

**RUBIDOUX COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, February 6, 2025**

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Bernard Murphy
Hank Trueba, Jr.
John Skerbelis
Diana Leja
Leslie Altamirano

STAFF PRESENT: Brian Laddusaw, General Manager
Brandon Thomas, Assistant General Manager
Jaclyn Makarzec, Director of Engineering
Kirk Hamblin, Director of Finance and Administration
Miguel Valdez, Director of Engineering
Martha Perez, Customer Service/Accounts Payable
Manager

VISITORS (SIGNED IN): Ross Leja, RCSD Resident

ITEM 1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Board of Directors of the Rubidoux Community Services District by President Trueba, at 4:00 PM Thursday, February 6, 2025, 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 January 16, 2025, Regular Meeting
- B. Consideration to Approve the February 7, 2025, Salaries, Expenses and Transfers

ACTION:

Director Murphy moved, and Director Skerbelis seconded to approve the Consent Calendar.

Roll call:

Ayes – 5 (Murphy, Trueba, Skerbelis, Leja, Altamirano)

Noes – 0

Abstain – 0

Absent – 0

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

ITEM 6. CORRESPONDENCE AND RELATED INFORMATION

GM Laddusaw presented the Board of Directors with two articles from enewspaper.pressenterprise.com. The first article, titled "State Allocates SoCal More Water," discusses a modest increase in the allocation of water being released from Northern California, which will make billions of additional gallons available to Southern California water agencies, according to state and local experts. Water managers say the extra amount may serve as drought insurance for the years ahead. The State Department of Water Resources announced on Tuesday that it has raised the allotment of requested supplies delivered by the State Water Project from 15% to 20%. This increase amounts to a total allocation of approximately 526,709 acre-feet for Southern California water agencies in 2025, or just under 172 billion gallons of water. Of that amount, the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, the largest wholesaler of water in the state, is scheduled to receive 382,300 acre-feet, the most of any agency, according to the Department of Water Resources.

The second article, titled "Agency Gets \$100M for Desalination Plant," discusses the three groundwater desalters at the Eastern Municipal Water District desalination plant, which run around the clock to produce 13 million gallons of potable water per day enough to supply 30,000 households. Desalination is how the district, a public agency serving almost 1 million people in western Riverside and northern San Diego counties, meets 110% of its water demand. The district's efforts will receive a boost from \$100 million in federal funding awarded earlier this month.

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**

GM Brian Laddusaw shared with the Board the names of District attendees who participated in the Western Regional Roundtable on January 28th. The headshot photographer for the Board of

Directors and Management Team is scheduled for Thursday, February 20th, from 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. in the Board Room.

The District participated in the IAC meeting on January 31st, and Director Altamirano provided Board members with a copy of the transcript. Following the IAC meeting, District staff and Board members attended the JCSD Parks and Recreation event.

GM Laddusaw also provided the Board with an update on the medical conditions of former Director Muniz and Director Trowbridge, with Director Trueba elaborating on their status.

AGM Thomas is coordinating a site tour for the Board, tentatively scheduled for February 18th. The tour will also include a visit to the JCSD building remodeling project.

He introduced the District's new Director of Engineering, Jaclyn Makarzec, who is a licensed California Professional Engineer. She has several years of experience and has been working on District projects since 2020 through her previous employer, Krieger and Stewart.

D. Committee Reports

The Solid Waste Trash Disposal Committee, which includes Directors Skerbelis and Murphy, met on Wednesday, January 22, 2025, to discuss the current Burrtec contract. Director Murphy requested feedback from the Board of Directors on two topics: street sweeping and hazardous waste pickup. Director Leja commented on street sweeping signage and asked staff to consider placing stickers on the barrels to indicate acceptable content.

ITEM 8. ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS.

A. DM 2025-05: Board Governance and Compliance Update: Legislative Changes and Training Requirements for 2025

BACKGROUND:

Rubidoux Community Services District ("District") is governed by a five-member Board of Directors ("Board") elected at-large. The District is a special district and a member of the California Special Districts Association ("CSDA"). Special districts are local governments formed by communities to provide essential services. They are political subdivisions authorized under state law.

CSDA is a nonprofit association established in 1969 to support special districts through governance resources, advocacy, and professional development. Each year, CSDA publishes the *Special District Board Member Handbook* ("Handbook"), included as Attachment 1. The Handbook covers:

- About Special Districts
- Good Governance
- Primary Role and Responsibilities
- Accountability and Transparency
- Legislative Advocacy, Media Outreach, and Public Engagement

The Accountability and Transparency section addresses:

- Website Compliance
- Open and Public Meetings
- Public Records
- Financial Audits
- Online Financial and Compensation Reports
- Ethics Training
- Conflict of Interest Compliance

Open and Public Meetings

Under the Ralph M. Brown Act (“Brown Act”), special district board meetings must be open and accessible to the public. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, teleconferencing was subject to strict requirements, including:

1. Identifying all teleconference locations in the meeting notice and agenda.
2. Ensuring public access to each teleconference location.
3. Maintaining a quorum within the agency’s jurisdiction.

