

**CSA7 Customer Advisory Committee
Sept. 25, 2021– 48th meeting
By videoconference**

Meeting called to order at 11:00 am

Attendees:

Committee: Cyrus Yocum, Heather McAvoy, Joanne Lehner, Patricia O’Neal, Terry Adams.

Department of Public Works (DPW): Alan Velasquez, Ann Stillman.

Supervisor Horsley’s Office: Chris Hunter, Lena Silberman.

Host: Fred Deubert.

Public: Armand Borick, Eva Knodt, Kim Borick, Lynnette Vega, Miriam Frank

Announcements:

DPW Director Jim Porter retired July 2nd; the position is now filled by Interim Director Ann Stillman. Also in July Tiffany Deng, who had been working out of class to fill Krzysztof Lisaj’s position, has been replaced by Alan Valasquez as the Senior Civil Engineer in Mark Chow’s group and on CSA7 projects. Alan will be attending on Mark’s behalf today while Mark is on vacation.

Ann joined the meeting at 11:07.

1) June quarterly meeting minutes:

Joanne moved to approve the minutes; Heather seconded. All approved.

2) May, June, July Budgets, Fourth quarter capital improvements expense report, county funded capital expense report.

Patricia notes that Mark answered a question from the last meeting regarding the percentage of Bracewell's budget that is paid by CSA7 and CSA 11. 73% is paid by CSA7 and 27% is paid by CSA11. CSA7 has more extensive routine maintenance and CSA11 does not need a treatment plant.

Ann explained the basics of the budget spreadsheets for the public attendees. June shows the results of the previous fiscal year. July begins the new year so shows no new information.

Areas of over budget were highlighted. Primary expense issues relate to increased maintenance expenses and increased regulatory burden. Most of the expenses of the aeration system have been paid in the last fiscal year, but there is still some testing to do before approval can be obtained. The June budget report shows that CSA7 accrued \$5,128.70 as revenue for the 2021/22 fiscal year, relating to the invoice sent to the contractor who damaged a water main last year. Patricia confirmed that Bracewell did not charge us for a chlorination error that they committed. Ann encouraged us to continue helping with information about damages to CSA7 structures, in order to obtain reimbursements when possible.

Patricia notes that there are no new expenses on the Capital Improvements expense report. There was discussion of how the County and CSA7 share in capital improvement expenses. Basically, there is a

50/50% split on expenditures associated with the treatment plant, supply source, and other shared structures depending on where in the system the improvements or repairs occur.

3) Capital improvements, improvement schedule, compliance.

Alan explains that the focus now is on bringing the treatment plant up to date. About \$1.1 million have been spent so far on chemical containment, the treated water tank, the spray system and the seismic retrofit. This work is essentially completed. So far approximately \$80,842 has been spent on consultation, DPW labor and equipment time, and construction expenses on the treatment plant improvements project which includes the flocculation chamber recoating (\$1,707), and sand media and sand filters replacement (\$9,135). Both of these are under design review and the designs need to be completed and approved by the DDW (Division of Drinking Water). These are a priority because we need to come into regulatory compliance. When the designs are submitted and approved a contractor will need to be hired to do the work and the plant will need to be taken off line for up to two weeks to rehabilitate the treatment plant filter unit and a separate shut down of up to 48 hours for electrical power tie-in as per the current Water Treatment Plant project specifications.

Regarding the acquisition of an additional source of raw water, Alan notes that last week another attempt was made to contact the trustee of the trailer park property where we would like to drill a test well. Patricia says that the trustee is in agreement with the procedure, has contacted their attorney who also agrees, and that the trustee feels they have a fiduciary responsibility to allow it because it insures the viability of the trailer park and its residents. Mark has said that the trustee is considered the legal owner, so if they agree we can proceed. We need to be proactive about getting this finalized as soon as possible.

