

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
WATER SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
VISTA IRRIGATION DISTRICT

October 15, 2014

A meeting of the Water Sustainability Committee of Vista Irrigation District was held on Wednesday, October 15, 2014, at the offices of the District, 1391 Engineer Street, Vista, California.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Vasquez called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Committee members present: Vásquez and Franklin.

Committee members absent: None.

Staff present: Eldon Boone, Assistant General Manager; Brett Hodgkiss, Administrative Services Manager; Brent Reyes, Water Conservation Specialist; and Lisa Soto, Board Secretary.

Other attendees: None.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT TIME

No public comments were presented on items not appearing on the agenda.

5. WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

See staff report attached hereto.

Administrative Services Manager Brett Hodgkiss presented an overview of the Water Conservation Programs in which the District participates either through the San Diego County Water Authority (Water Authority) or the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) or on its own. Mr. Hodgkiss stated that the District will spend over \$332,000 in direct and indirect expenditures on water conservation programs/incentives in fiscal year 2015 (\$279,470 for Metropolitan's rebates, \$40,540 for Water Authority rebates/water surveys and landscape audits and \$12,000 for District programs and co-funding of residential water surveys and large landscape audits). Assistant General Manager Eldon Boone clarified that the District indirectly funds Metropolitan's and the Water Authority's incentives through water purchases, the costs for which are built into the water rates.

The Committee reviewed the table which was attached to the staff report, noting the level of customer participation in each program. Director Franklin requested that this table be revised prior to its presentation to the full Board, adding a column to reflect the dollar benefit associated with the level of participation in each program. The Committee discussed ideas for promoting conservation rebate programs for items such as the high efficiency toilets. Director Franklin expressed a concern that the District may not be receiving its full proportionate share of the water conservation incentive programs offered through Metropolitan and the Water Authority. Mr. Boone responded that there are currently 89

applications to remove about one million square feet of lawn in the queue for rebates in the turf removal program. When paid out, this alone will reap a far greater monetary benefit for the District's customers than the District paid into these programs. The Committee discussed ideas for outreach efforts to promote the rebate programs through retailers who deal in high efficiency toilets and washing machines.

Chair Vásquez brought up for discussion the possibility of adding a District incentive (in addition to the incentives offered by the Water Authority and Metropolitan) of .50 to .75 cents per square foot to reimburse for labor costs associated with the removal of turf and the installation of artificial turf. Mr. Hodgkiss pointed out that while it is true that these costs are not covered in the Water Authority program, they are covered in the program offered by Metropolitan. Mr. Hodgkiss said that with applications for rebates for nearly one million square feet of turf replacement already in process, this level of supplementation by the District to the already existent programs could prove to be quite costly. The Committee agreed that there would need to be a cap. Chair Vásquez suggested that the idea of offering an additional District incentive of 50 to 75 cent per square foot for turf removal be tabled for the time being.

Chair Vásquez discussed possible promotional items such as low flow shower heads, shower timers, and sprinkler shut-off valves, which could be given out at the front desk. Mr. Hodgkiss said that staff researched the cost of the sprinkler shut-off valves, which are special valves that prevent water loss if a sprinkler head is broken. He stated that depending on the quantity ordered, these valves could cost anywhere from \$2.00 to \$4.00 each. Mr. Hodgkiss said that one concern for giving out costly items such as these for free is that they may end up never being installed. The Committee further discussed the fact that in order for these special valves to fully protect from water loss due to broken sprinkler heads, they would need to be installed on each and every sprinkler head in an irrigation system. Chair Vásquez suggested that perhaps the District could offer a rebate for sprinkler head shut-off valves in the future. The Committee also discussed soil moisture sensor systems and noted that Metropolitan already offers rebates for these systems.

7. COMMENTS BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

None were presented.

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, at 9:45 a.m. Chair Vásquez adjourned the meeting.


Richard L. Vásquez, Chair

ATTEST:



Lisa R. Soto, Secretary
Board of Directors
VISTA IRRIGATION DISTRICT



**WATER SUSTAINABILITY
COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Item: 5

Meeting Date: October 15, 2014
Prepared By: Brett Hodgkiss
Reviewed By: Eldon Boone
Approved By: Roy Coox

SUBJECT: WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

RECOMMENDATION: Review water conservation programs available to Vista Irrigation District customers.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION: At its September 24, 2014 meeting, the Board requested that the Water Sustainability Committee review water conservation programs currently available to customers and present recommendations on any new programs to the Board.

FISCAL IMPACT: The District pays for water conservation programs/incentives offered by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) and the San Diego County Water Authority (Water Authority) as well as its own programs. It is estimated that the District will spend over \$332,000 on water conservation programs/incentives in fiscal year 2015 (\$279,470 for Metropolitan's rebates, \$40,540 for Water Authority rebates/water surveys and landscape audits and \$12,000 for District programs and co-funding of residential water surveys and large landscape audits). The District indirectly funds Metropolitan's and the Water Authority's incentives through water purchases.

SUMMARY: The District has provided water conservation programs to its customers for over twenty years. The District has partnered with its wholesale water providers, Metropolitan and the Water Authority, to provide various programs/incentives to its customers. These partnerships with its wholesalers have proven to be the most efficient and cost-effective means for local water agencies to provide water conservation programs to its customers. Incentives to replace inefficient devices and remove turf are available to homeowners as well as businesses.

