

CANEBRAKE COUNTY WATER DISTRICT
Board of Directors Meeting
Saturday, June 08, 2024
Minutes

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Canebrake County Water District was called to order by President Jerry Bucheit at 9:02 am in McKenney Hall. Please see Attachment 1 for the meeting Agenda.

ROLL CALL: Bucheit called the roll with Daryl Holmes Jr., Robert Mooney, Gunnar Ramstrum and Ellyn Hae in attendance. Also in attendance was Dean Kuns, Water Manager.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Bucheit led the Pledge of Allegiance.

WELCOMING OF GUESTS: Guests in attendance at the meeting were: Steve Fillmore, Chris MacDonald, Marsha Campbell, Charlie Holmes, Kathy Steuermann, Bill Dimmock, Karyn Barnett, Frank Colver

APPROVAL OF MINUTES MARCH 9TH, 2024

Bucheit asks for correction of minutes to read on page 5, under Old Business, Credit Cards from Chase Bank.

“Three credit cards were obtained with a total usage limit of \$5,000.”

Motion to approve minutes: Mooney: Second: Holmes: Minutes are unanimously approved.”

PROPOSED RATE INCREASE

Bucheit states that we have been discussing the rate increase in meetings and minutes since September 2023. To date, the only correspondence received was a letter from Frank Colver on June 3, 2024 (Attachment 2). Bucheit reads letter. Bucheit asks Ramstrum to respond. Ramstrum indicates that the Board feels comfortable with the tiered structure as we can prove that costs for median and high-water users are significantly more than the costs for customer usage at the Tier 1 level. They are not exact because this would require many tiers needed to compute the costs. The

bookkeeping cost and complexity would drown the process. Think of tiers like tax tiers; they exist to identify an approximate threshold for changes.

Because of our Tier 2 and Tier 3 users, CCWD tank sizes must be much bigger, costing \$100,000's more. Most CCWD customers use between 50 and 100 gallons of water per day. Half the water metered in the CCWD is from our top 10 users, costing a lot to operate, maintain and oversee. If everyone used the same as our Tier 1 users, a small tank size costing only \$13k would be sufficient.

There are much higher labor costs to handle high water consumers, such as more daily monitoring, more frequent changes to pump schedules, more usage in equipment (truck, fuel, pumps, etc.) more false alarm leaks, more power usage. In addition, the pump schedule oversight would be very simple with only low water consumers. Essentially in the winter CCWD could fill the large tank and we would be good for weeks.

The base fee covers the amount to cover costs before one drop of water is transferred. The tiered amount is intended to cover the variable costs. Most customers do not use more than 4,999 gallons of water in a two-month period. In fact, we think that most bills that are over 4,999 gallons are mistakes. Technically, the tiers should be adjusted to Tier 1 at 3,500 gallons and Tier 2 at 4,500 gallons, however, the bookkeeper asked to work with in the existing as a change will require a major reworking of the bookkeeping system.

Frank Colver clarified that he was asking to make sure the CCWD complies with the state constitution regarding Prop 218. Bucheit thanked him for his letter.

Chris MacDonald asks if CCWD could create one or two more tiers to soften the edges of the tiers? Ramstrum replies, next year can review potential changes to tier levels.

Hae proposes a motion to increase the CCWD access fee to \$80 per two months and raise the usage rates as follows (with an annual rate review to occur to ensure CCWD is meeting its budget and reserves):

- Tier 1: 1.9 cents/gallon (<5k gallons in two months)
- Tier 2: 4.5 cents/gallon (5-10k gallons in two months)
- Tier 3: 6.0 cents/gallon (>10k gallons in two months)

Ramstrum seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

Kathy Steuermann asks now that the rate increase has passed (and is needed) what is the Board's policy on collections?

Bucheit indicates that there are only a few people that have been behind. Ramstrum states that we don't have anyone over 90 days. Discussion on the topic. Bucheit specifies that the CCWD will enforce the schedule set in the [CCWD Rules and Regulations](#) (click here to read).

Frank Colver asks how to discontinue meter service? Send a letter asking to a Board Member asking to remove and the request will be completed.

SYSTEM MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS/ WATER DELIVERY INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATE:

Dean Kuns presented his report covering the period May 12,2024 – June 7th, 2024 (Attachment 3).

As the report indicates, on May 13th a black poly pipe leak on Upward Trail was repaired. Replaced with schedule 40 PVC. Ordered schedule 80 PVC. When it arrives, he will replace a 10-ft section between two meters.

Also repaired a fire hydrant on Canyon Road. A metal nipple into plastic fitting had cracked. Replaced the filling and the $\frac{3}{4}$ valve with a 2-inch valve. Has a plug now but can purchase an adapter in the future and use it as fire hydrant.

Mooney and Peterson Wells

Mooney well was shut down due to minimize high fluoride levels. Kathy Steuermann brought it to Bucheit's attention that the well was not functioning. Kuns added that the well was working on May 11 when he turned it off to not run at same time as Peterson, but when returned to turn on but the digital display showed an error message of a short circuit. Happened to be the same night as the solar storms. Perhaps the solar storm is the cause?

