

Borrego Water District
MINUTES
Special Meeting
Conservation Standing Committee
Tuesday, August 18, 2009
4:00 p.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: Don McKelvey Mike Shetler, Palm Canyon Resort

CALL TO ORDER
INTRODUCTION OF PARTICIPANTS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of July 1, 2009 were approved as written.

CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS:

1. IMPLEMENTATION OF CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

- Possible Conservation incentives for Palm Canyon Resort

Jerry Rolwing introduced Mike Shetler, representing the Palm Canyon Resort. They had been working to identify options for the resort to conserve water. One concern is that the turf removal credit is limited to 2,500 square feet, and the resort hopes to remove most of its 44,000 square feet (approximately one acre). They are also looking at replacing all toilets with low flow models. Mr. Rolwing suggested perhaps the District could lease sign space on the property, as is done at Christmas Circle, for a message such as "Conserve water in the desert."

Mr. Shetler explained that he had already removed some trees and hoped to remove more, as well as most of the turf, and replace it with desert landscaping. However, the cost is prohibitive. Rich Williamson suggested the water mitigation credit policy. Mr. Rolwing noted the 10 acre-feet per acre per year minimum, but it was agreed that exceptions could be considered. Mr. Shetler could receive eight credits, valued between \$6,000 and \$8,000 each. Mr. Williamson explained the policy, which is up for adoption on September 16 and stands a good chance of passage. A variance to the water use limit would be considered by the Groundwater Management Committee. Discussion followed regarding the timing, and the fact that Mr. Shetler hoped to begin the work immediately to be ready for groups coming to the resort in October. He wondered whether a contractor might agree to do the work in exchange for the credits, and Mr. Williamson agreed to put it on the next Groundwater Management Committee agenda (September 9).

Director Andersen inquired about toilet rebates for the resort. Mr. Rolwing pointed out that if rebates were granted for replacement of all existing toilets, that would use up the entire annual toilet rebate budget. He suggested approving one third initially, and Director Andersen added that more could be granted at year end if there is money left. Mr.

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Williamson recommended that the rebate amount for the remaining two thirds be paid as rent for signage space, and Mr. Rolwing noted that that money could come from the water education and awareness account. It was agreed to recommend this approach for immediate approval of the toilet rebates (\$3,333 from the toilet rebate fund and \$6,667 for signage, details to be negotiated). Mr. Williamson will prepare an agreement for consideration by the Committee and Board in September.

Further discussion followed regarding the turf removal, and whether the resort should reseed in September as usual or wait for GWM Committee and Board approval for the turf removal. Reseeding requires a lot of water. Don McKelvey suggested that Mr. Shetler contact Tom Fredericks to see if he would consider handling the turf removal and re-landscaping in exchange for mitigation credits. Mr. Williamson suggested that in the alternative, the District could contract out the work, offer fair market value for the credits and use them for individual builders and small developers. It was agreed that Mr. Shetler will contact Mr. Fredericks and report back to Mr. Rolwing. Hopefully an agreement can be presented to the Board in September. Mr. Rolwing pointed out that Mr. Shetler would also be eligible to apply for a 20 percent irrigation retrofit rebate. Mr. Shetler planned to attend the next GWM Committee meeting and the September Board meeting.

- Discussion of public information activities

Mr. Rolwing suggested giving out metal drinking water bottles with the District's logo at the Borrego Days booth. They cost approximately \$5 each, and after discussion, it was agreed that stainless steel would be preferable to aluminum and that we would order 144 and give some away to District staff and crew. Mr. McKelvey suggested displaying the water bottles, representing a unit of water, again this year. Director Shimeall recommended sending a picture of the display to the ACWA magazine.

2. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

None.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m. The next regular Conservation Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 2, 2009.