

HOMELESS ENCAMPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

MINUTES

**April 20, 2021
2:00 PM**

(Paragraph numbers coincide with agenda item numbers)

1. CALL TO ORDER.

A regular meeting of the Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water) Homeless Encampment Committee (Committee) was called to order in the Valley Water Headquarters Board Room, 5700 Almaden Expressway, San Jose, California at 1:00 p.m.

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 J. Abbatelli, L. Bankosh, R. Barajas, M. Bilski, G. Brambill, D. Candelas, T. Chinte, J. Codianne, J. Collins, N. Dominguez, R. Fields, M. Ganjoo, L. Hoang, M. Keller, C. Kwok-Smith, J. Lee, C. Pilson, E. Serrano, S. Tippetts, S. Tran.

Also, in attendance: Ms. Olympia Williams, City of San Jose.

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.

Ms. Gail Ann Osmer, of undisclosed residency, expressed concern for removal of portable toilets from encampment areas. The Committee referred Ms. Osmer's concerns to staff for follow-up and to respond to Ms. Osmer.

Mr. John Davis, San Jose resident, expressed concern for the continued destruction of the Coyote Creek embankment near his property and urged Valley Water to consider installing a natural rock retaining wall to prevent further erosion of the creek embankment.

3. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE OFFICERS.

3.1. Approval of Minutes.

Recommendation: Approval of March 30, 2021 Homeless Encampment Committee Meeting Minutes.

The Committee considered the attached minutes of the March 30, 2021 Homeless Encampment Committee meeting. It was moved by Director Varela, seconded Director Keegan, and carried by roll call vote that the minutes be approved as presented.

4. ACTION ITEMS

4.1. Update on May 1, 2021 Coyote Creek Cleanup Event.

Recommendation: A. Receive an update from staff regarding the planning for Valley Water's Coyote Creek Cleanup event scheduled for May 1, 2021; and
B. Provide input and feedback to staff as necessary.

Mr. Mark Bilski, Senior Management Analyst, reviewed the information on this item, per the attached Committee Agenda Memo, and the corresponding presentation materials contained in Attachment 1 were reviewed by Mr. Jason Imamura of Trash Punx.

Director Varela asked and received an explanation of how the unhoused would be notified of the upcoming clean up event.

Director Varela left the meeting.

Mr. Davis asked to receive information on the volunteer group that participates in clean up events with regard to cleaning within the stream flow and how Valley Water plans to follow-up on its cleanup efforts. Mr. Bilski explained that Valley Water would continue to monitor the creeks and schedule additional cleanup events as necessary. Mr. Davis's information request was referred to staff for a response.

Ms. Olympia Williams, City of San Jose, briefed the Committee on additional strategies being considered to protect resources, including the deployment of additional park rangers.

The Committee requested a discussion regarding strategies to secure Valley Water properties following cleanup events be added to its Work Plan.

Ms. Shawn, of unidentified residency, expressed concern for the potential increase in the homeless population upon expiration of temporary eviction protections and the impacts it could have to encampments.

Ms. Osmer suggested that Valley Water consider partnering with the City of San Jose to create housing opportunities.

Mr. Davis briefed the Committee on his activities to partner with the City and County to create housing opportunities.

4.2. Proposed Adjustments to Modifications to the Good Neighbor Program: Encampment Cleanup Project, Project F5 Under the Renewed Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program.

Recommendation: Review proposed text adjustments and Key Performance Indicator modifications for the Good Neighbor Program: Encampment Cleanup Project, Project F5 under the Renewed Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program, and provide feedback as necessary; and consider whether to recommend that the Board of Directors approve the text adjustments and set a time and place for a public hearing to modify Project F5.

Ms. Jessica Collins, Watersheds Business Planning and Analysis Manager, and Ms. Jennifer Codianne, Acting Deputy Operating Officer, reviewed the information on this item, per the attached Committee Agenda Memo.

Ms. Shawn expressed her opinion regard the continued breach of Valley Water properties following cleanup events and sweeping versus cleanup of encampments, and suggested that Valley Water consider sanctioned encampments and partnering with the local municipalities and other agencies to develop housing opportunities.

Chairperson Santos expressed concern for the use of the terms unhoused and homeless and suggested finding other terminology, e.g., encampment areas, and will work offline with staff to finalize text adjustments.

It was moved by Director Keegan, seconded by Chairperson Santos and carried by roll call vote to recommend that the Valley Water Board of Directors approve the amended text adjustments to the Good Neighbor Program: Encampment Cleanup Project, Project F5 Under the Renewed Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program and set a time and place for a public hearing to modify Project F5. Director Varela was absent.

4.3. Review Homeless Encampment Committee Name and Purpose.

Recommendation: A. Review and discuss the Homeless Encampment Committee's name and purpose; and.
B. Provide recommendations to staff as necessary.

Ms. Sue Tippets, Interim Chief Operating Officer, reviewed the information on this item, per the attached Committee Agenda Memo.

Director Keegan suggested that action on this item be postponed to a time when all Committee members are present for a more comprehensive discussion and study of the Committee's purpose, to consider the root cause of the problem and identify responsibilities to engage other local agencies to collaborate on addressing the problem; and to provide Committee members an opportunity to discuss with Valley Water's Chief Executive Officer how to best orchestrate external agency participation.

Chairperson Santos continued Item 4.3, Review of Homeless Encampment Committee Name and Purpose to a future meeting.

4.4. Review 2021 Homeless Encampment Committee Work Plan.

- Recommendation:
- A. Review the 2021 Homeless Encampment Committee Work Plan, and make adjustments as necessary; and
 - B. Discuss and determine the 2021 Homeless Encampment Committee meeting schedule.

Ms. Natalie Dominguez, Assistant Deputy Clerk II, reviewed the information on this item, per the attached Committee Agenda Memo, and the corresponding presentation materials contained in Attachment 1.

The Committee made the following additions to its Work Plan:

- Discuss Strategies for Securing Valley Water Property
- Review Homeless Encampment Committee Name and Purpose
(Continued from 4/20/21)

5. INFORMATION ITEMS.

None.

6. CLERK'S REVIEW AND CLARIFICATION OF COMMITTEE REQUESTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

Ms. Dominguez reviewed Committee Requests and Recommendations as follows:

Regarding Item 4.1: The Committee requested a discussion regarding strategies to secure Valley Water properties following cleanup events be added to its Work Plan.

Regarding Item 4.2: The Committee recommends that the Valley Water Board of Directors consider approving amended text adjustments to the Good Neighbor Program: Encampment Cleanup Project, Project F5 Under the Renewed Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program and set a time and place for a public hearing to modify Project F5.

Regarding Item 4.3: The Committee continued discussion of Item 4.3, Review of Homeless Encampment Committee Name and Purpose to a future meeting.

8. ADJOURN.

- 8.1. Adjourn to next regular meeting to be called to order in compliance with the State Emergency Services Act, the Governor's Emergency Declaration related to COVID-19, and the Governor's Executive Order N-29-20.

Chairperson Santos adjourned the meeting at 2:30 p.m., to the next meeting to be called to order in compliance with the State Emergency Services Act, the Governor's Emergency Declaration related to COVID-19, and the Governor's Executive Order N-29-20.

Natalie F. Dominguez, CMC
Assistant Deputy Clerk

Approved: