

REVISION IN RED
RUBIDOUX COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
Thursday, December 19, 2024

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

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

VISITORS (SIGNED IN): Ross Leja, RCSD Resident
Leslie Altamirano, RCSD Resident
Hugo Bustamante, RCSD Resident
Anthony Kelly Jr., RCSD Resident
Chief Otterman, Fire Station 38

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, December 19, 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. DM 2024-100: Consideration to Review Board Candidates Applications Submitted and Make Appointment to Fill Board Vacancy

BACKGROUND:

At the November 7, 2024, regular meeting of the Rubidoux Community Services District ("District") Board of Directors ("Board"), staff presented a "Letter of Resignation" ("Letter") submitted by F. Forest Trowbridge, dated November 3, 2024. The Letter was provided to the remaining Board members in advance of the meeting via Memorandum on November 4, 2024. During that meeting, the Board formally accepted Mr. Trowbridge's resignation and decided to fill his unexpired term, which concludes in December 2026, by appointment.

In accordance with the Board's decision and the requirements of Government Code Section 1780 (Attachment 1), a "Notice of Vacancy" (Attachment 2) was prepared and posted in three public locations within the District's service area for a minimum of fifteen (15) days.

The "Notice of Vacancy" was posted during the week of November 11, 2024, at the following locations:

- Rubidoux Community Services District Administration Building (3590 Rubidoux Blvd.)
- Louis Robidoux Library (5840 Mission Blvd.)
- Veterans Memorial Park (5981 Limonite Ave.)

Additionally, while not required, the "Notice of Vacancy" was published in the *Press Enterprise* on November 16, 2024, to further publicize the vacancy.

As indicated in the notice, the deadline for submitting "Letters of Interest" was December 12, 2024. As of this date, staff has received three "Letters of Interest" for the Board's consideration. The candidates are as follows:

Leslie Altamirano (Attachment 4)
Hugo Bustamante (Attachment 5)
Anthony Kelly, Jr. (Attachment 6)

In preparation for today's meeting, staff contacted all interested candidates to attend. This agenda item is open to the public and designed for Board review and action. Board members are encouraged to thoroughly review all applicants "Letters of Interest" and resume. At the Board's discretion, questions may be directed to the candidates. Following the review, the Board may proceed to vote on an appointment, in line with its earlier decision to fill the vacancy by appointment.

The Board Policies and Procedures Manual ("Manual") does not outline standard procedures for filling a Board vacancy. Section 14 states that appointing an individual to fill a vacancy requires a vote of three (3) Directors in favor, and if two of the four Directors present abstain, the appointment is not approved. (Attachment 3)

Regarding public input on this agenda item, the District will follow Section 13 of the Manual, which allows individuals or groups to address the Board, with a five-minute limit per speaker, prohibits boisterous conduct, and disallows oral presentations involving complaints against specific employees. (Attachment 3)

Staff recommends the Board adopt the following guidelines to ensure a fair and equitable process for soliciting input from interested candidates and members of the public in filling the Board vacancy:

PROPOSED GUIDELINES FOR APPOINTMENT

- INTERESTED CANDIDATES (in alphabetical order) – Facilitator: President Trueba
 - Leslie Altamirano – 5 Minutes (optional)
 - Hugo Bustamante – 5 Minutes (optional)
 - Anthony Kelly, Jr – 5 Minutes (optional)
- PUBLIC – Facilitator: President Trueba
 - 5 minutes per speaker (speaker card suggested)
- BOARD INTERACTION – Facilitator: President Trueba
 - Q&A with interested candidates
- BOARD DELIBERATION – Facilitator: President Trueba
 - Discussion and decision-making by the Board
- VOTE – Facilitator: General Manager
 - Ballot vote, conducted by the General Manager
 - Director will circle one candidate per round
 - Multiple rounds of voting until three or more votes are cast for a single candidate
- OATH OF OFFICE – Facilitator: General Manager
 - Administer the Oath of Office to the appointed Director

Budget Considerations

This action represents a policy decision by the Board and does not have any budgetary impact beyond staff time required for associated administrative tasks.

ACTION:

Ms. Leslie Altamirano was successfully appointed to the RCSD Board of Directors. The Board of Directors authorized the General Manager to complete and file the necessary Registrar of Voters, County of Riverside paperwork.

ITEM 6. CONSENT CALENDAR

- A. Approval of Minutes for December 5, 2024, Regular Meeting
- B. Consideration to Approve December 20, 2024, Salaries, Expenses and Transfers
- C. **DM 2024-101:** Consider Easement Quitclaim Deed for Agua Mansa Commerce Park (APNs 175-200-008 and 175-200-009)

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 7. CORRESPONDENCE AND RELATED INFORMATION

General Manager Brian Laddusaw included three articles from the *Press Enterprise*. The first article, titled "2024 Elections," summarizes the City Council vote recount that occurred in Jurupa Valley. It also discusses the recounts that took place in the Banning City Council and the Beaumont Unified School District.

