

SunLand Water District

Board of Commissioners Meeting of February 9, 2021

MINUTES

Purpose: Regular Meeting

1. **Call to order.** 9:03 AM

Attendees Via Zoom: Commissioners Larison, Fortmann and Frank, Mike Langley, district manager, Judy Gamble, office administrator, Karen Shay, bookkeeper.

2. **Virtual Meeting with Attorney Jeff Davis.** Mr. Davis discussed with the Board the current status of the more than 2-year case involving the non-payment for water and sewer service and other issues of a SunLand resident. Mr. Davis has conferred with other attorneys for public utilities and can find no comparable situation. The Board asked for status of the criminal case brought against the resident several months. Although the resident was issued a citation several months ago for damage of SWD property and illegal reconnection of water service, Mr. Davis says he has been unable to get the County Prosecutor's office to move on this case and bring it to trial.

Mr. Davis was made aware by Mike Langley, the district manager, that there is a potential health hazard developing on the property due to a water leak which the owner has not repaired. Nearby neighbors have called the District office reporting the leak and voicing their concern. In addition to being a hazard, the water leak on this property has resulted in extremely excessive water usage. For example, the usage for November and December of 106,000 gallons, while normal usage for this time of the year is in the range of less than 8000 gallons. Mike was advised to contact the Washington State Department of Health for advice and to ascertain if there is a legal directive in the State WAC's pertaining to this situation that we might provide to the Clallam County Sheriff.

Although not paying for everything that was owed on the account, in July 2020 the bank that carries the mortgage on the property paid the delinquent amount and the balance of the water and sewer bill through the end of 2020. However, the account is once again in arrears as the owner has not paid the first quarter payment due on January 1st. Mr. Davis will provide the SWD with contact information for the bank's attorney in order that the District may contact them with regard to the ongoing non-payment situation.

Mr. Davis stated that it is highly unlikely that the SWD will receive payment on all of the outstanding charges on this account. The SWD placed a lien on this property in 9/26/18 which is still in effect.

3. **SWD Vulnerability to Hackers:** There was discussion regarding a recent news segment referring to a Florida community water supply that was hit by cybercrime. The hacker was able to increase the sodium hypo-chlorite introduced to the water system which created a dangerous condition. Thankfully, the problem was discovered quickly and corrected. The SWD does not treat the water at all so we are less vulnerable than many in that regard. The Board asked that Mike Langley and WRF supervisor, Willy Burbank, talk with Al Friedli of Evolution Controls regarding any security issues we might have with regard to the SCADA computer system to be installed at the Water Reclamation Facility and the remote auto-dialer for our lift stations.
4. **Minutes:** It was M/S/P to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of January 12, 2021.
(Moved by G. Fortmann, seconded by A. Frank.)
5. **Public Comment Period:** N/A per the Governor's Proclamation 20-28 - effective until rescinded.

6. **Financial Report:** Karen Shay's reports for January 2021 – previously sent out via email - were presented and reviewed.
7. **Manager's Report** – Mike Langley presented his report which will be appended to the official meeting minutes. Highlights include:
 - a. The WRF crew continues to test for COVID-19 at the WRF.
 - b. Representatives from the University of Washington and the Washington State Department of Ecology will be at SunLand on February 19th to develop a plan to determine if the treatment process at the WRF kills the COVID-19 virus.
 - c. Willy and Rich have begun assembling the components of the new spray field irrigation system.
 - d. Willy and Rich have been performing annual maintenance on the mixers and aerators in the SBRs as well as the pre-eq basin pumps and blowers.
 - e. The total water meter read was completed last month and, thanks to Scott, Rocky and Karen's sleuthing, some residential water leaks have been revealed and most of them have been resolved.
 - f. The water level in both wells is normal for winter months.
 - g. Total water production numbers continue to appear high. SWD continues to search for leaks or other reasons for high production. Scott is investigating some irrigation that may not be metered.
 - h. The new emergency generator at lift station #3 is up and running.
 - i. A diesel mechanic replaced a failed voltage regulator on the emergency generator at well #1.
 - j. Scott has replaced a failed gate valve at Hilltop Drive and installed a meter on a previously unmetered irrigation line.
 - k. The SWD has been receiving a large number of reports from SunLand residents voicing their concern regarding the ongoing water leak at 100 Sunland Drive.
 - l. Scott is providing assistance in finding an apparent water leak on Mount Baker Drive in Division 17.

Old Business

- a. **COVID-19 – Sampling & Customer Notification – Mike Langley**
COVID-19 lab reports received weekly are posted on the SWD website and an email is sent to residents with the results. (See Manager's Report above.) The Board agreed that it may be necessary to continue the weekly testing until June 2021 but will review the situation in April.
- b. **Legal Report – Mike Langley**
Covered during meeting with Attorney, Jeff Davis.
- c. **Emergency Response Plan – Mike Langley**
Mike will take over, or assign someone, to complete writing specific guidelines for Phases 2 and 3 of the District's Plan.
- d. **Website – All**
Judy stated the updated write-up for the WRF will be posted on the website and the next task is to update the photos in the Gallery section. Karen reported she has put a "test button" on the website which would allow customers to pay their bill. It is only being tested at this time but some but there are additional features needed to make it usable.
- e. **New Hire Search – Mike Langley**

The SWD has advertised for a District Manager to replace Mike when he retires in May and also for a Water Distribution Operator to replace Dutch Williamson. Many resumes have been received but, in the case of the Water Distribution Operator, only one candidate partially meets the qualifications for the job.

For the District Manager position, there are two candidates who meet the job requirements.

Mike reviewed an email he sent to the Board on Monday, February 8th, regarding the 2021 Budget Hires wherein he suggests that the Board consider returning to a structure which contains both a District and an Operations Manager. After discussion, the Board agreed to virtually interview the two qualified candidates for the District Manager and/or possible Operations Manager the week of February 16th (February 15th is a holiday).

- f. Internet Bandwidth – Pursuant to the directive given at the last Board meeting, WAVE has increased the bandwidth for the office and WRF internet and it seems to have improved the operation, especially with regard to sound during Zoom meetings.

8. New Business

a. 2021 Audit Update – Karen Shay

The audit of the SunLand Water District for the years 2018 and 2019 continues. The State Auditor, Cheryl Friesen, requested documentation for areas of review and the team is in process of providing that documentation electronically.

9. Requests for Waiver of Late Fee – Judy Gamble

The Board approved an alternate quarterly payment amount of \$235 for a resident who had a \$400.00 credit at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Judy presented the request submitted by the SunLand Golf and Country Club to reduce the amount of the bill for the Clubhouse due to the COVID-19 restrictions which have affected sales of food and beverage and reduced income from recreational/social gatherings. As a public utility, the Board reviewed the Proclamations issued by the Governor, as well as the Washington State Department of Health Publication #331-661 (Information on Customer Assistance Programs for Water System Customers) in coming to a decision regarding the request. It was noted the DOH publication only covers residential customers and does not cover commercial customers. Governor Inslee's Proclamation 20-23 pertaining to Utility Ratepayer Assistance does not remove a customer's obligation to pay their utility bills, but does encourage utilities to provide relief, not including rate reduction. The biggest concern is that a reduction of a customer's bill would be considered a gift of public funds which is only allowed in the Washington State Constitution for the "poor and infirm". While unable to reduce the amount of the Clubhouse bill, the Board agreed to offer the SGCC the ability to defer payment of the balance of this bill on the one account at 109 Hilltop Drive, with the amount of the deferred payment to be repaid in whole within 12 months after the state of emergency in the State of Washington is rescinded by the Governor. The total amount to be deferred is \$3,015.00. Judy will notify the customer of the deferment offer.

10. **Checks and Vouchers.** The January payroll summary with detail, a vendor voucher and a transfer check are in the office and ready for signature by the Commissioners.


11. **Adjournment – M/S/P to adjourn the meeting at 11:00 a.m. (Moved by G. Fortmann and seconded by A. Frank.)**

NEXT BOARD MEETING WILL BE TUESDAY, MARCH 9, 2021

Respectfully submitted


NEXT BOARD MEETING WILL BE TUESDAY, APRIL (tbd), 2021

Respectfully submitted



Judy Gamble
Office Administrator

Approved: 9 March 2021



Jim Larson, President



Gary F. Fortmann, Secretary



Al Frank, Commissioner