

**RUBIDOUX COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, October 3, 2024**

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Bernard Murphy
F. Forest Trowbridge
John Skerbelis
Hank Trueba, Jr.

DIRECTORS VIA ZOOM: Armando Muniz

STAFF PRESENT: Brian Laddusaw, General Manager
Ted Beckwith, Director of Engineering
Kirk Hamblin, Director of Finance and Administration
Martha Perez, Customer Service/Accounts Payable
Manager
Melissa Trujillo, HR Generalist/Safety and Facilities
Coordinator

VISITORS (SIGNED IN): Diana Leja, RCSD Resident
Ross Leja, RCSD Resident

ITEM 1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Board of Directors of the Rubidoux Community Services District by President Skerbelis, at 4:00 P.M., Thursday, October 3, 2024, in-person and by teleconferencing at the District's Administrative Office, 3590 Rubidoux Boulevard, Jurupa Valley, California.

ITEM 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – General Manager

ITEM 3. ROLL CALL – General Manager

ITEM 4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments.

ITEM 5. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Approval of Minutes for September 19, 2024, Regular Meeting
- B. Consideration to Approve October 4, 2024, Salaries, Expenses and Transfers

- C. DM 2024-75: Receive and File Statement of Cash Asset Schedule Report Ending August 2024

*****Director Murphy had a question on bills 5473 Mission carpet cleaning and plumbing. He confirmed if that is the office on Mission, Management responded yes*****

ACTION:

Director Murphy moved, and Director Trueba seconded to approve items the Consent Calendar items A-C.

Roll call:

Ayes – 5 (Murphy, Trueba, Skerbelis, Trowbridge, Muniz)

Noes – 0

Abstain – 0

Absent – 0

The motion was carried 5-0-0-0.

ITEM 6. CORRESPONDENCE AND RELATED INFORMATION

Riverside Press- Enterprise Article, “City Hires Private Trash Hauler”

Riverside took emergency action this week, hiring a private trash hauler, while residents continue to grapple with garbage collection problems sometimes it is sitting out for days before being collected. The private hauler, Athens Services, started service Thursday, Sept. 19, according to city officials. The company will oversee nine city routes and assist in delayed trash pickups. “It’s going really great,” Riverside City Councilmember Steven Robillard said in a phone interview Thursday. “This morning, I was out front in my front yard with my son and two of our cans got picked up by Athens, which hasn’t happened in a very long time.” The City Council approved seeking outside help during the closed session portion of its meeting Tuesday, Sept. 17, Riverside spokesperson Phil Pitchford said. Issues and delays have been ongoing for the past three years, but aging trucks made worse in hot weather are now a key problem. Maintenance costs have gone up because of the aging fleet of trucks, vacancies have led to increased overtime costs, and retention issues, are all things the city has been dealing with, according to the city’s Biennial Budget. Athens may remain for up to six months and no city trash service layoffs are expected due to the assistance the city agency is now getting, officials said. The cost for the private hauler is nearly \$95,000 a month, Pitchford said, making the total for six months \$570,000. The city’s refuse fund, or solid waste fund, is 2.5% or \$32,628,594 of the budget for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. “This is a temporary solution until we get back on track,” Robillard said Thursday. “I think we’re expected to catch up with all the backlog pickups by this weekend and be on normal trash service starting next week.”

ITEM 7. REPORTS

A. Operations Report (Second Meeting Each Month)

B. Emergency and Incident Report (Second Meeting Each Month)

C. General Manager and Staff Reports / Updates

General Manager Brian Laddusaw shared pictures from the State of the City Chamber of Commerce event with the Board of Directors. In attendance were Future Director Diana Ross, Director Murphy, Director Skerbelis, Director Trueba, Miguel Valdez, Director of Operations, and GM Laddusaw. Next, he updated the Board on the City of Jurupa Valley's Salute to Veterans Parade and Celebration, scheduled for November 9th, which will begin at 9 a.m. Miguel Valdez and Director Trueba will be representing the District at the event. GM Laddusaw will not be able to attend this year.

GM Laddusaw also reminded the Board of the Recognition for Director Muniz, which will take place on November 7th at 3 p.m. before the scheduled Board meeting. Lastly, he discussed the Jurupa Community Services District Boil Water notice with the Board. Director Murphy requested a follow-up on this issue in upcoming meetings.

