

# **RAND COMMUNITIES WATER DISTRICT**

## **Regular Board Meeting**

# **MINUTES**

Wednesday, June 9, 2021

27804 Comstock Ave, Johannesburg, CA 93528

### **I. Call to Order**

President Cliff Kennedy called to order the regular meeting of the Rand Community Water district at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, June 9, 2021 in Johannesburg, California. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

### **II. Roll Call**

Present were President Cliff Kennedy, Vice-President Ernest Napolis, Director Tom Williams, Director Brent Brown, and Director Ghulam Din.

### **III. Adopt Agenda**

The agenda was adopted with no changes.

### **IV. Communications from the Public**

Dan Stanton commented.

### **V. Approve Minutes**

Director Williams made a motion to approve the minutes from May 12, 2021. Director Din seconded the motion. Motion passed with all ayes.

### **VI. Correspondence**

GM Jones reported that the office had received ten letters of protest for the rate increase proposal.

### **VII. General Managers Report**

(Copied from original report)

On 5/26 Prather Well 1 stopped pumping water. I called Randall Wallis, who originally installed this particular pump, to install the new pump in the back office. It turned out that they could not come out for at least three weeks as their trucks were not registered due to a compliance issue.

So, I called around and Garrison Well Service out of Ridgecrest agreed to come out. On Wednesday, June 2, they came out and discovered that the power line was only about 6' from the well, instead of the required 10'. So work was delayed about two hours until Edison came out and turned off the power by pulling out the fuses on the power transformers.

They were able to start work about 11:00 am and pulled out about 400' worth of 3" galvanized pipe until they came to the pump itself. The reason it stopped working was because the bearings had been ruined from pumping sand and gravel when it was on

Prather Well 3, and one of the bowls had completely broken off. The only thing keeping the pump from dropping to the bottom of the well was the electrical wire attached to it. They attached the new motor and bowls to one of the non-rusted pipes and lowered it into the well for the night for safekeeping, as there wasn't enough time left in the day to drop the pipes back down the well, and some of the workers were suffering from heat exhaustion. It was 106 in the Fremont Valley, and they ended the day at 4:00 pm.

On Thursday, June 3, they came back in the morning and lowered the new pump and bowls into the well along with 21 sections of pipe, attaching the wiring as they went. After reinstalling everything, they tried to flush the well. Very little volume came out, so the hydrant meter was checked, and discovered to be full of dirt. It was removed and the water volume was as it should be. Everything was working fine when they left that afternoon. I kept Newmont informed of everything that was going on.

On Friday morning, June 4, I was informed that Newmont was only able to get one load of water before the control panel smelled hot. The pump would not turn on again for the second load. Tiger verified that he could smell something burning, and that a black box inside the panel was melted. So, I called Garrison Well Service to come out again. They came out on Saturday morning, June 5, to fix the panel. They discovered that one wire had been removed from the motor control box, and the screw to one of the fuses was so loose that it fell out when touched. One of the fuses was also blown. The black box that was melted was not actually being used for anything and was not required to run the pump.

They then asked me if someone had tampered with the wires, because only someone with knowledge of how everything was wired would have messed with the particular wires that were loose or disconnected. Yes, it was tampered with by an ex-employee fired by the district who holds a grudge and retained a key to the old locks. I will not mention any names, but I think everyone knows who it is who has knowledge of the system wiring. Garrison Well Service put everything back the way it was supposed to be, replaced the fuse, then wired in the on/off switch so that could be used to turn the pump off and on instead of the breaker lever. Why the switches were ever disconnected, I have no idea. I changed the locks to the gates before I left the site, so I was the only one with a key for the rest of the weekend.

On Monday, May 7, I went down to the well with Tiger and Ocean, and a hasp and lock was installed on the inner door of the electrical panel. A different hydrant meter was installed, and everything worked fine. I met with Newmont and gave them a copy of the new key, which they gave to the tanker truck driver.

The water tank divers will be out here on June 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> to inspect the tanks.

On 5/24 there was a major leak in Randsburg by the Cottage in and Meredith Post's house. The T to the hydrant there broke, then the coupler broke. Water had to be turned off temporarily on Lexington while it was being fixed.

I respectfully request that all board members cash their checks within 30 days after receiving them. Some checks are going on six months old, and I don't want to have to reissue them just because they aren't being cashed or deposited.

Newmont used 663,123 gallons of water last month and were billed for \$13,260.00. Most of this will likely go to the repair of Prather Well 1.

A small group of people, headed by the ex-employee who sabotaged Well 1, have been circulating fraudulent flyers throughout town, giving people false information about the proposed new water rates. I know it is this person spearheading it because I have been told by various customers who have heard this person talking about it.

I was told directly by the Johannesburg post office that someone was trying to get information on post office boxes, how many there are, how to do a direct mailing, and claiming to be an employee of the water district. The post office is very familiar with both the district and me, and immediately knew something was fishy and talked to me about it when I went to pick up the mail.

Some of the papers that are being spread around the towns are in your folders. They have made up forms for people to sign and then turn in.  
(End of report)

**VIII. Budget**

No action was taken. The board members took a copy of the proposed budget supplied by GM Jones home to look over before the next meeting.

**IX. Rate Increase Hearing**

There was discussion on the propaganda being mailed out concerning the rate increase and if the district should send out a notice refuting it. It was decided against sending anything out, but to post a notice that people could come in person to the hearing, which would be held outside.

**X. Pay Bills**

All the bills presented were signed.

**XI. Future Agenda Items**

The Budget

**XII. Adjournment**

Director Din made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Director Williams. Motion passed with all ayes. The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 PM.

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Debbie R Jones, Secretary  
RCWD Board of Directors