DETAILED REPORT: As drought gripped California in the early 1990's, water purveyors, including the Vista Irrigation District, initiated water conservation programs to reduce demand. Over the years, these programs have been successful in managing water demand as populations grew. The District's current water use is less than it was in 1990 despite significant population growth. The District's population served has increased by 31% from 1990 to 2014 (94,526 to 124,293); however, water delivered to District customers has decreased by 11% (22,530 acre feet versus 20,134 acre feet) over that same period. This has resulted in a 32% reduction in water use over this 24 year period.

Conserving water has become a way of life for most Californians, especially for people living in the southern part of the state. While winter and spring rains typically ease the severity of the ongoing dry conditions, demand is beginning to exceed the available supply. Voluntary water conservation is a key component of meeting demand and avoiding mandatory reductions. With this in mind, the District offers a number of programs, including an education component, to help its customers to voluntarily save water.

The District has partnered with the Water Authority and Metropolitan to offer conservation programs to its customers since the early nineties. Metropolitan, the Water Authority and its member agencies, including the Vista Irrigation District, have jointly funded programs that benefit the region as a whole. Historically, the District's expenditures on water conservation programs have been based on the required matching funds or its decision to completely fund a program because it wasn't being offered by Metropolitan or the Water Authority, such as the District's artificial turf program.

Historically, the District has offered its customers a variety of water conservation programs, including low-flush toilets, low-flow shower heads, and water-saving appliances (typically in association with SDG&E). These programs have been geared primarily to residential customers, but commercial and industrial customers could also take advantage of these offers, as well as programs such as cooling towers. As the market reached a saturation point with these products, programs have evolved and new ones have been introduced.

Currently, the District offers rebates to its residential and business customers through Metropolitan's SoCal WaterSmart Program and through the Water Authority's Turf Removal Rebate Program. A summary of programs is attached for the Committee's reference. Rebates are available on a first come, first serve basis until funds are depleted or June 30, 2015, whichever comes first.

ATTACHMENT: Water Conservation Program Summary

WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAM SUMMARY

Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

Residential Rebates – January through September

| Rebate | Incentive | 2014 Rebates Paid | 2013 Rebates Paid |
|-------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| High Efficiency Toilets | \$100 (1.28 GPF or less) | 183 | 32 |
| High Efficiency Washers | \$85, SDG&E offers an additional \$50 | 118 | 142 |
| Weather Based Irrigation Controller | \$80; \$35 per station (sites one acre or more) | 4 | 4 |
| Rotating Nozzles | \$4 per head (minimum of 15) | 469 | 195 |
| Rain Barrels | \$75 per barrel | 97 | 0 |
| Soil Moisture Sensors | \$80; \$35 per station large sites | 1 | 0 |
| Turf Removal Rebate | \$2 per sq. ft.; front & backyards; and artificial turf is eligible | 35,675 sq. ft. | 0 sq. ft. |

Commercial, Industrial, Institutional Rebates – January through September

| Rebate | Incentive | 2014 Rebates Paid | 2013 Rebates Paid |
|---|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| High Efficiency Toilets (tank type) | \$100 | 0 | 0 |
| High Efficiency Toilets (flushometer) | \$100 | 0 | 0 |
| Ultra Low & Zero Water Urinals | \$200 | 0 | 0 |
| Multi-Family High Efficiency Toilet | \$100 | 0 | 0 |
| Multi-Family High Efficiency Toilet (4-Liter) | \$145 | 0 | 0 |
| Plumbing Flow Control Valves | \$5/valve (minimum of 10) | 0 | 0 |
| Weather Based Irrigation Controllers | \$35/station | 5 | 4 |
| Central Computer Irrigation Controller | \$35/station | 0 | 0 |
| Rotating Nozzles | \$4/nozzle (minimum of 15) | 653 | 294 |
| Large Rotary Nozzles | \$13/set (minimum of 8 sets – 2 per site) | 0 | 0 |
| Sprinkler In-Stem Flow Regulators | \$1/regulator (minimum of 25) | 0 | 0 |
| Soil Moisture Sensor Systems | \$25/station | 0 | 0 |
| Connectionless Food Steamers | \$485/compartments | 0 | 0 |
| Air-cooled Ice Machines | \$1,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Laminar Flow Restrictors | \$10/restrictor (minimum of 10) | 0 | 0 |
| Cooling Tower Conductivity Controllers | \$625 | 0 | 0 |
| Cooling Tower pH Controllers | \$1,750 | 0 | 0 |
| Dry Vacuum Pumps | \$125/0.5HP | 0 | 0 |
| Turf Removal Rebate | \$2 per sq. ft.; artificial turf is allowed. | 0 | 0 |

San Diego County Water Authority

Turf Replacement Rebates – January through September

| Rebate | Incentive | 2014 Rebates Paid | 2013 Rebates Paid |
|------------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Residential Turf Replacement | \$1.50 sq. ft., max \$3,000 per site; project must be visible from the street; and artificial turf not eligible | 9,113 sq. ft. | 2,480 sq. ft. |
| Commercial Turf Replacement | \$1.50 sq. ft.; max \$9,000 per site; and artificial turf not eligible | 0 | 0 |

Landscape Surveys

Irrigation Checkups (surveys) are available for residential, commercial, industrial and institutional customers.

Water Surveys and Large Landscape Audits – January through September

| Customer | Program | 2014 | 2013 |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Residential | Water Survey | 17 | 12 |
| Commercial | Large Landscape Audit | 1 | 0 |