Director Ted Beckwith provided the Board with updates on the tracks for the construction of Lennar Homes on Avalon and Cannel. They are working on the Avalon sewer replacement and will be adding sewer lines where none currently exist. He also discussed the Seasons at Sagebrush by Richmond American Homes, Century Communities, the Country Estates sewer extension, and the ongoing discussions with the City Council regarding Rio Vista. The District is collaborating with Rio Vista to build a reservoir on 20th Street, over the hill on Shadow Rock.

For commercial projects, there are 5 or 6 smaller tilt-up buildings coming online at 26th and Canal. Initially, the project was planned to be 1.2 million square feet, but the City requested revisions to reduce traffic impact, leading to a redesign for smaller businesses.

D. Committee Reports

None of the committee's met, no items to discuss.

ITEM 8. ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS.

- A. DM 2024-76:** Consider Proposal for Additional Services from Water Resources Economics for Public Speaking Coaching

BACKGROUND:

The Rubidoux Community Services District ("District") serves an expanding and dynamic community and the need for clear, timely, and reliable public communication is crucial. With significant growth in both residential and commercial sectors, the demand for community services, particularly water and wastewater management and infrastructure, has increased substantially. The District's ability to effectively communicate with the public and industry stakeholders is essential to maintaining transparency, managing expectations, and fostering trust. This has become especially evident in light of the recent boil water notice issued last week by a neighboring water agency affecting parts of the Eastvale and Jurupa Valley areas.

In an industry as critical as water services and wastewater collection, where rapid changes in regulations, infrastructure projects, and crisis situations occur, the capacity to convey complex technical information in a concise and accessible manner is more important than ever. Residents, business, and partner agencies depend on the District to provide fast, accurate, and understandable information about essential services, water quality, conservation efforts, and infrastructure developments. Moreover, in a time of crisis, such as water shortages or infrastructure failures, the District must be prepared to deliver reliable information that reassures the community while guiding them through necessary actions.

This emerging environment presents unique challenges to staff, especially those who are responsible for public communication. With community engagement at an all-time high, the ability to deliver well-structured, confident, and effective presentations is not just a skill, but a necessity. The District's leadership team, including the recently hired Assistant General Manager, will benefit from public speaking consulting to ensure that the District meets these expectations.

The role of a public speaking coach will be instrumental in equipping the leadership team with the skills needed to excel in this fast-paced, information-driven landscape. The District leadership team includes the General Manager, Assistant General Manager, and Directors of Engineering, Operations, and Finance and Administration. From public speaking hearings and community forums to interagency meetings and media interactions, District staff must be prepared to respond swiftly and effectively. The District does not have a dedicated government affairs position or department, so these responsibilities are currently managed by the leadership team.

Public speaking coaching is a service currently offered by Water Resources Economics, an existing District consultant. In 2021, the District hired Water Resources Economics to operate as an extension of staff in assisting the District with its 2022 Comprehensive Cost of Service Study ("COSS") which ultimately resulted in the District adopting a new 5-year water and wastewater rate plan for fiscal years 2024-2028.

In 2024, Water Resources Economics expanded its services to include public speaking coaching. District staff received a proposal for \$14,000 for public speaking coaching which includes:

Proposed Scope of Services

- Five one-on-one public speaking sessions for up to five District staff (leadership team)
- Session 1: Mastering Professional Presence
- Session 2: Structuring Your Argument
- Session 3: Engaging and Influencing Stakeholders
- Session 4: Handling Pressure and Interjections
- Session 5: Final Presentation and Professional Feedback

The public speaking coach will offer tailored training focused on the unique demands of the District and the community served. The training will address:

1. Speech Structuring: Organizing technical information into clear, accessible narratives that resonate with a diverse audience.

2. Crisis Communication: Responding quickly and confidently to urgent situations while ensuring accurate, calm messaging.
3. Audience Engagement: Fostering trust and dialogue through effective communication with community members, regulatory agencies, and local governments.
4. Confidence Building: Strengthening the leadership teams' ability to communicate under pressure, particularly during public meetings and challenging question-and-answer sessions.
5. Information Clarity: Presenting complex issues such as water quality, conservation efforts, and infrastructure projects in a way that is easy for non-experts to understand.

