

MINUTES OF THE ADJOURNED REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
SANTA CLARITA VALLEY SANITATION DISTRICT
HELD AT THE SANTA CLARITA CITY HALL
VIA TELECONFERENCE

May 29, 2024
11:00 o'clock, A.M.

The Board of Directors of Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District of Los Angeles County met both in person and via teleconference pursuant to adjournment as ordered by this Board of Directors at the regular meeting held May 20, 2024. The Secretary reported that a copy of the Order of Adjournment was posted as required by law and that proper affidavits of the posting are on file in the Secretary's office.

There were present: Cameron Smyth, Director from Santa Clarita
Kathryn Barger, Alternate Director from Los Angeles County, via AB 2449 teleconference
Laurene Weste, Chairperson, Director from Santa Clarita

Absent: None

Also present: Kimberly S. Christensen, Secretary to the Board
Wes Beverlin, District Counsel

In response to the Secretary, Director Barger stated that she was attending remotely in accordance with AB 2449 – Business Travel. Two of her staff members, Roberto Alvarez and Anish Saraiya, were in the room with her.

RE: PUBLIC COMMENT The Chairperson announced this was the time for any questions or comments by members of the public. There were no public comments or questions to address the Board on any matters.

RE: SERVICE CHARGE PROGRAM ADOPT SERVICE CHARGE REPORT New rate ordinances are being proposed to generate sufficient revenue for the increased operating costs of the new state-mandated Advanced Water Treatment Facility at the District's Valencia Water Reclamation Plant. The new rates will also address recent inflationary impacts and the need for upcoming capital projects. The current service charge rate per single-family home is \$30.83 per month (\$370 per year). The proposed rates for fiscal years 2024-25, 2025-26, 2026-27, 2027-28 and 2028-29 are \$36.42 per month (\$437 per year), \$38.17 per month (\$458 per year), \$40.08 per month (\$481 per year), \$42.08 per month (\$505 per year), and \$44.25 per month (\$531 per year), respectively, and reflect the rates as modified at the May 20, 2024, Board meeting after the Public Hearing was held. The Surcharge and Connection Fee ordinances also reflect the modified rates established at the May 20, 2024, Board meeting. Adopting the Service Charge Report is required each year to collect the wastewater service charge on the property tax roll. A letter describing the required Board actions, together with the Service Charge Report and proposed service charge rate, industrial wastewater rate and connection fee rate ordinances, accompanied the agenda. This item is consistent with the Districts' Guiding Principles of commitment to fiscal responsibility and prudent financial stewardship; and to plan for both short-term and long-term needs to minimize the need for significant rate increases.

The Secretary called on the following speaker:

Ms. Cynthia Rodriguez addressed the Board. She stated that she is opposed to the collection of the service charge on the property tax roll. The service charge should be on the water bill. Most people are unaware of the low-water rebate. The salt should be removed from water going into the homes rather than coming out of the homes as people are drinking more salt than they should when drinking the tap water. People would rather pay for cleaner water that meets government standards going into the homes.

Upon motion of Director Smyth, duly seconded and unanimously carried by a roll-call vote, the Board of Directors of Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District of Los Angeles County approved and adopted the *Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District Service Charge Report for Fiscal Year 2024-25*, which was filed with the Clerk of the Board on May 20, 2024.

RE: WASTEWATER REVENUE PROGRAMS
SERVICE CHARGE, INDUSTRIAL
WASTEWATER SURCHARGE AND
CONNECTION FEE RATE ORDINANCES
ADOPT- FIND EXEMPT FROM CEQA

Proposed service charge, industrial wastewater surcharge, and connection fee rate ordinances (Ordinances) were presented for adoption. In connection with the adoption of the Ordinances, the Board may adopt written findings in support of the exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) in the record of proceedings.

The Chief Engineer and General Manager stated that the ordinances that are being considered for adoption include the rates for the next five years. The rates have been adjusted to reflect Rate Structure 1 as presented at the previous meetings, which is the lowest overall cost between two options and will cover operations and maintenance (O&M) for the Advanced Water Treatment Facility. Furthermore, information regarding the low-water rebate can be found on the Districts' website www.lacsd.org under Wastewater Rates and Rebates – Low Water Rebates. This will include contact information and a link to the application, which is submitted with water bills from fiscal year July-June. For questions, customer service representatives may be contacted during business hours at (562) 908-4288, extension 2727, or (800) 426-7414, extension 2727, or via email at rates@lacsd.org.

The Chief Engineer and General Manager stated that a ban on saltwater softeners was helpful in reducing the amount of salt going into the system. Santa Clarita Valley Water Agency is responsible for potable water. Collection of the service charge on the property tax bill is the most cost-effective and efficient method for the Districts.

The Chairperson stated that she appreciates staff's clarification on the process to apply for low-water rebates. She thanked staff for their efforts in keeping rates low and meeting the state's requirements. The District is responsible for the water that is being discharged to the Santa Clara River.

The Chief Engineer and General Manager stated that the rates will help pay for O&M, and he appreciated the Directors' leadership.

Director Smyth reiterated the Chairperson's comments that staff's work is appreciated. The public was given both rate options and the opportunity to provide feedback.

A recommendation was made that the Ordinances be adopted, and that the Board make the finding that adoption of the Ordinances is exempt from CEQA under Section 15273 of the State Guidelines for implementation of CEQA.

Upon motion of Director Smyth, duly seconded and unanimously carried by the following vote:

AYES: Directors Smyth, Barger, and Weste

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

An Ordinance Prescribing the Service Charge Rate and Mean Loadings per Unit of Usage for Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District of Los Angeles County and Providing for the Collection of Such Charges on the Tax Roll, An Ordinance Prescribing Industrial Wastewater Surcharge Rates for Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District of Los Angeles County; and An Ordinance Prescribing the Connection Fee Rate and Mean Loadings per Unit of Usage for Santa Clarita Valley Sanitation District of Los Angeles County, were adopted. Furthermore, the Board found that the adoption of the Ordinances are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Section 15273 of State Guidelines for Implementation of CEQA on the basis that CEQA does apply to the modification of rates or other charges which are for the purpose of meeting operating expenses, purchasing equipment, and funding capital projects necessary to maintain services within existing service areas; and that the proposed rate increases are for the purpose of (1) meeting operating expenses, including employee wage rates and fringe benefits, (2) purchasing or leasing supplies, equipment, or materials, (3) meeting financial reserve needs and requirements, or (4) obtaining funds for capital projects necessary to maintain service within existing service areas, as reported to the Board of Directors by the Chief Engineer and General Manager and as reflected in the official minutes of the District on file at the office of the District.

Upon motion of Director Smyth, duly seconded and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned.



LAURENE WESTE
Chairperson

ATTEST:



KIMBERLY S. CHRISTENSEN
Secretary

/ee