

Borrego Water District
CORRECTED MINUTES
Conservation Standing Committee
Wednesday, April 7, 2010, 9:00 a.m.
806 Palm Canyon Drive, Borrego Springs, CA 92004

Attendance: Director: Shimeall
Staff: Richard Williamson, General Manager
 Jerry Rolwing, Operations Manager
 Wendy Quinn, Recording Secretary
Public: Jim Engelke Beth Hart
 Marshal Brecht Lucy Larson
 Consuela Smith, BSUSD Dick Walker
 Jim Jordan

CALL TO ORDER
INTRODUCTION OF PARTICIPANTS

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of March 3, 2010 were approved as written.

CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS:

1. IMPLEMENTATION OF CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

- Update Budget for FYE 2010

Rich Williamson noted that tiered rates were adopted in 2008, followed by a year of education and incentives, and implemented in July 2009. At present, most customers interested in toilet or washer rebates or turf removal have already taken advantage of them. He requested Committee approval to recommend to the Capital Projects Committee and Budget Committee that we continue the irrigation efficiency audits only. Discussion followed regarding the irrigation retrofits. Jerry Rolwing recommended retaining a budget for education, perhaps including irrigation timer information on the back of bills and conducting another seminar. Jim Jordan suggested posting educational material in the area outside the Post Office. Marshal Brecht inquired about increasing the use of e-mail to communicate with customers. Mr. Williamson suggested a \$20,000 budget for irrigation audits and education combined. The tentative class to be taught by District staff at the College of Borrego Springs would be a separate expense, as would staff time spent on the conservation program. Mr. Brecht suggested putting a limit on staff time, perhaps a percentage of the budget for each particular item.

Discussion followed regarding tiered rates. Beth Hart asked about the overall decrease in water use since the inception of the conservation program. Mr. Rolwing pointed out that a comparison between this year's water use and last year's is in each Board Agenda packet. Director Shimeall recommended establishing a new tier for the heaviest water users. Mr. Jordan asked if there was a way to get revenue from the agricultural community. Mr. Williamson explained the adjudication process, but pointed out it is unlikely to succeed because of powerful agricultural lobbies in the State, the costs involved in litigation and the fact that the farmers were here first. Mr. Engelke concurred. Lucy Larson suggested obtaining an outside legal opinion. Mr. Williamson noted that adjudication had been

investigated as part of the Groundwater Management Plan and other technical studies and rejected as a viable option.

- Signage for Palm Canyon Resort

Mr. Williamson reported that the agreement between Palm Canyon Resort and BWD had not yet been signed, but he expected it this week.

- Discussion of termination of rebate program

Jim Engelke recommended retaining the turf removal rebate program. Ms. Hart suggested calculating the water savings for each type of rebate before deciding. Ms. Larson pointed out that the District is losing money because of the loss of Montesoro and Borrego Ranch and needs to reduce costs.

- Public outreach/education with Borrego College on Conservation Class

Mr. Williamson reported that plans had not yet been finalized for a conservation class at the College of Borrego Springs. It will likely be held at the college and begin in the fall.

Mr. Rolwing recommended another contest for school students related to water conservation. Connie Smith suggested the end of May, and it was agreed to present the awards at the May 26 Board meeting. Categories will be K-Grade 2 and Grades 3-5 (posters), middle school (essays) and high school (essays or PowerPoint presentations). Ms. Smith announced that Dr. Carmen Garcia has been selected as the new Superintendent of Schools and will begin on July 1.

Ms. Smith inquired about Water Education for Teachers Programs. Mr. Rolwing replied that they are available in San Luis Obispo, Fresno, Sacramento and Tucson. Mr. Williamson offered his services and Mr. Rolwing's to make presentations regarding current water issues and careers in water.

- Water saved by incentive program participants

Mr. Rolwing reported that comparing the past eight months' water use by those who participated in the incentive program to their four-year history, they saved a total of 58.42 acre-feet or 25,000 units. The cost to the District was \$4,792 per acre-foot of savings.

2. CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MONITORING DUTIES

- Review of irrigation audits
- Turf removal approvals
- Irrigation retrofit approvals

Mr. Rolwing reported that two irrigation audits had been conducted during the past month.

3. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

None

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m. The next regular Conservation Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 5, 2010.