Alan notes that DPW has not applied under the DDW "Arrearages" program, as we are not eligible because lost revenue did not result from Covid 19. In fact, Covid has resulted in increased water sales due to people being home more. The DPW staff has been looking at other sources of funding, and are now talking to the RCAC (Rural Community Assistance Program) for Technical Assistance support which is to be paid by the Water Board grant for the preparation and submittal of funding applications on behalf of CSA7. There is also the possibility of working with the SMCRC (Resource Conservation District) to obtain funding for water system work to improve fish habitat. Ann says there are several opportunities that the DPW is pursuing due to increased funding available for infrastructure.

Discussion of the process for the treatment plant improvements. Once the plans are approved, the County will go through either a Job Order Contract or a bid process to hire a contractor to do the work. Ann explained the process in detail. The County has purchased a generator but the lead time for procurement is 24 weeks due to supply chain issues. PG&E has loaned CSA7 generators in the past due to being "critical infrastructure", so if there are prolonged outages this winter, we might be able to get that again. Lena notes that the PG&E outages are a hot issue in the county right now and the supervisors are hard at work trying to deal with it.

4) Meter mapping: No new information.

5) Communication with customers of CSA 7:

Heather notes that we now have CSA7@groups.io community message board. We have 16 people who have signed up. We also have the CSA7.org website with links to CSA7 public information including meeting minutes, budgets, and capital improvement plans. Other means of communication are paper

notices from Bracewell, the Public Works website, and DPW mailed documents. A Conservation Alert will arrive with the next bill. We have a responsibility to communicate with customers but we also recognize that many people are just not interested.

6) Public comment:

Miriam Frank asked if the funding in the California Comeback Plan just signed in to law will be investigated as a source. Ann said she will be looking in to it. Miriam also asked if there was a way to reconsider the pace of the rate hikes, given the financial impact of Covid on many customers. There was discussion of why there was no community outreach meeting this time, when there was one before the previous rate hike. Ann notes that all of the requirements of Prop 218 were met, including notices being sent with the proposed rate hikes 45 days prior to the supervisor's meeting, which notified the customers of the availability of written protests, and the ability to speak at the meeting. Miriam wants to know if there is any way to meet the County half way and at least have a more gradual increase. Ann said she will talk to Supervisor Horsley, but that we also need to consider how the expenses of our water system are going to be met. Patricia noted there is contact information for resources who may help with utility payments distributed with delinquent bills and water shut-off notices.

Eva Knodt said that information is delayed because the minutes need to be revised and approved before being made public. She asked if there will be public meetings in the future? Also, the CSA7 page on the San Mateo County Public Works website has not been updated since 2014. There was discussion about how to find information on the County website, which sometimes takes some digging. Terry suggested that the County put on the website things that happen that increase our rates. Patricia noted that additional work by the County will be charged to our account, and suggested placing the DDW reports on the Committee website instead. Ann also said that the expenses of running the system and the repairs are extremely detailed, so would take considerable time to put up.

Chris Hunter left

Lena Silberman left at 1:53 PM

Lynnette asked if we can record meetings to increase transparency. Patricia said this is up to the Committee, and would be discussed at the next meeting. Lynnette asked if we would include the chat comments in the minutes. Patricia said the Committee had not decided to include chat comments at this meeting, and that we hope to be able to have in person meetings in the near future, perhaps next meeting. Lynnette asked if we would distribute a document to replace the agenda, with links to appropriate websites, in advance of each meeting. Patricia offered to put the agenda and the meeting documents on the website. Lynnette asked if they could have at least a summary of the meeting. Patricia said this would also be discussed at the next meeting, and noted that this would mean a lot of work for people who are volunteers and already putting in a lot of time. We have already established a website and user group with information and discussion capability. Perhaps we should give these a try before adding additional tasks.

Patricia also thanked Chris for his help with graffiti abatement at the water intake.

Cyrus moved to adjourn, Terry seconded, all approved. Meeting adjourned at 2:00 PM

Minutes by Cyrus Yocum, Secretary