The five sessions will commence shortly after the Assistant General Manager starts and settles into their new role and responsibilities, likely late Fall. No other proposals were received for public speaking coaching as Water Resources Economics is uniquely qualified to provide this service.

Budget Considerations

The objective of this proposal is to provide public speaking coaching to the District's leadership team. The roles benefiting from this training include the General Manager, Assistant General Manager, and Director of Finance and Administration, which are funded by the District's General Fund, and the Directors of Operations and Engineering, which are funded by the District's Water Fund.

The total funding required for this initiative is \$14,000, with \$8,400 allocated from the General Fund and \$5,600 from the Water Fund. However, this expense was not anticipated during the development of the Fiscal Year 2024|2025 ("FY 24|25") General Fund and Water Fund budgets and will necessitate a budget amendment to proceed.

Staff Recommendation for Budget Amendments:

1. General Fund Amendment:

Amend the FY 24|25 General Fund Budget, Line 42 'Employee Education and Training,' increasing the allocation from \$15,000 to \$25,000. This additional \$10,000 will cover the \$8,400 required for the General Fund portion of the training and include a \$1,600 contingency.

2. Water Fund Amendment:

Amend the FY 24|25 Water Fund Budget, Line 30 'Employee Education and Training,' increasing the allocation from \$25,000 to \$31,000. This additional \$6,000 will cover the \$5,600 needed from the Water Fund and include a \$400 contingency.

The additional funding of \$10,000 for the General Fund and \$6,000 for the Water Fund will be sourced from the District's Unrestricted Property Tax Operating Reserve and Water Fund Operating Reserve, respectively. As of September 20, 2024, the balances of these reserves stood at \$5.138 million and \$2.033 million, respectively, which is more than sufficient to accommodate the proposed expenditure.

This initiative directly supports the District strategic goal of enhancing operational transparency and community engagement. Effective public communication is critical to ensuring the District maintains the public’s confidence, especially as the District navigates an increasingly complex regulatory and operational environment. A well-trained staff will enhance the District’s ability to deliver timely and accurate information, which in turns supports the District’s mission and goals.

ACTION:

Director Murphy moved, and Director Trueba seconded to approve the proposal from Water Resources Economics and issue a Task Order to the consultant in the amount of \$14,000 to provide public speaking coaching. Amend the District’s Fiscal Year 2024|2025 General Fund Budget In. 42 ‘Employee Education and Training’ from \$15,000 to \$25,000 with the additional funds allocated from the District’s Unrestricted Property Tax Operating Reserve and amend the District’s Fiscal Year 2024|2025 Water Fund Budget In. 30 ‘Employee Education and Training’ from \$25,000 to \$31,000 with the additional funds allocated from the District’s Water Fund Operating Reserve.

Roll call:

Ayes – 5 (Murphy, Trueba, Skerbelis, Trowbridge, Muniz)

Noes – 0

Abstain – 0

Absent – 0

The motion was carried 5-0-0-0.

ITEM 9. DIRECTOR’S COMMENTS AND REQUESTS

Director Trueba attended a meet-and-greet a couple of days ago, where he spoke with a woman on the corner of 34th Street named Nadia. She was very complimentary about how the District handled a flooding issue, mentioning that everyone involved was professional and efficient.

Director Skerbelis noted that this was the third time the situation had occurred. GM Laddusaw responded that he would work with Miguel to gather further information.

Director Murphy commented on the State of the City Jurupa Valley event he attended. After the Mayor’s presentation, he mentioned that he would consider living in the city (he currently resides in the City of Jurupa Valley). He confirmed that all the SB1383 trash pails had been distributed. He requested that in March 2026, he would like to see an annual trash data report (by weight) for 2023–2026, presented in a line graph with trends. He also expressed a desire to understand the economic benefits of the AMI project and to ensure that the specifications are appropriate. Additionally, he asked what the Meter Reader’s role would be once the AMI project is implemented.

Regarding the building project, Director Murphy wants to continue this effort through the building committee and mentioned the importance of appropriate construction parking and the use of a steel building for District vehicles.

Director Muniz apologized for not attending the meeting in person. No other Directors had any further comments.

ITEM 10. NEXT MEETING

Thursday, October 17, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.

ITEM 11. ADJOURNMENT

President Skerbelis adjourned the meeting at 4:37 P.M.