

**ENVIRONMENTAL CREEK CLEANUP COMMITTEE
(formerly Homeless Encampment Committee)**

MINUTES

**MONDAY, MAY 16, 2022
2:00 PM**

(Paragraph numbers coincide with agenda item numbers)

1. CALL TO ORDER.

A special meeting of the Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water) Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee (Committee) was held on May 16, 2022, in the Headquarters Building Boardroom at the Santa Clara Valley Water District, 5700 Almaden Expressway, San Jose, California.

1.1 Roll Call.

Committee members in attendance were District 1 Director John L. Varela, District 2 Director Barbara F. Keegan, and District 3 Director Richard P. Santos, Chairperson presiding, constituting a quorum of the Committee.

Staff members in attendance were District Counsel C. Orellana, F. Aguilar, R. Barajas, R. Blank, J. Codianne, B. Hopper, L. Kinsworthy, C. Kwok-Smith, E. Latedjou-Durand, J. Lee, B. Magleby, T. Mercado, E. O'Keefe, J. Randol, M. Richardson, D. Rocha, R. Snyder, S. Tran, R. Tregoning and K. Yasukawa.

Guests Agencies in attendance were: Deb Kramer, Keep Coyote Beautiful; Olympia Williams, Beautify SJ; Greg Pensinger from Downtown Streets Team; and Katja Irvin, AICP Conservation Committee Co-chair at Sierra Club.

Public in attendance were: E. Arteagi, R. Brown, J. Estrada, J. Hare, B. Levy, E. Ruiz, T. Dougherty, Annie, and Allison.

2. TIME OPEN FOR PUBLIC COMMENT ON ANY ITEM NOT ON THE AGENDA.

Chairperson Santos declared time open for public comment on any item not on the agenda. There was no one present who wished to speak.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

3.1. Approval of April 18, 2022 Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee Meeting Minutes.

Recommendation: Approve the minutes.

The Committee considered the attached minutes of the April 18, 2022 Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee meeting. It was moved by Director Varela, seconded by Director Keegan, and carried by roll call vote to approve the minutes as presented.

4. REGULAR AGENDA:

4.1. Receive Information on the Proposed Water Resources Encampment Risk Assessment.

Recommendation: Receive information on the proposed Water Resources Encampment Risk Assessment.

Ms. Jennifer Codianne, Deputy Operating Officer, reviewed the information on this item, per the attached Board Agenda Memo, and per the information contained in Attachment 1.

The Committee was informed that the encampment cleanup program would continue to be managed daily to reduce debris and pollutants that go into our waterways, and that draft assessment form presented would be a transparent way to assess risks and conduct an abatement.

Ms. River Brown, of unknown residency and affiliation, requested to include creek proximity to residences and schools of encampment in assessing location of encampment.

Mr. Jeffrey Hare, of unknown residency and affiliation, informed the Committee about the fire at Watson Park adjacent to the Coyote Creek where firefighters struggled to reach the creek and stop the fire spread to the south; suggested that high point scores be assigned on camp locations regardless of whether channels are modified or unmodified, and on camps proximity to areas with Wild Land Urban interface issues such as dry vegetation due to the risk of fire spreading to nearby residences; and expressed appreciation for many encampment cleanups by Beautify San Jose led by Ms. Olympia Williams.

Mr. Juan Estrada, Green Foothills Author, inquired on how often the forms would be updated, and whether the results of these assessments would be posted on line. Ms. Codianne clarified that the assessment forms were for encampments that have significant risks on waterways that Valley Water has land rights and on easements when there are concerns on flow conveyance; that these forms would not be published; and that these forms could be requested by way of a Public Request for Records.

Mr. Tim Dougherty, a San Jose resident, asked any Valley Water concrete goal on mitigation; and any measurable data on numbers of unhoused removed or how much linear feet have been cleared of trash. Chairperson Santos recommended to reach out to Ms. Codianne. Ms. Codianne added that Valley Water has been removing a hundred tons of trash and debris monthly and countywide before they reach waterways separate from City of San Jose programs.

Mr. Estrada expressed disappointment that the last two categories on the Hazard Rating Scale were Low and Moderate; that the fact that an encampment exists, and situations could change would not be considered; and that Valley Water would

determine an encampment without performing an assessment. Ms. Codianne stated that Valley Water crews are out on the field assessing how sites are transitioning.

During the presentation, the Committee noted the following without taking formal action:

- Staff to increase assessment score for line items on Weaponry Visible and Aggressive Behavior under the Safety Issues section of the assessment form;
- Staff to invite SJPd to speak on collaborations, and eventually with elected officials, on public safety, and understanding of roles and responsibilities, and the use of VW funding related to the unhoused given the hundred miles of creeks, and the upcoming peak in summer activities;
- Staff to agendaize at the next meeting the Valley Water (VW) agreement with the Street Crimes Unit of the San Jose Police Department;
- The May Revision to the Governor's Budget was released last week, and staff would do a report out on funding set aside for the unhoused;
- Ms. Olympia Williams, Beautify San Jose Program Division Manager, made a suggestion to this Committee to invite the Housing Authority to make a presentation at a future meeting of this Committee; and
- Staff to come back with an implementation plan and recommendation on the assessment form.

4.2. Review 2022 Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee Work Plan.

- Recommendation:
- A. Review the 2022 Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee Work Plan, and make adjustments as necessary; and
 - B. Confirm date and time of next Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee meeting.

The Committee noted the information without formal action.

5. ADJOURN.

7.1. Adjourn to Regular Meeting at 2:00 p.m., on July 19, 2022.

Chairperson Santos adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m., to the 2:00 p.m. Regular meeting on July 19, 2022 in the Valley Water Headquarters Building Boardroom, 5700 Almaden Expressway, San Jose.

Eva M. Sans
Assistant Deputy Clerk

Approved:

