

*Del Rey Community Services District*  
**Minutes of the  
Board of Directors  
Regular Board Meeting  
March 21, 2024  
7:00p.m.**

President Reyna called the Regular Board Meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

**Directors present:** Maria Reyna, Daniel Ramirez, Joaquin Nunez, Stephanie Garza  
**Directors absent:** Rolando Sanchez

A2 The Board leads in the Pledge of Allegiance.

A3 **Approval of Agenda:** DM Arias asks to remove or postpone item D-2 since the auditor was unable to be present. He suggests either having a special meeting or postponing it to the next regular meeting. President Reyna asks if a special meeting would be necessary. DM Arias states it's not necessary. President Reyna made a motion to approve the agenda with the amendment of postponing the item until next regular meeting. Nunez seconds the motion. All in favor; four ayes: Reyna, Ramirez, Nunez, Garza. All Absent; one absent: Sanchez. Motion passed.

**B. SCHEDULED AND UNSCHEDULED COMMUNICATIONS:**

No public comment.

**C. CONSENT CALENDAR:**

C-1 Approve payments for vendors for West America Bank – January 2024, a Total Amount of \$106,221.20.

C-2 Approve payments for vendors for West America Bank – February 2024, a Total Amount of \$151,275.20.

C-3 Approve payments for vendors for West America Bank – March 15, 2024, a Total Amount of \$87,491.40.

C-4 Approval of Minutes of January 11, 2024, Special Board Meeting.

C-5 Approval of Minutes of January 18, 2024, Regular Board Meeting.

The Board decides to discuss items C-1 to C-5 together. Reyna opens the items to the public for comment. No public comment. Ramirez made a motion to approve items C-1 to C-5. Reyna seconds the motion. All in favor; four ayes: Reyna, Ramirez, Nunez, Garza. All Absent; one absent: Sanchez. Motion passed.

**D. PUBLIC HEARINGS (DISCUSSION AND ACTION ITEMS):**

D-1 a. Public Hearing to Consider Protests for Proposed Water, Wastewater, and Solid Waste Rates for Fiscal Year 2024/25 through 2028/29. LC Linden asks DM Arias how many notices were sent out. DM Arias responds 314. LC Linden asks how many protest forms were submitted. DM Arias responds 4 protests were turned into the office, and the mailbox was checked at 3:30 and none were submitted by mail. LC Linden informs the public that if they would like to submit a protest they may do so now if they are an effective rate payer. President Reyna opens the item to the public for comment. Public member Leticia Casillas for California Rural Legal Services asks why the rates were protested. Public member Rumaldo Reyna responds it was a simple letter to protest. Rumaldo Reyna asks Dan where he got the numbers from. Dan responds it was a

combination of audited financial statements, billing system, and CPA. Rumaldo Reyna asks which audits were used. Dan responds the most recent available, which was 21-22. LC Linden states out of 314, there were only 4 protests. DM Arias confirms that is correct. LC Linden states the Board can move on to “b”.

b. Consideration of Resolution for Approval of Proposed Water, Wastewater, and Solid Waste Rates for Fiscal Year 2024/25 through 2028/29. Dan presented the essence of prop 218 rates. He states he would like to make an important point – raising rates is not optional in order to cover the costs of operation. The District will continue to operate and go in the red if something is not done. He points out the biggest impact would be on the big customers and not on single family. The single-family increase would be about \$22. He informs the Board if it is not passed tonight, they would have to start all over. Ramirez asks if they will continue to be go in the red if utilities go up again, such as PG&E. Dan explains they shouldn’t need an adjustment, it was already taken into consideration. Dan states in 2026 there will be a 2% increase for single-family. Discussion. Reyna asks if part of the monthly billing allocates funds for GSA. DM Arias states, yes, it all goes to and is a part of the general fund. President Reyna opens the item to the public for comment. Rumaldo Reyna asks why the protest forms were not included in the letters mailed out. DM Arias explains residents had the option to come into the office to protest. LC Linden states the District did what was required by law. Leticia from California Rural Legal Assistance asked what options were offered. President Reyna explains the District held meetings which presented the rate study and all the information, notices were mailed out, allowed 30 days to protest, and she personally spoke to residents to inform them of costs and that they had the opportunity to protest. Nunez states he was approached by residents, and they asked for translation and better understanding. He also informed them they could go to the District office to ask questions and get more information or clarification. Ramirez made a motion to approve the rate study and impose rates. Garza seconds the motion. All in favor; four eyes: Reyna, Ramirez, Nunez, Garza. All Absent; one absent: Sanchez. Motion passed. Dan thanks the Board and District and appreciates their cooperation.

D-2 Presentation of Financial Statements by the Auditor. Nelson not present, so item postponed until next month.

D-3 Discussion/Direction on District Manager retirement/position. Nunez states he understands the District Manager’s last day will be June 30<sup>th</sup>, so thinks it is best to start looking for a new District Manager to aide in the transition. Reyna states she would like to try to convince DM Arias to wait until the end f the year to train the new one. LC Linden states no action can be taken, as it is a “discussion” item but can confer with District Manager. Discussion. Direction to Legal Counsel and District Manager to come up with a plan for next meeting.

