

Minutes

Sacramento Suburban Water District
Facilities and Operations Committee
Thursday, September 1, 2016

Call to Order

Director Locke called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

Roll Call

Directors Present: Craig Locke and Neil Schild.

Directors Absent: None.

Staff Present: General Manager Robert Roscoe, Assistant General Manager Dan York, Dan Bills, Amy Bullock, Mitch Dion, John Valdes, Dave Jones, David Espinoza, James Arenz, Annette O’Leary and Lynne Yost.

Public Present: William Eubanks and Shelly Anderson.

Announcements:

General Manager Robert Roscoe (GM Roscoe) announced the following:

- Special Board Workshop on Friday, September 16, 2016 at 2:00 p.m.
- Facilities and Operations Committee Meeting on Friday, September 30, 2016 at 3:00 p.m.

Public Comment

None.

Consent Items

1. Minutes of the July 22, 2016 Facilities and Operations Committee Meeting

Director Schild moved to approve Item 1; Director Locke seconded. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

AYES:	Schild and Locke.	ABSTAINED:	
NOES:		RECUSED:	
ABSENT:			

Items for Discussion and Action

2. Delegate Authority to Accept Easements – General Manager

GM Roscoe introduced Mitch Dion (Mr. Dion) who presented the staff report.

Director Schild stated that he would be willing to suggest to the full Board the approval on the basis that all easements met Board policy. He further suggested that if the easements did not meet Board policy, then they should go before the full Board.

Mr. Dion agreed unless there is a variance that the Board issued.

Director Schild stated that he did not think we need to put the \$10,000.00 limit in and felt there is a more reasonable figure, suggesting \$5,000.00. Director Schild would like to defer the dollar amount and have it presented to the full Board for discussion.

William Eubanks (Mr. Eubanks) commended staff for bringing this forward to the Committee stating he had no comment on the dollar amount issue. He further noted that he believed that the easements were a good thing, and have gone for little money in the past.

Director Locke agreed with Director Schild to defer the dollar amount discussion to the full Board.

GM Roscoe reaffirmed both Director Schild and Director Locke's recommendation of the Committee of \$5,000.00 for land owner payment, excluding surveying, title reports and all other costs and fees that go into it. The committee affirmed \$5,000.00 is the figure to be taken to the full Board.

3. Draft 2016 Compensation Study

GM Roscoe introduced the staff report and introduced Shelly Anderson (Ms. Anderson) with Bryce Consulting.

Ms. Anderson explained the process of the compensation study. She recommended using the mid-point of the third quartile as the point of comparison to help insure the District is competitive in the labor market, noting recent increase in turnover.

Ms. Anderson explained that a new employee coming into the organization who has not been a CalPERS member for the prior six months is in the 2% at 62 retirement plan as a PEPRA member, a new employee who has been a CalPERS member within the last six months is in the 2% at 55 retirement plan as a Classic Member.

Director Locke asked if a new PEPRA employee's retirement is based on highest single year or the average of the highest 3 years.

GM Roscoe and Ms. Anderson confirmed it is the average of the highest 3 years based on the plan that was in effect when PEPRA passed, which is the classic plan.

Director Schild asked if the staff report or Ms. Anderson's presentation included a comparison at the 50th percentile instead of the mid-point of the third quartile.

Ms. Anderson stated that she did not compile that data but would be willing to get the Committee that information if requested. Director Schild declined needing the data and stated it would just be interesting to know the information.

Director Schild stated that he believes if a new employee comes in under PEPRA the benefit package and salary is not as competitive in the marketplace and because the District doesn't pay the 6% employee share that must be paid by the employee as required by CalPERS regulations.

Ms. Anderson agreed with Director Schild's statement, but stated that agencies have no choice under CalPERS regulations and many agencies were struggling with this scenario.

Director Schild requested clarification on the pay ranges within the salary schedule.

Director Locke inquired what separated the pay ranges within the salary schedule.

GM Roscoe clarified there is a 5% difference between each pay/salary band. He further explained the non-exempt bands have a 10% range above and below the salary mid-point, and the exempt bands have a 15% range above and below mid-point.

The Committee directed staff to present this item to the full Board with a unanimous recommendation to accept the compensation study. Accepting the study does not constitute a budget commitment.

4. Proposed Staffing Additions 2017/18

Assistant General Manager Dan York (AGM York) presented the staff report and introduced Annette O'Leary (Ms. O'Leary) who made a presentation on a request to add a new Customer Service Representative position.

Director Locke inquired if customers have the opportunity to leave a message on a voicemail system to be called back?

Ms. O'Leary confirmed that there is a voicemail system in place.

Director Locke inquired if using an automated system to direct customers to the appropriate department or staff is a viable option to save time for the Customer Service Representatives (CSR).

Ms. O'Leary and AGM York stated that type of system is typically not as effective verses a live CSR answering and directing customers to the right department.

GM Roscoe introduced Jim Arenz (Mr. Arenz) to present his request for four new staff positions, three positions in 2017 and one position in 2018.

GM Roscoe advised the Committee to refer to the staff report on the table showing other water districts staff verses connections as context on why the District is requesting 4 additional positions.

Director Schild stated that Fair Oaks Water District had more staff with a large construction crew and felt a comparison with them was not comparing apples to apples, when it comes to comparing total staff count between positions.

Director Locke stated that he understood and agreed with the need for more staff at the Walnut office and that paying a Superintendent wage for administrative tasks is not in the best interest for the District and its employees. He felt the Operations Manager and Superintendents should be overseeing and mentoring their staff.

Regarding the cross connection specialist position, GM Roscoe stated that the state requires the District to install 50 new backflow devices a year and the Environmental Compliance staff cannot keep up with the demand.

GM Roscoe asked the Committee to approve staff's request for all four positions in 2017 and one in 2018 and to be presented at the Special Board Workshop on the budget so that the upcoming budget is accurate when presented to the full Board.

Mr. Eubanks stated that he felt the District was not over staffed. Further noting that he felt paying staff superintendent wages for administrative tasks seems ridiculous. Mr. Eubanks stated that the Committee demanded excellence from staff, but they were not giving staff the tools to be successful. Mr. Eubanks stated that the District has 46,000 connections and it is not staffed appropriately.

GM Roscoe advised the Committee that the item would be presented at the Special Workshop on September 16, 2016.

Director Locke stated that he agreed with the need for additional staff and to bring this item before the full Board at the Special Workshop.

The Committee favored the additional 4 positions in 2017 and one position in 2018 and for the salaries for these additional positions to be considered in the CY 2017 and 2018 budget. The Committee requested for this item to be presented at the Special Board Workshop as recommended by staff.

Adjournment

Director Locke adjourned the meeting at 5:35 p.m.

Robert S. Roscoe
General Manager/Secretary
Sacramento Suburban Water District