The next article, titled "Communities Begin to Turn Against Fluoride in Water," describes how, for about 50 years, adding cavity-preventive fluoride to drinking water was a popular public health measure in Yorktown, a leafy town north of New York City. However, in September, the town's supervisor used emergency powers to stop the practice.

The last article, titled "10.8B Battle Arises Over Cleaner Water," examines the effort to clear pollution from the Santa Ana River, which has pitted Inland communities against coastal areas.

ITEM 8. REPORTS

A. Operations Report (Second Meeting Each Month)

The Operations Report format was updated to include the Potable Water Production report. In November, potable water production totaled 378 acre-feet. During May, June, July, and August, the acre-feet values were below the five-year average.

Well No. 18 and Well No. 8A produced the majority of the water. Chemical deliveries for the reporting period included the following:

- **Sodium Bisulfite 25%:** 1,536 gallons delivered to the Thompson Plant.
- **Morton NSF Certified White Crystal Salt:** 25.48 tons delivered to the Smith Plant.
- **Sodium Hypochlorite 12.5% (Liquid Chloride):** 1,850 gallons delivered to the Thompson Plant, Smith Plant, and Well 8.

The Operations Report also included information on SCE Public Safety Power Shutoffs and their impact on affected sites. A majority of the lift stations were impacted.

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

Riverside County Fire Station 38 Chief Otterman presented the incidents reported for the month of November 2024. The station had a total of 257 calls. It received 36 false alarm calls, 1 hazmat, 157 medical calls, 9 other fire calls, 2 other miscellaneous, 13 public service assistant calls, 2 rescue fires, 1 rescue, 4 ringing alarms, 11 standbys, 19 traffic collisions, 1 vehicle fire, and 1 wildland fires.

C. General Manager and Staff Reports / Updates

General Manager Brian Laddusaw informed the Board that the Western Water Retail meeting is scheduled for January 28th, from 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The employees' annual potluck took place earlier in the day. AGM Brandon Thomas introduced the District's new Engineering Technician/IT Business Systems/GIS Analyst, Anthony Strey.

D. Committee Reports

None.

ITEM 9. ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS.

A. DM 2024-102: Consideration to Approve Amendment No. 2 to Employment Agreement and Amend Salary Schedule for Fiscal Year 2024|2025

BACKGROUND:

On October 6, 2022, the Rubidoux Community Services District ("District") Board of Directors ("Board") entered into an Employment Agreement ("Agreement") with Brian Laddusaw ("Employee") to serve as the District's General Manager. The Agreement became effective December 30, 2022, for a term of three (3) years, ending December 30, 2025, unless terminated or extended as specified in the Agreement. A copy of the Agreement is included as Attachment 1 to this Director's Memorandum.

Pursuant to Section 6 of the Agreement, titled "Performance Evaluation", the Board is required to conduct a written performance review of the Employee annually at the second Board meeting in December, which aligns with the Employee's anniversary month. For 2024, the second December Board meeting falls on December 19. However, due to the anticipated transition of multiple Board members during December 2024, the Board conducted the Employee's annual evaluation earlier, during its regular meeting on December 5, 2024, under Closed Session (DM 2024-94).

Evaluation Outcome

Following the evaluation, the Board approved a 3.00% increase to the Employee's base salary. No other terms or conditions were modified.

Included as Attachment 2 is the Second Amendment to Employment Agreement (“Second Amendment”), which formally reflects this salary adjustment. All other provisions of the original Agreement and the First Amendment remain in full force and effect.

Summary of Changes

Section 4: Compensation

- Base Salary: The Employee’s base salary shall be adjusted to \$260,041.60, representing a 3.00% increase from the previously adopted Fiscal Year 2024-2025 (“FY 24|25”) District Salary Schedule approved on June 20, 2024 and first amended on December 5, 2024.
- The adjustment will be effective December 30, 2024, consistent with the Employee’s anniversary date.

If the Board approves the Second Amendment, the District’s FY 24|25 Salary Schedule will require an update to reflect this change. A revised version of the FY 24|25 Salary Schedule is included as Attachment 3. No other salaries have been adjusted in the proposed amended Salary Schedule.

Compliance and Action Items

Per the advice of the District’s General Counsel and in compliance with the Brown Act, adjustments to the General Manager’s compensation must occur in open session.

The following items will be considered as separate actions:

1. Approval of the Second Amendment to the Employment Agreement.
2. Approval of the updated FY 24|25 Salary Schedule.

ACTION:

Director Murphy moved, and Director Trueba seconded, to approve the Second Amendment to Employment Agreement between Rubidoux Community Services District and Brian Laddusaw.

