

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
OF THE TWENTYNINE PALMS WATER DISTRICT  
72401 HATCH ROAD, TWENTYNINE PALMS, CA 92277**

**July 28, 2021 / 4:00 P.M.**

Call to Order and Roll Call

President Giannini called the Board meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Those responding to roll call were Michael Arthur, Bob Coghill, Suzi Horn, Carol Giannini, and Randy Leazer. Also present were General Manager Ray Kolisz, Maintenance Superintendent Matt Shragge, and District Secretary Cindy Fowlkes. Treatment/Production Superintendent Mike Minatrea and Financial Consultant Cindy Byerrum were absent.

Pledge of Allegiance

Steven Reyes led the pledge.

Additions/Deletions to the Agenda

Discussion of a draft ordinance for retail water service, to be heard after Agenda Item# 1.

Public Comments

Steven Reyes, of unincorporated Twentynine Palms, spoke to Agenda Item #2 regarding the increase in sales of water at the pay meter station.

Amy Tessier, of Twentynine Palms, spoke regarding illegal marijuana grows and water consumption.

1. Morongo Basin Conservation Association Presentation

Pat Flannigan provided the Board with a presentation and thanked them for their monetary contribution for the desert-wise landscape campaign. There are six gardens on the tour that provide different desert-wise landscapes.

Anna O'Hare, questioned if palm trees and Italian cypress are native to the area.

1.A Discussion of Draft Ordinance Regarding Retail Water Service

This ordinance would require a building permit from the county or city to purchase a meter.

2. Pay meter Station Report

The Board was presented with a report showing the amount of water sold at the pay meter station on a yearly basis beginning 2012 until the present. The majority of water sold, 63%, happens between the hours of 7:00 am – 3:30 pm. The District historically has provided a pay meter station to the community, with various methods used over the years for purchasing water. There are currently no restrictions on the volume of water purchased or the amount of times the meter can be accessed. Costs to upgrade the station will be passed along to the consumer to cover the costs of providing the service. District counsel advised the District, at the last Board meeting, that it cannot legally shut off water to

suspected illegal grow operations. It is Law enforcement that can curtail illegal activity, not District staff, and they have advised that opioids are a bigger problem than marijuana. The illegal grow operations began with the passing of Prop 64. Staff recommends not limiting the hours of operation at the meter as it would impact the law abiding customers who rely on the station for water.

Anna O'Hare, of Twentynine Palms, questioned the District's ability to restrict water purchase from the station and commented on the water usage at Lucky Park.

Steven Reyes, of unincorporated Twentynine Palms, reiterated the increase in water consumption.

Amy Tessier, of Twentynine Palms, informed the Board that she has addressed the issue with the Board of Supervisors and other entities, not just the Water District.

Pat Flannigan, of Twentynine Palms, advised that Mojave Water Agency uses satellite mapping to pinpoint grow operations, and questioned how many wells in the area have gone dry.

3. Emergency Generators Report

As requested by the Board at the last meeting, the Board was provided with a report detailing the fuel consumption for the District's backup generators. The District has five emergency generators that can run for approximately 85 hours, non-stop. The District can operate under emergency conditions for 3-5 days before running out of water in the reservoirs.

Anna O'Hare, of Twentynine Palms, commented on the situation in Needles with their water district running off of one well.

4. Consent Calendar

- Minutes of a Regular Meeting held on June 23, 2021
- Audit List

Director Arthur, moved to approve the Minutes and Audit List, seconded by Director Coghill, and unanimously approved by all present.

5. Items Removed from the Consent Calendar for Discussion or Separate Action  
None

6. Management Reports

6.1 Maintenance

Matt Shragge reported that the District responded to 99 Underground Service Alerts, had 0 water main leaks, 0 water meter leaks, 0 service line leaks, 2 fire hydrant repairs/maintenance, installed 11 new services, replaced 3 customer gate valves, performed 1 leak audit, painted 36 fire

hydrants, performed 5 customer pressure checks, replaced 7 meters, Tested and exercised emergency generators and sounded wells for June. 0 water waste inquiries were received. 357 work orders were generated and performed during the month. There were no shut offs due to COVID-19. 0 AMI/AMR meters were installed. Matt personally sends his condolences to the Smith family who lost a patriarch, Jane Smith.

6.2 Water Quality

Mike Minatrea was absent. Matt reported Water production was down 3.52% as compared to the same month in 2013. 47 routine and 9 special water samples were taken. All samples tested negative for Colilert. The fluoride variance of 3.0 mg/L will expire in 2023. All current wells meet the 2.0 mg/L standard variance set by the State Water Resource Control Board.

6.3 Finance

Ms. Byerrum was absent. Ray reported that water sales are up, due to several factors, including new services, hotter weather, and sales at the pay meter station.

6.4 General Manager

Mr. Kolisz reported a bill stuffer was sent out regarding the reporting of suspicious activity. The Board was asked to meet on August 11<sup>th</sup> for a special meeting at 4:00 pm.

7. Future Agenda Items and Staff Tasks/Directors' Comments and Reports

Director Leazer would like current cost estimates to lock off fire hydrants from potential theft.

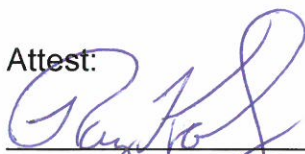
Director Coghill would like to see what the costs are for an additional emergency generator and additional fuel storage.

Director Giannini reported that she and Director Leazer met with the city's wastewater ad hoc this week with nothing to report.

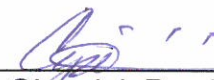
8. Adjournment

On motion by Director Horn seconded by Director Coghill, and approved by the Board, the meeting was adjourned at: 5:42 p.m.

Attest:



Ray Kolisz, Board Secretary  
Twenty-nine Palms Water District

  
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Carol Giannini, President  
Board of Directors