D-4 Discussion/Direction regarding what action can be taken for residents not paying bills. Reyna asks if there is anything that can be done for people not paying their bills. DM Arias informs the Board the District acquired the grant for about \$56,000 for accounts behind on water and sewer only and expects it will help a lot to relieve the burden. There are restrictions to see how much can actually be used. There is a program LIHWAP that has been offered to the residents that helps pay for water bill accounts that are behind. There have been seminars and applications in the office, but people don’t take advantage and have until March 31 to apply. As of now, the District cannot shut off water. Ramirez asks if the District can send letters to customers. DM Arias says it is against the law to do so. LC Linden says the District should update their policy for water shut offs as there are certain criteria to be reviewed and met. Discussion. The Board directs LC Linden and DM Arias to make a plan to present to the Board.

D-5 Discussion/Consideration regarding requirement of Zoom option at Board meetings. Arias explains that nobody logs into Zoom for the meetings, so asks if it is necessary to have it. President Reyna states she personally doesn't think so. LC Linden states it is legally not required. DM Arias states if its removed, it could save around \$100. President Reyna opens the item to the public for comment. Public member Leticia explains they have used Zoom in the past but understands if they don't need. Nunez believe there is no need to keep it and translates the item for the public that just arrived. Reyna made a motion to eliminate Zoom. Ramirez seconds the motion. All in favor; four ayes: Reyna, Ramirez, Nunez, Garza. All Absent; one absent: Sanchez. Motion passed.

D-6 Discussion/Direction regarding removing item "G" from the Agenda. Linden informs the Board that second public comment is not required, and it unnecessarily elongates meetings. President Reyna says it sounds good. Nunez explains it was added because people would come late and wouldn't make it in time to speak during the first public comment. Reyna suggests maybe removing item "B" instead to allow people to speak later. LC Linden does not suggest doing that as the public would have to wait until the end of the meeting to speak. Garza explains if people really have something important to say, they will make sure to be at the meeting on time to do so. DM Arias translates for the public. Reyna opens the item to the public for comment. No public comment. Rena made a motion to remove item "G" from the agenda. Nunez seconds the motion. All in favor; four ayes: Reyna, Ramirez, Nunez, Garza. All Absent; one absent: Sanchez. Motion passed.

#### **E. DIRECTOR COMMUNICATIONS/AGENDA ITEMS**

Garza asks if candy was donated for the Easter egg hunt and when it is. DM Arias explains it is on Friday March 29<sup>th</sup>, and that the District cannot donate but if the Board would like to donate on a personal level they are welcome to. He also informs the Board they will be stuffing eggs on the 27<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m. President Reyna says she will bring candy and will help fill eggs. Dictos says he will donate some candy. President Reyna explains the school is having an event (carnival) and asks if the Board can put a basket together to donate for the raffle. Ramirez states he will give her money and she can buy whatever she would like to incorporate in basket. DM Arias tells Reyna to talk to Sylvia as she could possibly donate one.

#### **F. DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS**

F-1 Report of District Manager (Report by Carlos Arias)

DM Arias reports there was a vision clinic two weeks ago, and about 15 people showed up, but would like to see more people show up to take advantage of these clinics. There was a meeting with the Del Rey Community Plan Update in which they were asked to explain why Del Rey needs the land they are asking for, the use of the land, and if they have money to do what needs to be done. He and Manrique joined the Zoom meeting together to discuss and explain. He informs the Board the District received the grant for unpaid bills, which was a little over \$56,000. He continues to report they are waiting for proposals to see how much it would cost to repair manholes. He checked the contract with IWS which will be over June 2025 and noticed a clause which allows an extension of the contract for 5 years. He spoke to Nick Caglia, and he is willing to extend the contract.

F-2 Report of District Counsel (Report by Michael Linden)

LC Linden states there is nothing to report other than he will be scheduling a closed session for the next meeting before the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

F-3 Report of District Engineer (Report by AM Consulting)

Angela Hall, in place of Manrique, gives updates on projects and reviews the report.

F-4 Report of District Accountant (Report by Paul Dictos)

Dictos reviews report and highlights key points.

**G. UNSCHEDULED COMMUNICATIONS:**


Public member Leticia from California Rural Legal Assistance asks what projects Del Rey is currently working on. District Manager Arias responds the sidewalks, water line replacement, TCP (making trenches, piping, vessels), and the stormwater basins. Angela Hall states the demolition of the old plant should start in September/October. Public member Rinaldo Reyna informs the Board he called Fresno County to put in a complaint and make a report about the lack of traffic control and signs around the manhole construction. He is concerned as if there is an accident regarding the lack of supervision the District will be liable.

**H. ADJOURNMENT:**

Ramirez made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Garza seconds the motion. All in favor; four ayes: Reyna, Ramirez, Nunez, Garza. All Absent; one absent: Sanchez. Motion passed.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Eileen Hernandez  
Del Rey Community Services District