During the pandemic, Governor Newsom’s Executive Orders N-29-20 and N-35-20 temporarily suspended these restrictions through September 30, 2021, allowing local agencies to function under emergency conditions.

Subsequent legislation addressed post-pandemic teleconferencing:

- AB 361 (Effective Sept. 16, 2021 – Jan. 1, 2024)
 - Allowed local agencies to teleconference without full Brown Act compliance under emergency conditions.
- AB 2449 (Effective Jan. 1, 2023 – Dec. 31, 2025)
 - Permits individual board members to teleconference under “just cause” or “emergency circumstances.”
 - Limits remote participation to no more than three consecutive months or 20% of regular meetings per year.

On Sept. 22, 2024, Governor Newsom signed AB 2302, amending Government Code §54953 to further limit remote participation. Given the District’s twice-monthly meeting schedule, a board member may use “just cause” or “emergency circumstances” for remote participation in up to **five (5) meetings per year**. AB 2302 sunsets on Jan. 1, 2026.

Effective Jan. 1, 2025, AB 2715 amends the Brown Act to authorize closed session discussions regarding cybersecurity threats, including risks to public buildings, essential services, or public access.

Trainings and Conflict of Interest Compliance

State law requires all special district board members to complete:

- Ethics Training (every two years, 2-hour course)
- Harassment Prevention Training (every two years, 2-hour course)
- Form 700 (Statements of Economic Interests) (annually)

Form 700 ensures transparency by disclosing financial interests to prevent conflicts of interest.

Each Director must complete their ethics training, harassment prevention training, and submit Form 700 by Thursday, March 6, 2025.

COMMENT(S):

Director Murphy commented on the Board's attendance at the District holiday luncheon and the possible discussions that could have occurred between staff and the Board, such as the half-day off for Christmas Eve. GM Laddusaw clarified that the recommendation was his and that staff did not request the date; therefore, it did not go to the Personnel Committee for discussion but rather to the full Board.

ACTION:

This is an informational item. No action is required. The information provided serves as a reminder for the Board to complete the required training and compliance documents by the stated deadline.

B. DM 2025-06 Board Discussion: Building Project

BACKGROUND:

The Rubidoux Community Services District (“District”) Board of Directors (“Board”) has over the years considered potential options for new building facilities. These include:

- A. A new two-story wavy glass building located on the vacant lot diagonally across from the District’s current location at 3590 Rubidoux Blvd. (2008-2017)
- B. The County Fleet Services Building (5293 Mission Blvd.) either purchasing alone or in partnership with the City of Jurupa Valley. (2018-2021)
- C. The Rubidoux Family Resource Center (5473 Mission Blvd.) for administrative functions and remodeling the District’s current Administrative Building (3590 Rubidoux Blvd.) for field operations. (2021-2024)
- D. Remodel of District current Administrative Building (3590 Rubidoux Blvd.) and construct a new Field Operations Building on the vacant lot diagonally across from the Administrative Building. (2021, 2024 forward)

Option A was the primary District effort from 2008 – 2017 but was deemed too expensive and the architecture was inconsistent with the desired “Mission Village” planning concept. Option B was considered from 2018-2021 but no longer became a viable option as the City of Jurupa Valley purchased the property alone after the Board decided the County Fleet Services Building was not going to be functional for joint use without substantive remodeling and expense. Option C was the preferred Board option in 2021 when the County of Riverside decided to surplus the old Rubidoux Family Resource Center. In August 2022, the District secured a private placement loan for approximately \$3.5 million, with \$1.5 million being allocated to purchasing and remodeling 5473 Mission Blvd. and \$2.0 million being allocated to remodeling 3590 Rubidoux

Blvd. for strictly operations. The loan amount was based on the architects cost estimate of the site work and floor plan. Option D was considered by the Board during the same time as Option C, but once the old Rubidoux Family Resource Option became available, the Board prioritized Option C.

Option C was intended to be executed in phases, with the first phase focusing on 5473 Mission Blvd. and the second phase on 3590 Rubidoux Blvd. In September 2022, the District established an Ad Hoc Building Committee (September 1, 2022 – Item 13 Closed Executive Session) to oversee the building purchase and remodel efforts under Option C. This item is now included as an attachment to this Director’s Memorandum, as many aspects of the discussion have since been settled by the District and become public information (Attachment 1). The District’s Ad Hoc Committees are governed under Section 16 of the Board Policies and Procedures Manual (Attachment 2). In November 2022, the District purchased the 5473 Mission Blvd. property for approximately \$390,000.

In 2023, the District collaborated with its architects, Ruhnau Clarke, along with various landscaping, engineering, and audio/visual subconsultants to finalize the design and bid specifications for 5473 Mission Blvd. The project was put out to bid, and results were received in July 2023. The District received five bids ranging from \$2.6 million to \$4.3 million; however, the lowest apparent bidder withdrew their bid due to an estimating/accounting error, making the next lowest bid \$3.7 million, approximately 3.4 times higher than the original \$1.1 million estimate.