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 approve and adopt the amended Rubidoux Community Services District Fiscal Year 2024|2025 Salary Schedule (2nd Amended) effective December 30, 2024.

Roll call:

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

Noes – 0

Abstain – 0

Absent – 0

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

B. **DM 2024-103:** Consideration and Authorization to Adjust Employees Holiday Work Schedule

BACKGROUND:

The Rubidoux Community Services District (“District”) provides its employees with paid holidays as outlined in the District’s Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) with its bargaining unit employees and the District’s Employee Handbook (“Handbook”), which governs all employees. The MOU and Handbook specify that when December 24th falls on a Monday, the District observes it as a paid holiday. This year, December 24th falls on a Tuesday, and this provision does not apply. The District will remain open for regular business operations on December 24th, with the District observing Wednesday, December 25th, as a paid holiday for Christmas. In 2022 and 2023, December 24th fell on a weekend, minimizing the impact of this policy. However, this year’s alignment presents an opportunity to recognize staff contributions with a meaningful gesture.

Staff proposes closing District operations at 12:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 24th, granting all employees a paid half-day off. This would provide employees with additional time to prepare for and enjoy the holiday while acknowledging their dedication and hard work throughout the year. Essential services, including water and wastewater operations, will continue without interruption through on-call staffing to ensure public health and safety. All other employees and those not on-call will adjust their schedules to accommodate the early closure, ensuring a seamless transition for District operations.

The financial impact of this proposal is minimal, as it involves paid time during a regularly scheduled workday. Any overtime expenses for on-call staff will be managed within the District’s existing budget allocations. This proposal aligns with holiday practices observed by many public agencies and demonstrates the District’s commitment to employee appreciation and well-being.

Approving this closure at 12:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve would reinforce the Board’s support for its employees, promote morale, and foster a positive workplace culture.

COMMENT:

Director Leja recommended making Christmas Eve a permanent District holiday with half-day paid status.

ACTION:

Director Skerbelis moved, and Director Altamirano seconded, to approve the closure of District operations at 12:00 p.m. on Tuesday, December 24th, 2024, and grant a paid half-day off to all District employees.

Roll call:

Ayes – 4 (Trueba, Skerbelis, Leja, Altamirano)

Noes – 1 (Murphy)

Abstain – 0

Absent – 0

The motion was carried 4-1-0-0.

C. DM: 2024-104 Consideration to Cancel the January 2, 2025, Regular Board Meeting of the Rubidoux Community Services District

BACKGROUND:

Historically, the Rubidoux Community Services District (“District”) Board of Directors (“Board”) has cancelled the first Board meeting of the year due to conflicts with the seasonal holiday schedule. In previous years, Board members' holiday plans often made it challenging to achieve a quorum for conducting District business. Additionally, District staff frequently schedule holiday or vacation time to spend with family or travel, which complicates Board agenda preparation. Business activity generally slows down during this period for the same reasons. A similar approach has been applied to the first Board meeting in July.

This practice of cancelling the first Board meetings of January and July was in place for over 25 years before it was formalized through Resolution No. 2018-840 on May 17, 2018. However, on August 5, 2021, the Board rescinded this practice by adopting Resolution No. 2021-880, which repealed Resolution No. 2018-840. Resolution No. 2021-880 states, “Regular Board Meetings on the first Thursday of the months of January and July will be scheduled and conducted unless the actual date of the meeting conflicts with actual date of a District recognized Holiday...” This provision was applied earlier this year when the first Board meeting in July coincided with July 4th, a District-recognized holiday.

The first Board meeting of 2025 is scheduled for Thursday, January 2, 2025. While January 2nd is not a District-recognized holiday, the Board may have vacation or travel plans, which could make it difficult to achieve a quorum.

ACTION:

Director Altamirano moved, and Director Skerbelis seconded, to approve the cancellation of the January 2, 2025, regular Board meeting. The next regularly scheduled Board meeting would be on January 16, 2025.

Roll call:

Ayes – 4 (Trueba, Skerbelis, Leja, Altamirano)

Noes – 1 (Murphy)

Abstain – 0

Absent – 0

The motion was carried 4-1-0-0.

RECESS @ 5:01PM-5:08PM

DM 2024-105 – 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 @ 5:08 PM- End @ 5:26 PM

No reportable action items from Closed Session.

ITEM 10. DIRECTOR’S COMMENTS AND REQUESTS

Director Leja welcomed Director Altamirano to the Board of Directors. No other Directors had comments and/or requests.

ITEM 11. NEXT MEETING

Thursday, January 16, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.

ITEM 12. ADJOURNMENT

~~President Skerbelis adjourned the meeting at 5:27 P.M.~~
President Trueba adjourned the meeting at 5:27 P.M.