Bucheit tracked Sexton down to repair. He will be out today. At that point he will identify if he can fix the short circuit at the box or pull the pump. If it is the pump, it may need to be replaced. Last replaced November 2021.

Mr. Mooney asks if we have replaced the timer in the control box at the Peterson well? Discussion followed. Kuns thinks the breaker box needs to be replaced first. Started two months ago. Tripped two more times during the day when he was running the pump during the day. Thinks it may be caused by the heat. Karyn Barnett notes that she had them and replaced them because she was told they are prone to fire (Zephyr). Bucheit suggests replacing the two twenty-amp breakers and if it starts popping again then we know there is an issue in the line. Karyn Barnett may have the breakers we need. Will work with Holmes.

Valves

In the past two months we have discovered additional stuck valves -- both open and stuck shut. Must use ball valves (not gate) on all repairs. Ramstrum vetted replacement priority list with Kathy Steuermann. Mooney asked for clarification on timeline and cost. Bucheit states that \$900 per valve if Sexton is involved. Five hundred for materials if using volunteer labor to replace. Cost estimate for eight valves will be approximately \$5,000. Discussion continued regarding specific valve replacement issues. Will try to replace four per year. Kuns said the hole on Canebrake Road near Birgit and Liz is ready to be covered. Still need to work on the vault near the Ackey's. Kuns describes the replacement requirements to re-plumb as the existing pipe is enclosed in concrete.

Tank Rotation

Kuns runs the poly tank one week per month.

Summer Chlorination Procedure

Summer chlorination will occur with a targeted level of 1 mg/L. Agua Caliente Hot Spring pool is maintained at 3.5 mg/L.

Tank Liner

Ramstrum presents the tank liner company references that Mooney asked for in the last meeting (Attachment 4). Bucheit would like to see the rust on the tank sealed if we choose the hung bladder system. Galvanized anode would be added, sand would be added on the bottom, and it would need to be painted. Ramstrum will check if that is included. Hae would prefer we use TRO versus PVC to minimize chemical leaching. She also wonders if there is a pad between tank and the liner. Bill Dimmock asks if they included hooking up the tank to the system as part of the bid. Ramstrum will investigate.

Mooney asks that this subject be tabled for six months as we have a significant number of projects in the pipeline now and we have spent a significant amount of money. He suggests that we let the existing projects and revenue stabilize. He reasons that although rust is showing through the liner, based on his experience as a sand blaster, the existing rust is "surface rust." This type of rust will not increase dramatically over the next six months. Ramstrum notes that there is a few-month lead time in securing a contractor. Therefore, a vote to purchase in November translates to a March installation. Board tables.

Water Manager Discussion

Karyn Barnett asks what are the options for a Water Manager?

1. Hire a manager \$60 - \$100,000
2. Use Board Members/Trained Volunteers with Contractors and automation
3. Find a person in the community

Ramstrum asks if we could form a committee to brainstorm Water Manager options and issues. Bucheit suggests we all research over the summer, we will have a discussion at the September meeting and will form a committee with community representatives. If anyone has ideas, please forward them to the CCWD Board of Directors. If anyone would like to serve on the committee, please let a Board Member know. Ramstrum will forward to the Board, the 10 Water Manager tasks from his interview with Dean Kuns. Bucheit reminds the room that we have a trailer offered from Bill Fair.

PRESENTATION AND APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORT:

Ramstrum presented the Canebrake financial reporting for the period (Attachment 5). Ramstrum covered the financial dashboard and check register. He will move \$9,000 to Morgan Stanley which will make an additional ~\$500 per year. Reminds credit card holders to retain receipts and send them to bookkeeper. Also notes he will begin audit in September.

We forgot to approve.....

PRELIMINARY BUDGET 2024 -2025

Ramstrum reviewed budget changes (Attachment 6). Income is \$70.7k and the budget plus reserves is \$70.6k. Streamline increased to \$756 per year.

The bookkeeper is requesting an increase of \$30 per month.

Hae makes a motion to increase the bookkeeping fee by \$30 per month. Holmes seconds. – Motion passes unanimously.

Ramstrum indicates that we should be holding back \$15,000 in reserves each year to replenish our holdings. However, \$9,700 is a good start. We need to focus on fundraising to increase revenues.

Mooney makes a motion to approve the CCWD 2024 – 2025 budget. Ramstrum seconds. – Motion passes unanimously.

GOVERNMENT FORMS AND CORRESPONDENCE (BUCHEIT):

Bucheit states that the San Diego County Fixed Rate Charge Special Assessment was completed.

SDGE Bill

Community Center -\$12

Mooney Well -\$47

Bucheit will notify the San Diego County Board of Supervisors and Registrar of Voters that two seats on the CCWD Board of Directors need to be placed on the ballot in the next election.

EQUIPMENT REPORT:

Daryl Holmes Jr. presented the Equipment Report (Attachment 7).

Tried to bleed the brakes on the Dump Truck, Josh Klein later assisted, and the brakes are now fully functioning.

The golf cart bed lift is not working. Holmes will look.

