River, are activating various stages of water conservation. In general, the first approach is to utilize programs and publications to address the higher volume users.

- Expand rebate programs.
- Late night water waste patrol.
- Advertise requests to reduce water use by 10 percent.
- Notify the top third of their users of the need to conserve.
- Continue to promote conservation in their publications.

At this point in time, we are confident our water supply is adequate, and we were able to fill our three reservoirs this year.

**Sacramento Central Groundwater Authority (SCGA)** – I was not able to attend the meeting this month.

**Sloughhouse Resource Conservation District (SRCD) Board Meeting** – I did not attend this meeting last month.

**Regional Water Authority (RWA) Regular Board Meeting** – I have been on a few meetings with the RWA over the past month. There are several meetings related to potential drought issues. As discussed above, most agencies are in a monitoring mode for their drought related concerns.

## **OTHER DISTRICT BUSINESS**

**Fire Safe Council Support Letters** – At the request from the RMA Board President, I provided two letters of support for two grants. One grant was for Fire Prevention Readiness and the other was to support a Ladder Fuel Reduction Project.

**Joint Security Committee Meeting** – These meetings are to be scheduled as needed. As of today, the District Security staff is meeting with RMA staffers on a regular basis. This process appears to be working well.

**Reserve Study** – We are mid-way through our review of the reserve study. We received a draft report in March and are working with the vendor to refine the list of assets, replacement costs, and the timing of when the purchases need to be made. This work will allow us to provide an estimated amount to be charged for water and sewer reserves in FY 2021/22 and the years ahead. An important aspect of the reserve study is the need to provide an influx of funds, special assessments, to fulfill some of the more urgent items. We are planning to meet this obligation as part of the transfer of retained revenues from the last few fiscal year budgets.

**Survey Opinion Poll Schedule** – We have scheduled the Security Opinion Poll Town Hall Meeting to take place on Tuesday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6 PM. This meeting will be open to anyone in Rancho Murieta. The remaining schedule is below:

- Stakeholder working groups/meetings July 2021
- Survey questions to be finalized and presented to BOD August 2021
- Conduct polling activities September 2021
- Present polling results to Finance Committee November 2021
- Present recommendations to the Board November 2021
- Potential voter education and outreach program March-June 2022
- Possible voter referendum in June 2022

**General Staffing Update** – Over the past two months, I have received five Public Records Act (PRA) requests. Three of these requests are overly broad and have required significant staff time to address. In one instance, I have requested the District's legal counsel to intervene to narrow the scope of the request. We are going to work on these requests as staffing and time become more available.

We are currently recruiting for the Security Supervisor, Accounting Supervisor and Controller positions. The Accounting Supervisor position has been open for over a month with only one viable candidate who has declined to accept our job offer. We are continuing to recruit to fill a Gate and Patrol Officer vacancy. We discussed our ideas for the Accounting Supervisor and Controller positions at the Personnel Committee in May, and this is an item on tonight's Board Agenda.

**Conference/Education Opportunities:**

**California Special Districts Association (CSDA)**

General Manager Leadership Summit	6/27-28/2021	Olympic Valley
Annual Conference & Exhibitor Showcase	8/30-9/2/2021	Monterey, CA
2021 Special District Leadership Academy	9/26/2021	Lake Tahoe, CA
Board Secretary/Clerk Conference	10/25-27/2021	Anaheim, CA

**Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA)**

**EMPLOYEE ANNOUNCEMENTS, PROMOTIONS, COMMENDATIONS, AND KUDOS:**

Paul Siebensohn left the District on May 5, 2021.

Andres Lozano, a retired annuitant Engineer, has joined the District to support Ron Greenfield while Ron is working as the Acting Dir of Field Operations.

Warlito Gabriel, Patrol Officer started Tuesday, May 18.