



**MEETING MINUTES
ETHICS TRAINING – 5:00-7:00 PM
REGULAR MEETING – 7:00 PM
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2021**

In response to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Soquel Creek Water District's February 2, 2021 Board Meeting was held remotely via Zoom.

Recorded Meetings: Recorded meetings can be viewed anytime on the District's [website](#).

President Lather called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm via Zoom.

0. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Board Members Present:

Rachél Lather, President
Dr. Thomas LaHue, Vice-President
Dr. Bruce Daniels
Carla Christensen
Dr. Bruce Jaffe

District Counsel

Joshua Nelson, District Counsel

Staff Members Present:

Ron Duncan, General Manager
Shelley Flock, Conservation and Customer Service Field Manager
Taj Dufour, Engineering Manager
Leslie Strohm, Finance Manager
Traci Hart, Human Resources Manager
Christine Mead, Operations & Maintenance Manager
Melanie Mow Schumacher, Special Projects-Communications Manager
Emma Olin, Executive Assistant/Board Clerk
Rebecca Rubin, Public Outreach Coordinator

Others Present:

4 members of the public

1. CLOSED SESSION

- 1.1 Conference with Legal Counsel – Existing Litigation Pursuant to Government Code Section §54956.9(d)(1)
Steinbruner vs. Soquel Creek Water District et al., Santa Cruz County Superior Court Case Nos. 19AP00031 19AP00030 19CV00181; CA Sixth District Court of Appeals Case No. H048738
Steinbruner v. California Coastal Commission, et al., San Francisco County Superior Court Case No. CPF- 20517119
- 1.2 Conference With Real Property Negotiators
Property: Right-of-way easement for 2505 Chanticleer Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA 95062
Agency negotiator(s): Ron Duncan and Taj Dufour
Negotiating parties: Kimberly Finley, Santa Cruz County

Under negotiation: Price and Terms of Payment

At 7:08 pm, President Lather announced that the Board will meet in closed session to discuss Items 1.1 and 1.2.

One public comment was heard prior to the start of closed session.

CONVENE TO CLOSED SESSION – 7:11 pm

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION – 7:37 pm

President Lather adjourned the closed session and returned to open session at 7:37 pm.

President Lather reported that the Board discussed Items 1.1 and 1.2 in closed session. No action was taken.

President Lather announced that Item 7.3, Property Negotiations with County of Santa Cruz, APN 029-013-54, 2505 Chanticleer Ave., Santa Cruz, California, is removed from the agenda.

2. PUBLIC HEARING - None

3. ANNOUNCEMENT BY BOARD MEMBERS OF ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

None removed.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

One public comment was heard.

MOTION: Director Daniels; Second: Director Christensen; To approve Consent Agenda Items 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.5. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

4.1 Approval of Minutes
4.1.1 January 19, 2021 – Regular Meeting Minutes
Action: Approved

4.2 Board Planning Calendar
Action: Approved

4.3 Special Board Assignments Status Report
Action: Approved

4.4 Informational - Annual System Water Production Status Report, 2020
Action: Approved

4.5 Authorize the Board President to Sign a Letter of Support for Senate Bill (SB) 45, Wildfire Prevention, Safe Drinking Water, Drought Preparation, and Flood Protection Bond Act of 2022
Action: Approved

5. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS (items not on the Agenda)

Written communications addressed to the Board are available [online](#).

One public comment was heard.

Director Christensen stated that WaterReuse is offering free informational webcasts, such as “Stormwater Capture Drivers, Impediments, and Future Visions” on February 3, 2021, and “Communicating about Potable Reuse and Public Health: Tools for Success” on February 17, 2021.

6. **REPORTS** – *None*

7. **ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS**

7.1 Conditional and Unconditional Will Serve Letters

7.1.1 Approve Conditional Will Serve Letter for 11-lot Subdivision at 3300 Maplethorpe Ln., Soquel, CWO 19-081

Mr. Dufour reviewed the will serve on the agenda. He explained that the Board approved a conditional will serve letter for this project in 2019, and the project is returning to the Board for consideration of a renewal of the conditional will serve letter. He stated that the project remains an 11-lot subdivision, but with minor increases to the lot sizes, which triggered additional water demand offsets.

One public comment was heard.

In response to a question posed by Director Jaffe, Mr. Dufour explained that the developer is responsible for the cost of the main extension that is needed for the project.

MOTION: Director Christensen; Second: Vice-President LaHue; To Approve a Conditional Will Serve Letter for the 11-lot Subdivision at 3300 Maplethorpe Lane, Soquel, CWO 19-081. Motion passed by roll call vote (4:1). Director Daniels voted NO.

7.2 Consider Modification of District Procedure/Policy Regarding Costs for Non-Use of Existing Meters and the Abandonment of Existing Water Meter Services

Mr. Duncan reviewed Item 7.2, explaining that this item is presented for the Board to consider modifying the District’s existing procedure/policy regarding costs for non-use of existing landscape meters and the abandonment of existing landscape water meter services. He explained that one District customer, who is involved with two Home Owners’ Associations (HOAs), requested that the Board review and consider modifying this policy.

Mr. Duncan reviewed the District’s existing policy, and he discussed staff’s recommended approach:

1. Continue the practice of not allowing temporary suspension of water services – i.e. charge appropriate monthly service fees; and
2. If a customer wants to permanently discontinue service, then they should have the work performed at their own costs in conformance with District protocols.

Two public comments were heard.

President Lather responded to public comment.

Directors recognized the benefit of customers using less water by not utilizing water services (specifically irrigation services). Directors discussed different ways to possibly modify the District’s existing policy while remaining fair to all customers. Topics discussed included:

- Fairness to all customers, and the total number of irrigation meters in the District;

- Feasibility of capping at the connection where the service lateral joins the water main (allowing the abandoned pipeline to remain);
- Implications and legality of modifying fixed service charges and Proposition 218; and
- Possibility of offering an incentive and/or rebate for removing irrigation service.

Additional discussion ensued, and there was consensus among the Board to not modify the rate structure (i.e. fixed water service charge), without conducting a complete rate study and adhering to the Proposition 218 process. Mr. Duncan confirmed that this could be incorporated into the next rate development process, if the Board desires.

Directors recognized that the District's current policy is fair and appropriate, and there was consensus among the Board to not modify the existing policy/procedure at tonight's meeting. However, Directors requested that staff return with additional information related to offering an incentive and/or rebate for removing irrigation services. Director LaHue also requested clarification on the total number of irrigation meters in the District.

MOTION: Director LaHue; Second: Director Christensen; To request that staff return with additional information on the possibility of an incentive and/or rebate for removing irrigation services. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

7.3 Property Negotiations with County of Santa Cruz, APN 029-013-54, 2505 Chanticleer Ave., Santa Cruz, California – **Removed from the agenda**

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

President Lather adjourned the meeting at 8:30 pm.

SUBMITTED:



Emma Olin, Board Clerk

APPROVED:



Rachél Lather, President