

**Borrego Water District**  
**MINUTES**  
**Conservation**  
**Standing Committee**  
**Wednesday, April 1, 2009**  
**9:00 a.m.**  
**806 Palm Canyon Drive**  
**Borrego Springs, CA 92004**

Attendance:    Directors:    Andersen, Shimeall  
Staff:            Richard Williamson, General Manager  
                         Jerry Rolwing, Operations Manager  
                         Wendy Quinn, Recording Secretary  
Public:            Bob McKee

**CALL TO ORDER**  
**INTRODUCTION OF PARTICIPANTS**

Jerry Rolwing presented slides on the Conservation Incentive Program, which would be shown at tonight's Town Hall Meeting. He explained that the goal of the program is to assist customers in lowering water usage in preparation for the tiered rates, which begin in July. To date, 20 irrigation audits have been performed, 3 irrigation retrofits and 11 turf removal projects. The turf removal has resulted in a water savings of 69 percent of participants. Rebates have been paid for 36 low flow toilets, saving 147,147 gallons of water a year; and 19 low flow washers, saving 173,280 gallons. The program will continue at least through June 30, when it will be reevaluated.

Mr. Rolwing went on to summarize the education component of the conservation program, including a seminar in Spanish for local gardeners, a student trip to a water exhibit in San Diego, and a booth during Borrego Days demonstrating the size of a unit of water, costing \$1.12. A workshop for do-it-yourself gardeners is planned, and perhaps another for professionals.

Various types of irrigation controllers were presented. Mr. Rolwing noted that the "smart" controllers are difficult to program. Rich Williamson suggested offering a rebate only if District staff programs it. Mr. Rolwing reported that a common problem discovered during the irrigation audits is the lack of an anti-siphon valve. Other issues include problems with adjustable sprinkler heads, failure to adjust irrigation for seasonal differences and over-watering. The presentation concluded with a list of resources for information on low water use planting.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Conservation Standing Committee Minutes of March 4, 2009 were approved as written.

## **CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS:**

### **1. IMPLEMENTATION OF CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN**

- BMP for Commercial Customers

This item was deferred due to Subcommittee Chair Don McKelvey's absence.

- Gardeners' workshop report

Mr. Rolwing reported that the recent workshop was attended by six gardeners, lasted three hours and was well received.

Bob McKee pointed out that his water bill indicates he did not exceed the Tier 2 rate, while it should say he did not exceed Tier 1. The Committee concurred.

Mr. Rolwing reported that Helix Water District would be holding a hearing in May on a proposed five-tier rate plan. Rates would also vary at four levels depending on water shortage conditions. Commercial rates would be affected only by the shortage conditions, not the tiers.

Mr. Rolwing distributed information from Coachella Valley Water District regarding efficient water use. A representative spoke recently to the Desert Gardeners and offered to speak to the Committee.

- Plans for future workshops (gardeners and/or general public)

This was discussed during Mr. Rolwing's presentation for the Town Hall Meeting.

- Alerts for water bill inserts

Mr. Rolwing had prepared a water bill insert in English and Spanish, and Connie Smith is reviewing the Spanish version. It will be included in the April bills. Mr. Williamson is planning to include budget information in the May bills.

- "Speak Up" column in *The Sun*

Director Shimeall suggested deferring this proposal until next year. Mr. Rolwing noted that residents who received rebates would be interviewed.

- Conservation in schools in May

Director Shimeall is working with the schools on the upcoming conservation program. Mr. Rolwing will follow up on the poster, essay and PowerPoint contests, as well as the Water Education for Teachers (WET) program.

### **2. CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MONITORING DUTIES**

- Status of Conservation Incentive participants

Mr. Rolwing reported on several turf removal projects. Patricia Carson had applied for retrofit assistance in the amount of \$145.80 following her irrigation audit. Mr. Rolwing recommended approval, and the Committee concurred. William Marquez requested credit for 1,425 square feet of turf removal, which he promises to do within the current fiscal year. It was approved pending removal and verification. E.B. Chedrick submitted photos of his 800 square feet of turf removal, which was approved subject to inspection. St. Richards Church had applied for turf removal credit, over 2,500 square feet, but it was done in stages and they were not sure when (some time after January 2008, they think). Discussion followed regarding whether to put them on the waiting list for excess funds at fiscal year-end. Director Andersen suggested they submit a signed statement that the work was done during the allowable time period, and then approve the rebate. Mr. Rolwing agreed to seek additional information.

Mr. Williamson suggested sending a letter to those that have had irrigation audits but not applied for retrofit assistance, reminding them to apply before the end of the fiscal year. He expected Holiday Homes Mobile Home Park and Villas Borrego Condominiums to apply for audits and probably retrofit assistance. Discussion followed regarding the common lack

of anti-siphon valves, and all agreed they should be required as a condition of retrofit assistance.

- Toilet rebates, Irrigation audits, Turf removals

Mr. Rolwing distributed a written report on expenditures to date for the Conservation Incentive Program

- Committee Approval of Irrigation/Turf Removal Projects

Approvals were handled during the status report.

### **3. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

Mr. Williamson reported he had spoken to some vendors regarding upgrading the District's website. The estimates ranged from \$20,000 to \$25,000 to upgrade the design and provide capability for eventual online payments. The District would have to change its e-mail system as well. He intended to investigate modifying the existing website, working with the current consultant, and will schedule a meeting including Mr. Rolwing, Greg Holloway and Diana Del Bono.

Mr. Rolwing announced the American Waterworks meeting in San Diego in June.

- Water Production and Use Review for Previous Month (Effects of Conservation Efforts (BWD Staff))

Water production and use was covered during Mr. Rolwing's earlier presentation.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m. The next regular Conservation Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 6, 2009.