

SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

MINUTES OF THE RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

October 7, 2003

8:00 a.m.

General Manager Larry Libeu called the Resources Committee Meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. Director Bert Marcum Jr. was appointed Chairman of the Resources Committee.

ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bert Marcum Jr., Director
Sterling Woodbury, Director
Clare Henry Day, Director

STAFF PRESENT:

Larry Libeu, General Manager
Thomas Crowley, Assistant General Manager
Colleen Theuer, Administrative Services Manager

GUESTS PRESENT:

Melody Henriques, Director
Doug Headrick, Water Resources Chief, City of Redlands

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Chairperson Marcum announced this as the time for any persons present, who so desire, to make an oral petition to the Resources Committee. Hearing none, the meeting proceeded with the published agenda items.

2. DISCUSS GROUNDWATER LEVEL MITIGATION CONCEPT

Mr. Libeu led a discussion on a request from the Basin Management Committee of the Upper Santa Ana Water Resources Association regarding District participation in a Groundwater Mitigation Program. The District participated in a similar drought management program in 2002, where 14, 578 acre-feet of state project water was put into the ground. The price of the water at that time was \$100/acre-foot, and the cost was split between the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (Muni), the District, and certain producers. The Board approved \$400,000 from District reserves towards the program, and \$305,000 was spent. Muni has indicated that they may be interested in

pursuing this program again this year. The price of water this year is \$118; the District cost would be approximately \$30/acre-foot based on 10,000 acre-feet (Muni pays 50%, the District and certain producers pay the remaining 50%). The total cost to the District would be approximately \$295,000. East Valley Water District (East Valley) indicated their support for the program, as well as the City of Redlands (Redlands).

Mr. Headrick, Water Resources Chief from the City of Redlands, said the goal should be to develop a long-term solution. He suggested that the program last year and this year might have formed the foundation for a long-term project, but that a more formal structure with Muni would have to be formed. Director Day said the District should not get involved as a general policy, and that Muni should make a larger contribution, as the District is not financially able to contribute on a regular basis. Mr. Headrick said this is a stopgap measure to be used only in years when there is not enough native water flow to put in the ground. Using visual aids, Mr. Crowley and Mr. Headrick demonstrated the problem of low water wells, showing the historic water levels over the last several years. Mr. Headrick said that Redlands has a groundwater basin that is formed by two earthquake faults, and it is producing twice as much water now than ever before; to continue any lower, the water would not be usable. In addition, much of the available groundwater is contaminated, and cannot be used for potable purposes, so production has had to be moved. Two new wells have been drilled north of Orange Street at the CEMEX plant, and to stay clear of the perchlorate and nitrates problem, Redlands is also having to move easterly.

After further discussion, Mr. Libeu recommended participating in a proposal for drought management. Contributors, besides the District, might include the City of Redlands, East Valley Water District, the City of Riverside, West Valley Water District, the City of San Bernardino, Riverside/Highland Water Company, the City of Loma Linda, Meeks & Daley Water Company, Bear Valley Mutual Water Company, the City of Rialto, and the City of Colton. Payment could possibly come from a sub-group of this group, perhaps the City of Riverside, the City of Redlands, East Valley Water District, the City of San Bernardino, and possibly West Valley Water District. Chairman Marcum said the District also has the mechanism in place for assessing agricultural and non-agricultural producers, which would be an equitable way to raise funds for purchasing the water. Mr. Libeu recommended that the District become involved in the program this year, but not set a policy. Director Day agreed that the District should become involved without making a policy, and to look at the operating budget to see where costs can be cut in order to help finance the project. He suggested limiting the amount of water purchased to between 8,000 & 10,000 acre-feet. Mr. Headrick suggested proposing to Muni that they pay 66%.

It was moved by Director Day and seconded by Director Woodbury that due to another year of drought in the basin, the San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District is willing to participate in the groundwater level mitigation program, not to exceed 8,000 to 10,000 acre-feet, in partnership with the City of Redlands, East Valley, City of San Bernardino, and the City of Riverside. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Libeu said this item would now go before the Administrative Committee on October 14, 2003, where the fiscal impact would be discussed.

Director Woodbury suggested that the Outreach Committee write this story up for a newspaper article.

3. ADJOURN

There was no further business, and the meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.