The bid results were presented to the Ad Hoc Building Committee and the full Board in August 2023, at which point all bids were rejected due to their high cost. Following the Board’s direction, staff collaborated with the District’s architects and consulted various contractors to 're-work' the design in an effort to reduce construction costs. The redesign focused on scaling back expansion efforts, minimizing site work, and significantly reducing internal reconfiguration. Additionally, the District engaged a Certified Professional Estimator to provide a detailed cost estimate for the revised scope. Despite these efforts, the revised estimate remained 2.3 times higher than the original projection. Furthermore, the revised design would have reduced the workspace currently utilized by District staff and constrained future growth due to existing space limitations.

In July 2024, the District conducted a thorough evaluation of Option C and determined that it was no longer the preferred path forward. Despite extensive planning and revisions, the project continued to face significant challenges. The costs remained prohibitively high, and the proposed floor plan, while functional, was deemed inadequate for the growing needs of the District. The plan also presented limitations in terms of space for District employees, potentially hindering future growth and efficiency. Moreover, Option C required the permanent separation of staff between the Administrative and Field Operations functions, which would have introduced not only operational inefficiencies but also redundant costs related to maintaining separate facilities. After careful consideration of these factors, it became clear that a more cost-effective and scalable solution was necessary to meet the District’s long-term goals.

During the September 5, 2024, Board meeting, staff provided an update on the Field & Administration Building efforts. With the recent addition of two new Board members, staff has attached the slides from that meeting (Attachment 3). The presentation provided a comprehensive overview of the staff’s efforts over the last seven years. At the conclusion of the presentation, staff expressed their desire to move forward with Option D.

Option D proposes a 'single campus' solution, utilizing the existing structure at 3590 Rubidoux Blvd. and the developed 0.67-acre backyard, which has been a community landmark for over 70 years. This approach also allows the District to develop an additional 2.3 acres of vacant land already owned by the District, offering ample space for an Operations Center, including fleet, material and equipment storage, locker rooms, and offices. The combined nearly 3-acre campus will build upon the District's current 'home,' meeting both current and future needs for a growing community. Having all District staff on a single campus will improve operational efficiency and foster a more collaborative environment.

Initially, due to cost considerations, staff preferred to phase Option D, first focusing on the Administrative facilities at 3590 Rubidoux Blvd., followed by the Operations yard on the 2.3 acres of vacant land in a few years. However, based on feedback from the Board and internal discussions, the preferred approach has shifted to a more holistic strategy, aiming to complete both the Administrative and Operations facilities in succession. This approach requires input from the District's entire management team, which recently underwent changes. In October 2024, the District hired an Assistant General Manager, a position that had been vacant for over four years. Additionally, the District's Director of Engineering and the original project manager retired in December 2024, prompting an immediate recruitment process. The new Director of Engineering joined in late January 2025. With the management team now fully in place, the District is committed to prioritizing the Building Project in 2025.

In addition, the District has been analyzing the feasibility of using a concrete masonry unit (CMU) structure for the Operations Center versus a metal building. Metal buildings are typically more cost-effective in terms of materials and labor, are pre-engineered for efficiency, and can be erected more quickly than CMU structures. Moreover, they require less maintenance, offer better potential for future expansion, and can be designed to be highly durable and weather-resistant with modern coatings.

Staff is currently preparing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to secure architectural design services for the preferred Option D. The District previously engaged Ruhnu Clarke to assist with Option C. The RFP will invite qualified firms to submit professional design solutions that align with the project's scope, budget, and functional needs, ensuring a competitive selection process, promoting cost-effective planning, and establishing clear expectations for design, compliance, and project execution. Once the RFP process is complete, staff will seek authorization from the Board to proceed with an architectural design services firm in a future meeting.

COMMENT(S):

Director Murphy commented that he had requested the information to be provided in order to inform the new Board Directors of the status of the Building Project.

ACTION:

After Board discussion, Director Skerbelis moved, and Director Murphy seconded, to dissolve the Ad Hoc Field/Administration Building Committee.

Roll call:

Ayes – 5 (Murphy, Trueba, Skerbelis, Leja, Altamirano)

Noes – 0

Abstain – 0

Absent – 0

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

Director Murphy moved, and Director Trueba seconded to, draft and issue a RFP for architectural design services.

Roll call:

Ayes – 5 (Murphy, Trueba, Skerbelis, Leja, Altamirano)

Noes – 0

Abstain – 0

Absent – 0

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

C.DM 2025-07 – CLOSED SESSION: Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9: Legal Counsel Status on Litigation Case No. CIVDS 1310520, City of Riverside vs. Rubidoux Community Services District

CLOSED SESSION START: 5:16 PM CLOSE SESSION END: 5:31 PM

COMMENT(S): No reportable action.

ITEM 9. DIRECTOR’S COMMENTS AND REQUESTS

Director Murphy will be requesting an update on the steel plates on Avalon. Director Altamirano thanked GM Laddusaw for the presentations and comments. She also requested legal counsel to provide an update on the City of Riverside's legal status. Director Skerbelis made a formal request to speak with the Mayor of Riverside but has not received a response. No other Directors had any comments or questions.

ITEM 10. NEXT MEETING

Thursday, February 20, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.

ITEM 11. ADJOURNMENT

President Trueba adjourned the meeting at 5:35 P.M.