Will fire up the backup generator in the next couple weeks. Holmes donated a battery maintainer to provide a trickle charge.

Frank Colver wanted to know if Holmes wanted to pick up a telephone pole on his property as practice with the claw on the excavator. Holmes said yes.

Holmes indicated that both Steve Fillmore and Chris MacDonald are proficient in operation of the excavator and skid steer. Ron Ackey chained the two machines together to increase security.

Quonset huts need new electrical wiring. Holmes recommends that we replace it with LED lighting. Will ask Travis for a quote.

Holmes asked Bob LaPrade, for a quote on replacing the McKenney Hall control box during the meeting. Mr. LaPrade quoted \$2,500 to \$3,500.

Mooney requests that we officially name the dump truck "Betty." The Board concurs. Will purchase a magnetic name tag.

Bucheit asks are we charging enough to property owners at \$75/hour? Holmes responds, probably not. Example: Kelly Hawes charges \$150/hour for labor plus the day rental of equipment. Holmes will be work with Ramstrum to develop a rate that covers the cost of the fuel and maintenance but remembering that the community donated to the purchase we want to keep the community well situated.

Bill Dimmock asked, "shall we allow community members to take materials in the pile in the back of the building?" Yes. Hae will send an email to the community.

SAFETY

Bucheit presented home harmless forms for operators and homeowners to sign before project work commences (Attachment 8 and Attachment 9). Hae will add hours to the property owner's form. Forms will be stored in a logbook which will be a record of projects completed. Will pass forms by Sharon Sherman.

OLD BUSINESS:

Starlink

Ramstrum tested that Starlink Wi-Fi reaches the Peterson Well. It is about 15 times faster than the Viasat system.

Automated Well Pumping System

Ramstrum purchased the automated system and a waterproof container. It will be held in the waterproof container, then placed in a box to shade the unit. Also purchased a relay. Will begin installation in July and test. Installation instructions suggested a 15ft separation to ensure there is no electromagnetic interference. He suggests trying without the separation and see how it operates. It is password protected to prevent hacking.

Security Camera

Holmes will pick up the security camera donated by Steve Fillmore from Ramstrum and install now that we have Starlink.

Watering at McKenney Hall

Bucheit offers the use of Starlink Wi-Fi for CIA use to install a watering system for plants at McKenney Hall. Holmes offers information on Beehive, an app that allows watering valve control through the internet. Bill Dimmock concurred that is this plan after it cools off.

Stafford Crossing

Hae/Bucheit drafted the formal letter to Mr. Mattson and Kelly Hawes thanking them (Attachment 10).

NEW BUSINESS:

None

CORRESPONDENCE:

Kathy Steuermann letter regarding elections (Attachment 11). Discussed under the Good of the Order.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Bucheit lets the room know that Mr. Mooney will be resigning from the CCWD in November 2024. Therefore, seat number #5 will be open. The other term that is completed is Bucheit's, Seat #2. Bucheit will file to serve another term. Chris MacDonald will run for Seat #5.

Kathy raises the question, does the Board understand why this is important and should have been an agenda item, not as a Good of the Order? Bucheit indicates that he forgot to put it on the agenda. She continues that the people in the community have a right to know what is happening. If it is not on the agenda, then it seems as if the Board is trying to keep it secret. If it is on the agenda people can decide if they want to come to a public meeting and ask questions and find out if they want to be on the Board.

Marsha Campbell asks what are the requirements?

If people want to run, they need to be a property owner in Canebrake, and file with the County of San Diego by August 15th, 2024.

Bucheit and Hae apologize, Kathy Steuermann accepts the apologies. Hae says she will update the website with the process to be an elected official, send that information to each property owner via email and indicate that anyone can contact anyone on the board with questions of what it is like to be a board member. It is our intention to be transparent. Bucheit adds that each election cycle he has posted an election notice. He will forward this election notice to Hae. She will post.

Frank Colver ask that the website address added to letters that are disseminated

Holmes thanks Mr. Mooney for his service to the community and to the CCWD Board. Everyone applauds. Mr. Mooney offers thoughtful remarks that will be repeated at his last meeting in November, please attend.

Bill Dimmock spoke about the CIA social calendar survey that he conducted at the spring CIA meeting. One of the suggestions was to have the CCWD sponsor a morning event about the Water System in Canebrake. He would like us to pencil in a date for a coffee klatch/walk type event. The other item mentioned was a movie night fundraising event for the CCWD. Hae mentions we need to set a date for the celebration party for the completion of the Price Line and Tank #3. Perhaps we could set dates at the September meeting? Board Agrees.

Hae presents Karen Burnworth's spreadsheet that details the community people that served on the CCWD Board of Directors and/or as Recording Secretary. This spreadsheet shows the rich history of participating in our community (Attachment 12).

Frank Colver wanted everyone to know that in the last line of his letter he thanked the Board Members for serving the community.

Everyone thanked Charlie Holmes for the snacks!

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Mooney, second by Holmes to adjourn. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 12:13 p.m.

NEXT MEETING:

Saturday, September 14, 2024, at 9 AM
McKenney Hall

Attachments
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