

CITY OF VENTURA

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# VENTURA WATER COMMISSION MINUTES

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**Grant Burton**  
Commissioner Chair

**Susan Mulligan**  
Commissioner Vice-Chair

**Nova Clite**  
Commissioner

**Suzanne McCombs**  
Commissioner

**Gerhard Hubner**  
Commissioner

**Robert McCord**  
Commissioner

Susan Rungren, Ventura Water General Manager  
Miles Hogan, Assistant City Attorney  
Debra Gallegos, Recording Secretary

## REGULAR MEETING

**TUESDAY, JUNE 23, 2020, 5:30 P.M.**

**IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR'S EXECUTIVE STAY AT HOME ORDER AND THE COUNTY OF VENTURA HEALTH OFFICER DECLARED LOCAL HEALTH EMERGENCY AND BE WELL AT HOME ORDER RESULTING FROM THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19), CITY HALL IS CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC.**

***Water Commission conducted this meeting in accordance with California Governor Newsom's Executive Orders N-20-20 and N-35-20 and COVID-19 pandemic protocols.***

**Commission Chair Burton called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.**

### **ROLL CALL – WATER COMMISSION**

**Present:** Commissioners Clite, Hubner, McCombs, McCord, Mulligan and Burton (all via teleconference/video conference)

**Absent:** None.

### **WATER COMMISSION ITEMS**

#### **1. MINUTES**

Approve the minutes of the May 23, 2020 Regular meeting.

Members of the Public: None.

Commissioner Hubner moved to approve the recommendation. Commissioner Clite seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

AYES: Commissioners Clite, Hubner, McCombs, McCord, Mulligan and Burton.  
NOES: None.

Commission Chair Burton declared the motion carried, 6-0

**2. VENTURA WATER COMMUNITY AND VENTURAWATERPURE PUBLIC OPINION RESULTS**

Staff recommends that the Water Commission receive this written report and oral presentation on findings from a recently completed survey assessing residents' opinions and attitudes towards water issues in Ventura, including the VenturaWaterPure Project.

Members of the Public: Teri Andre – written comment  
No vote.

**3. PROPOSED COMMUNICATIONS AND OUTREACH STRATEGY FOR WATER AND WASTEWATER RATES**

Staff recommends that the Water Commission receive this written report and oral presentation by Water Systems Consulting, Inc. on the proposed Communication and Outreach Strategy for Water and Wastewater Rates.

Members of the Public: None.  
No vote.

**4. ALLOCATION OF COSTS FOR VENTURAWATERPURE PROJECTS**

Staff recommends that the Water Commission receive this written report and oral presentation by Raftelis Financial Consultants, Inc on the Allocation of Costs for VenturaWaterPure Projects included in the Adopted Fiscal Year 2020-2026 Capital Improvement Plan.

Members of the Public: None.  
No vote.

**COMMISSIONER COMMUNICATIONS:** Commissioner Clite commented that Congress is considering water infrastructure costs which is a dire need across the nation and she encourages Ventura Water and the Water Commission to look into the possibility that we could get additional funding and she encourages staff to communicate with elected federal officials. Commissioner Hubner noted that the City Council will be discussing Ventura Water funds with an appropriation table showing revenues and costs on the June 29, 2020 meeting.

**GENERAL MANAGER REPORT**

## COVID Update

COVID Update as of 6/23/2020 – Waived late fees = \$186,000; Door Tags (no shut off, late payment notice) = \$113,000; online VISA payment fee = \$170

Consumption overall is approximately the same as last year during these past months.

There are no households within Ventura Water's service area that are currently without water/wastewater services due to unpaid bills.

It is difficult to determine at this time how many customers have not paid their bills due to COVID impacts as some may be taking advantage of the no shutoff rule and many are on payment plans and are paying some amount while we are encouraging others who have not paid at all to take advantage of a payment plan.

Staff is continually following any possible relief for customers due to COVID-19 issues.

Ventura Water has Revised Rule 2020-001 now Rule 2020-002 suspending any new customer shutoffs and new late fees for nonpayment from May 11, 2020 to September 21, 2020 in concurrence with the City Council extending the emergency date to September 21, 2020.

## Department Updates

Ventura River litigation - There is a status conference with the Court this Wednesday. We will post any updates on the venturariver.com website.

The City needs to complete the noticing and service process that it began in January and February of this year. The City has completed most of this process, but it was put on hold beginning in March due to the COVID-19 restrictions. We plan to re-commence that process next month and we will post updates on the venturariver.com website.

The City is required to provide an annual Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) that details the City's water quality and provides a snapshot of what sources are utilized to supply water to our consumers. Beginning July 1, 2020, the 2020 Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) will be available in English and Spanish.

Several maintenance and CIP projects are ongoing with the wells and projects at the Wastewater Plant.

## **Past Council Info.**

Council Action 6/1/2020 – Budget Workshop – Transmittal of Fiscal Year 2020-2021 Proposed Operating and Capital Improvement Budget

- Recommendations to balance the projected \$11.1 million deficit in the General Fund
- 14 tools outlined at the meeting - Hiring freeze/VESIP (Voluntary Separation Incentives (if needed), Reduce support to outside agencies, temporary

suspension of Cost of Living adjustments, temporary suspension of merit & step increases, and furloughs.

Council Action 6/15/2020 – Budget workshop #3 – FY 2020-2021

- Reconfirmed the Existence of a Local Emergency and Extended it Until September 13, 2020
- Approved Amendment to Professional Service Agreements with ENS Resources Inc. for lobbyists services related to water and wastewater projects.
- Approved amendment to the Master Service Agreement with System & Software Inc. for software support and maintenance for billing system (Enquesta).

**Upcoming Council** – June 29

Final FY 20-21 Budget

**Next Meeting Items July 28**

Raftelis will present on Net Zero/Right of Way (ROW) & Pavement Obligation.

Groundwater Sustainability Agency's (GSA) Update.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None.

**ADJOURNMENT: 7:48 P.M.**