

BIG LAGOON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

APPROVED MINUTES of the Regular Monthly Board Meeting

Saturday November 20, 2021 - 4PM - Community Room at Big Lagoon Elementary School, including participation via Zoom

1. Chair's Call to Order (Bill)

The open/regular meeting of the Big Lagoon Community Services District convened at 4:05PM.

Board members in attendance: Bill Wenger, Chair; Gus Satein, Vice Chair;

Dick Maier, Treasurer; Chuck King, Director

Staff in attendance: Mara Friedman, Board Secretary; Val Castellano, Water Operator;

Dana Hope, Meter Reader

Community members in attendance: Louise Minor; Margie Adler; John Donohoe (Zoom)

Guest Speaker: Kathy Richards from Badger Meter (Zoom)

2. Recognize Public Correspondence received by 4:00 PM, November 19 (Bill)

No public correspondence was received as of 5:30PM November 19.

3. Agenda for November 20, 2021 (Bill) Amend / Approval

Motion and approval to add Kathy Richard's Badger water meter presentation as Agenda

Item 5. Agenda is approved as distributed by Bill with the addition of the Badger presentation.

4. October 16, 2021 Unapproved Meeting Minutes (Bill) Amend / Approval

There were no changes to the meeting minutes. Minutes are approved as distributed by Bill.

STATUS REPORTS (Public may comment after each report is given)

5. Kathy Richards (Badger Meter) Presentation

Kathy Richards (KR) gave a presentation about cellular testing results. There are two types of advanced meter reading technologies: Drive-by and Cellular. A 'drive-by' system can be done daily, weekly or monthly (whichever schedule meets the district's needs) and is simple, reliable and stores 90 days of data. This system shows active leaks as indicated by 24 hours of continual water usage.

The 'cellular' technology receives 15 minute blocks of data over the internet 4 times a day.

Customers are able to view their individual water usage data, including leak alerts.

Currently, Eureka, Mckinleyville and Humboldt CSD's are all using mobile technology. Eureka is shifting to the cellular solution. A challenge in certain rural areas is the strength of the cell signal. A Field Evaluation Analysis (FEA) determines cell signal strength. A FEA analysis was done for BLCSD and the majority of homes proved they had adequate signal strength. Only five homes had inadequate cell signal strength.

Possible solutions for a weak signal are cellular boosters, which cost approx. \$300. The Verizon tower signal is 4 miles SE of Big Lagoon. Data does not get lost if power goes down. John D. is concerned that any equipment outside will not hold up in our corrosive and salty environment. KR assured him that the Badger meters do hold up in ocean environments (such as Kauai and Maui, which Badger is currently servicing). The radio housing is plastic, completely sealed and is submersible in water 24 hours day/ 365 days year. The meters come with a full 10 year warranty. The set-up fee is the same for both solutions. 'Drive-by' has an upfront hardware investment (special tablet, any Windows 10 Pro). Additional cost for cellular is a training fee and a one time set up fee of approx. \$1500.

Further discussion: John D. noted that Windows 10 will eventually be replaced by Windows 11 and all our investment into Windows 10 will need to be replaced. KR to follow up.

The water operator inspects the well site every other day and is able to detect if there is a leak, although not able to determine where the leak is originating from without further investigation. KR noted that Badger is shifting back to brass meters only, as they are able to control costs better using this material. The Board will continue to discuss this information and look into all possibilities.

6. School Pipeline Project (Bill)

We received a \$16,500 grant towards this project. These funds will go to RCAC / State Water Boards to work on our behalf. The Tuesday meeting with RCAC is on. Bill will provide updates at our next meeting.

7. Vice-Chair's Report (Gus)

7.1 Cost estimate for replacing meters, valves and backflow devices

Gus provided a comparison table that gives a snapshot of estimated costs for the low-tech versus high-tech options. Price quotes were received from two different suppliers. This comparison includes two 'rough' labor quotes. The Wahlund price estimate is too high, while Hooven has provided a solid quote. The comparison table has listed three different options as far as who pays for all the work related to this project. Labor is our biggest variable. Based on this comparison table, Gus is leaning toward the 'high-tech' option for a variety of reasons. Chuck noted that he is a supporter of backflow devices and in answer to his question, Gus will find out if backflow devices are required or optional. Backflow devices are located on the homeowners side. Louise M. is concerned about the 'owner pay' option in the cost comparison table. She wants to know what power the Board has to require customers to pay for certain items. A typical backflow device costs \$400 and the estimated cost per household for labor and materials is \$645. Val recommends we 'sunshine' this information to the community for 60 to 90 days.

7.2 Draft Volunteer Safety Program (DVSP) from SDRMA

The DVSP was developed by Henri Castro at SDRMA. This is not a dictate, it is only various recommendations. Gus feels it is worthy for the Board to review the document to see if there are items to either revise and/or eliminate. Will vote on the DVSP at the next meeting.

8. Treasurer's Report (Dick)

8.1 Past-due accounts update

Historically, collections are slow in this billing cycle.

8.2 Future rate increase

Dick distributed Base Fee Analysis Study based on 2021 cost numbers. Questioned whether we want to stay with original rate structure increase of 5/10/15 percent or do we want to create a brand new structure? The difference in the base rate would amount to an annual increase of approx. \$85 dollars per household. A total annual increase of approx. \$3,500.

Louise stated that we need to take inflation into account. Dana thinks we should distribute this information to the community. Gus asked if the Board can make rate increases themselves? Generally agreed that further discussion is needed on this topic.

8.3 Financial Statements

Our balance is \$148,279 as of October 1, 2021.

9. Water Operator's Report (Val)

9.1 Average daily consumption

Using 5000 gallons/day and 3000 gallon/days when power is off. Generator working well.

10. Meter Reader's Report (Dana)

All going well with meter readings.

Dana is training three new volunteers: Matthew, Louise and Rob.

11. Storage Capacity & Fire Suppression status report (Dick)

Nothing more to report at this time.

12. Drought Emergency Conservation Measures Update (Chuck)

Nothing more to report at this time. The workgroup, comprised of Eric, Catherine and Margie, have not yet had their first meeting. Their preference is to meet outside, in person.

13. Volunteer Insurance Policy (Dick)

13.1 Enrolled in Alliant's Volunteer Insurance Program

Our new volunteer insurance policy cost \$350 per year, with a deductible of \$250 per accident.

14. Mutual Aid Agreement between Humboldt County CSDs (Bill)

Nothing further to report.

15. PUBLIC COMMENT

Louise wants to understand the cellular wifi meter solution better. Bill agreed, stating we all need to come to a better understanding of that information.

16. Future Agenda Items from Board Members

Gus is concerned about Val leaving in June 2022 and feels we need to seriously begin investigating a potential replacement for the Water Operator position.

17. Adjourn

With no other business, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:25 PM.

The next regular meeting will be Saturday, January 22 at 10 AM in person in the school cafeteria and also accessible via Zoom.

Submitted by Mara Friedman, Board Secretary