



Setting Standards of Excellence in Public Service

**MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Wednesday, February 24, 2021 – 3 p.m.
7811 University Avenue, La Mesa, CA 91942-0427
Virtual Meeting**

OPEN MEETING

1. President Scalzitti called a special board meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. The meeting was turned over to Board Secretary Sandra L. Janzen to verify all board members, staff and members of the public could hear one another and that everyone could identify the board members by voice recognition or video image.

The roll call showed a quorum of the board present via electronic conferencing software. Directors Scalzitti, Hedberg, McMillan, Gracyk and Verbeke were present.

Staff present: Lugo, Olney, Bryant, Miller, Tomasulo, Janzen, Pope, Malkin, Roff, Aytes, Curtis, Dambrose and Uhrhammer. General Counsel Elizabeth W. Hull was also present.

Others present: Vice President of CV Strategies Tara Bravo, Home Start Inc. Deputy Director Lauren Pollick, Housing Manager Annalisa Verdugo, and Rental Assistance and COVID-19 Relief Program Manager Ahmad Aljanabi, Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck Policy Assistant Victoria Barba and San Diego Union-Tribune Reporter Karen Pearlman were present.

2. Vice President Hedberg provided an invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.
3. General Manager Carlos V. Lugo reported there were no additions or deletions to the agenda. There were no public comments. The motion to approve the agenda carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Motion: Verbeke
Second: Hedberg

PUBLIC COMMENTS

4. President Scalzitti provided opportunity for members of the public to address the board on any item under the subject matter jurisdiction of the district. There were no public comments.

ACTION ITEM

5. The board adopted Resolution 21-13 approving the Helix helps Customer Assistance program to provide financial assistance, from non-water revenue, to customers who have unpaid, past due water bills as a result of financial impacts associated with the COVID-19 pandemic and authorized General Manager Carlos V. Lugo to execute a contract with Home Start Inc. to implement the program. The motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Motion: Gracyk
Second: McMillan

Public Affairs Supervisor Michelle M. Curtis introduced Homes Start Inc. Deputy Director Lauren Pollick, Housing Manager Annalisa Verdugo, and Rental Assurances and COVID-19 Relief Program Manager Ahmad Aljanabi along with Helix Water District Customer Service Supervisor Marquetta Aytes. Ms. Curtis provided a PowerPoint presentation. Discussion ensued. Director Verbeke clarified the eligibility requirements. Director McMillan and Vice President Hedberg clarified the terms of the agreement with Home Start Inc. and the negotiated fee of 16 percent. President Scalzitti confirmed the district would maintain contact with customers to assist with water conservation and other outreach. Director Gracyk requested that Home Start Inc. visit the board of directors in 90 days to provide an update regarding the number of customers helped and connected with other assistance programs. Vice President Hedberg confirmed that land sale funds could be utilized to fund the customer assistance program and clarified that the funds remain with the district and are applied to the customers' accounts as they are set on a payment plan for any outstanding balance. General Manager Lugo reviewed the customer outreach schedule with the board and stated the program will go into effect April 5, 2021.

President Scalzitti opened public comments. San Diego Union-Tribune Reporter Karen Pearlman confirmed that customers receiving assistance for other bills would still be eligible to receive up to \$300 for their overdue water bill through the Helix helps Customer Assistance program.

DISCUSSION

6. President Scalzitti and Director McMillan reported attending the February 24, 2021, East County Caucus meeting with San Diego County Water Authority Chair Gary Croucher and SDCWA Deputy General Manager Dan Denham. President Scalzitti also reported attending the February 18, 2021, Advanced Water Purification Joint Powers Authority meeting and mentioned the election of officers, new members and cyber security. Director Verbeke reported attending the February 22, 2021 Association of California Water Agencies Region 10 meeting and the February 23, 2021 ACWA Finance Committee meeting with plans for presentations in May. Director Verbeke and Vice President Hedberg reported attending the ACWA DC 2021 virtual conference on February 24, 2021, with additional events scheduled and reported attending the special Finance and Administration Committee meeting on February 23, 2021, to review the draft Proposition 218 notice. Vice President Hedberg and Director Gracyk both provided a report regarding the special Water Quality and Resources Committee meeting on February 23, 2021. Director Gracyk expressed gratitude to Director of Water Quality/System Operations Brian M. Olney and System Operations Manager Michelle P. Berens for their detailed reports regarding 13 projects at the treatment plant and Lake Jennings storage. There were no public comments.

RECESS

7. President Scalzitti recessed open session to convene in closed session at 4:03 p.m. There were no public comments.

CLOSED SESSION

- A. **PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**
Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957
Title: General Manager

ADJOURN CLOSED SESSION

8. President Scalzitti adjourned closed session and reconvened open session at 4:46 p.m. President Scalzitti stated for the record that there was no reportable action taken in closed session.

ADJOURNMENT

9. President Scalzitti adjourned the special board meeting at 4:47 p.m.


Joel A. Scalzitti, President

ATTEST:


Sandra L. Janzen, Secretary of the Board