

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
VISTA IRRIGATION DISTRICT

January 19, 2021

A meeting of the Public Affairs Committee of Vista Irrigation District was held on Tuesday, January 19, 2021, at the offices of the District, 1391 Engineer Street, Vista, California.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair MacKenzie called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Committee members present: MacKenzie and Vásquez.

Staff present: Marlene Kelleher, Director of Administration; and Alisa Nichols, Management Analyst.

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. VID SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST

See staff report attached hereto.

The Committee and staff discussed concerns related to potential difficulties of student participation due to schooling being conducted remotely because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Committee discussed several ideas and instructed staff to contact counselors to determine how each school is conducting outreach while students are not on campus. The Committee recommended continuing to offer awards in the \$1,000 to \$3,000 range to allow flexibility in selecting the number of award recipients. Additionally, the Committee directed staff to remove the requirement to provide the student's GPA in an effort to increase participation.

The Committee and staff reviewed and discussed the scholarship application materials, including a new essay topic/question, timeline and promotion of the scholarship contest to local high schools. The Committee recommended continuing to provide a brochure to assist high school counselors and others with promoting the contest.

6. 2020 ANNUAL REPORT AND 2021 SPRING/SUMMER NEWSLETTER

See staff report attached hereto.

The Committee and staff discussed the format and topics that will be included in the annual report, which will be produced in electronic format only and made available on the District's website. Ms. Kelleher and Ms. Nichols requested the Committee suggest ideas for content for this year's annual report including, but not limited to, a San Diego County Water Authority report, as well as additional articles. Chair MacKenzie suggested highlighting the District's 97 years in the community as well as upcoming reservoir projects. Chair MacKenzie also recommended including an article on each reservoir (as it is rehabilitated/constructed) in future annual reports. Additionally, Chair MacKenzie requested that the water infrastructure section clarify how many years the Main Replacement Program has been in place and that a graphic identifying how imported water is conveyed to the District be added.

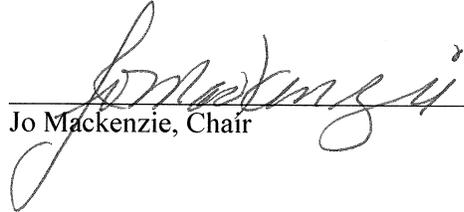
Additionally, the Committee and staff briefly discussed the upcoming four-page newsletter that will incorporate condensed demographic and financial information along with highlights from the annual report. Chair MacKenzie recommended staff carry the reservoir article into the newsletter. Ms. Nichols said that the newsletter would likely be distributed in late spring or early summer. Staff also proposed producing a two-page Fall/Winter newsletter, which will include articles on relevant water topics and/or District activities and projects.

7. COMMENTS BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

None were presented.

8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, at 10:08 a.m. Chair MacKenzie adjourned the meeting.



Jo Mackenzie, Chair

ATTEST:



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



**PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Item: 5

Meeting Date: January 19, 2021
Prepared By: Alisa Nichols
Reviewed By: Marlene Kelleher
Approved By: Brett Hodgkiss

SUBJECT: SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST

RECOMMENDATION: Review and provide feedback on draft application materials, including the essay question and timeline for the Vista Irrigation District Scholarship Contest.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION: On May 21, 2020, the Board awarded six \$1,000 scholarships to the contest winners.

FISCAL IMPACT: \$6,000 for the scholarship contest is included in the budget.

SUMMARY: Each year, the District invites high school seniors who live or go to school within its service area to compete for a scholarship. The purpose of the scholarship program is to increase student knowledge and awareness of water related issues affecting the District and its customers. Students who compete for a scholarship must complete an essay and provide a one page personal statement related to their background and/or goals; selection criteria also include community involvement or volunteer service, and letters of recommendation.

In December 2018, the Board authorized the Public Affairs Committee (Committee) to restructure the scholarship contest with the goal of increasing participation. After careful consideration, the Committee decided to remove the requirement to submit transcripts as part of the application process and offer up to six scholarships with a minimum scholarship award amount of \$1,000 and a maximum scholarship award amount of \$3,000, providing the Committee (and the Board) the flexibility to award multiple scholarships based on the quality of the applications. After making the aforementioned changes, District received 16 applications in 2109 and 15 applications in 2020 contest compared to six applications in 2018.

DETAILED REPORT: Staff has prepared a draft application package and brochure for the Committee's review and feedback. The scholarship contest requirements, as presented in the draft application package, are the same as last year. Per the Board's suggestion, staff has included a new essay question/topic.

Staff anticipates distributing application packages and brochure to high school counselors within the District's jurisdictional boundaries in January. Follow-up calls will be made to counselors to ensure the application materials were received. Additional scholarship promotional efforts will include placing information about the scholarship in high schools' monthly scholarship bulletins, issuing a news release, and announcing the program on our website. Application materials will also be made available on the District website.

As proposed, application packages would be due to the District by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, February 26, 2021. The Committee, which serves as the competition judges, could meet in the following weeks (based on Committee members' availability) to review the applications and recommend a winner(s). The Committee's recommendation for the winner could then be submitted to the Board for consideration at a meeting in April. A certificate could then be presented to the winner at the next scheduled Board meeting (if allowed by the County of San Diego Public Health Order). As in the past, once the student has enrolled at a university, college or vocational school District staff will forward a check to the school on behalf of the student(s).

ATTACHMENTS: Draft scholarship application package and brochure.



SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION PACKAGE

Vista Irrigation District (VID) invites local high school seniors to compete for scholarship(s) from VID. Up to six scholarships may be awarded; the minimum scholarship award amount is \$1,000 and the maximum scholarship award amount is \$3,000. Winners will be selected based on the quality and originality of an essay prepared by the applicant as well as school and community involvement. Applications will not be accepted if all criteria are not met, including correct formatting. **Applicants must submit each of the following documents by 5:00 PM on Friday, February 26, 2021:**

1. Completed application form.
2. School/Community involvement:
 - a. One letter of recommendation from a high school faculty member.
 - b. One letter of character reference from a personal or professional associate.
3. A personal statement (**two pages or less, Arial font, 12 point type, with 1 inch margins top, bottom, left and right, and line spacing set to 1½**). Suggested topics include the student's reasons for applying for the scholarship or seeking a higher education, the student's educational/career goals, personal background or interests.
4. An essay (**two pages, Arial font, 12 point type, with 1 inch margins top, bottom, left and right, and line spacing set to 1½**) addressing the following topic/question:

Water-use efficiency is an important aspect of ensuring a reliable supply of water in the San Diego region. Explain what specific actions you have taken to use water efficiently and how you can (or do) encourage water-use efficiency in your community.

The essay will be judged on originality and demonstrated understanding of the question.

Students may obtain an application package from their Scholarship Counselor or from VID by contacting Alisa Nichols at (760) 597-3173. The application package and related materials are also available on the district's website (www.vidwater.org).

A completed application package must be submitted to Vista Irrigation District, 1391 Engineer Street, Vista, CA 92081-8840, **by 5:00 PM on Friday, February 26, 2021.**

VID will review qualified applications and select winner(s) who will receive scholarships. Once enrolled at a college, university or vocational school, VID will send a check directly to the school on scholarship recipient's behalf.



2021 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

(Competition is open to all high school seniors who live or attend school in VID's service area)

Name: _____

Telephone number and best time to call: _____

Address: _____

High School: _____ **GPA:** _____

How did you learn about the VID Scholarship? _____

Post high school education plans (college, vocational school, etc.)

Service and/or other extracurricular activities performed through school or volunteer organizations, community groups, church or clubs, etc. (Include contact name/telephone for verification where possible)

Honors or special recognitions received (school or other)

If employed, job title and total hours per week: _____

Job Responsibilities: _____

Who Said Money for College is Hard to Find?

Talk to your
school counselors
or visit
Vista Irrigation District
website at
www.vidwater.org
to download a
fillable pdf
application to apply for
the scholarship.



Alisa Nichols
1391 Engineer Street
Vista, CA 92081
Email: anichols@vidwater.org
(760) 597-3173

Applications and additional information are
available on the web at www.vidwater.org



2021 Scholarship Contest

**Do you
need
money for
college?**



Vista Irrigation District Scholarship Contest

Up to six scholarships may be awarded; the minimum scholarship award amount is \$1,000 and the maximum scholarship award amount is \$3,000. The purpose of the scholarship program is to increase knowledge and awareness of water related issues impacting their community.

Students may download a fillable pdf application package at www.vidwater.org or contact Alisa Nichols at (760) 597-3173 to have the materials mailed to them. Applications are also available through high school counseling offices.

Applications must be received at the District's office by **5:00 PM on February 26, 2021**. Eligible students must live or go to school within the Vista Irrigation District service area.



Scholarship Awards

Maximum Award \$3,000

Minimum Award \$1,000

Applying is Easy!

**Submit the following to
VID by 5:00 p.m.
February 26, 2021**

- ◆ Completed application form.
- ◆ One letter of recommendation from a high school faculty member.
- ◆ One letter of character reference from a personal or professional associate.
- ◆ A personal statement. Suggested topics include reasons for applying for the scholarship or seeking a higher education, educational & career goals, personal background or interests.
- ◆ A two-page essay addressing the following topic/question:

Water-use efficiency is an important aspect of ensuring a reliable supply of water in the San Diego region. Explain what specific actions you have taken to use water efficiently and how you can (or do) encourage water-use efficiency in your community.



**PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Item: 6

Meeting Date: January 19, 2021
Prepared By: Alisa Nichols
Reviewed By: Marlene Kelleher
Approved By: Brett Hodgkiss

SUBJECT: 2020 ANNUAL REPORT AND 2021 SPRING/SUMMER NEWSLETTER

RECOMMENDATION: Discuss information to be contained in the 2020 Annual Report and 2021 Spring/Summer Newsletter.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION: None.

FISCAL IMPACT: Printing costs for a four-page newsletter are estimated at \$3,000. Based on information received from Infosend, the District's bill printing and mailing service provider, staff does not anticipate any additional postage costs associated with inserting the newsletter in with the water bills. Design and layout of the annual report and newsletter are performed in-house by District staff. There is no cost associated with posting an electronic version of each document to the District's website.

SUMMARY: Each year the District prepares an annual report that includes financial information, demographic data and articles about various water related topics, such as water conservation, infrastructure improvements and security. Prior to beginning the layout and design process, staff meets with the Committee to receive input regarding the contents of the annual report. Staff is working on the 2020 Annual Report and would like to get the Committee's ideas for content.

Staff is also formulating ideas for the 2021 Spring/Summer newsletter and would like to get the Committee's thoughts on the content for the newsletter.

DETAILED REPORT: Since the first edition, the annual report has been primarily a financial report, in that it focused on the District's audited financial statements. The annual report has also included District demographics and other statistical data shown in graphs. Over the years, articles about District activities and projects, and other water related topics have been added; more recently, financial information contained in the annual report has been summarized (since the full financial report is contained in the District's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report).

In recent years, the annual report has only been produced in an electronic format. In lieu of printing the annual report, which had very limited distribution, the decision was made to develop an expanded newsletter and mail to all customers with their water bills. The newsletter has included some articles and demographic information from the annual report as well as other relevant/timely information.