

CITY OF RIVERSIDE

PUBLIC UTILITIES DEPARTMENT

1 of 4

Minutes of: Agricultural Water Rates Task Force, Meeting #8
Date of meeting: November 14, 2018
Time of meeting: 5:30 pm
Place of meeting: Mayors Ceremonial Room, 7th Floor City Hall
3900 Orange St., Riverside, CA 92501

Meeting was called to order by Chair Wilson

Mr. Wilson announced that the RPU Board had nominated Board member David Crohn as Vice-chair after accepting the resignation from Andrew Walcker, and that he was nominated by the Board to be the Chair of the Task Force. He acknowledged the alternates and also announced the 2nd update to the Utility Land Use Committee will be on Dec. 10, 2018 at Council Chamber at 1pm. Vice-chair David Crohn announced he lives in Ward 1 and pays a residential water rate.

Pledge of allegiance to the flag was given by Vice-chair David Crohn

Roll Call

| | | | |
|----------|--|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Present: | Seth Wilson (Chair) | David Crohn (Vice-chair) | Gilberto Esquivel |
| | Barbara Croonquist | Jason Gless | Darleen De Mason |
| | Michele Sheehe | Tom Evans | Jason Hunter |
| | Dale Sexton | Steven Robillard | |
| | Gurumantra Khalsa (Alternate for Patricia Lock Dawson) | | |
| | Kevin Dawson (Alternate for Sharon Mateja) | | |
| | Rick Moslenko (Alternate for Ed Adkison) | | |
| | Scott Simpson (Alternate for Scott Andrews) | | |

Absent: Rose Mayes

1. Citizen Participation

Joyce Jong spoke about a 3 million dollar grant that the City was just awarded, by the California Natural Resources Agency, for a project on 7.5 acres in the Northside that will include walking trails, an urban agricultural education center and 24 community garden plots that will be used in conjunction with a farmer training program.

Conrad Newberry spoke to request that all members of the Task Force use their microphones so audio is clear and available on videotaped recordings of the meetings.

2. Approval of meeting minutes for October 25, 2018 meeting

Motion: Evans Second: Gless

Ayes: All present

Absent: Mayes.

3. City Definition of Agriculture per Zoning Code

Jay Eastman, Principal Planner with the Planning Division, presented information on how the General Plan and Zoning Code relate to the definition of agriculture and agricultural land use. He mentioned how "agricultural uses" are allowed to occur in all residential zones. He also mentioned how there is no specific "agricultural zone". He read the definition of "agricultural uses" from the Zoning Code...*"Agricultural uses means the use of land for the commercial, or non-commercial, purposes of planting, growing, raising, or harvesting of crops, livestock or poultry, all of which shall be subject to any applicable state license to a conditional use permit where it's required under the code and to the limitations and exclusions presented in this definition or as set forth for specific zones created under this code. For the purpose of this definition crops shall not include marijuana or hemp. Planting, growing, raising and harvesting as applied to crops shall not be understood or construed to include milling, mulching, recycling, or other processing treatments of any kind."*

Numerous questions were posed by Task Force members and answered by Mr. Eastman.

Mr. Carl Pongs, Joyce Jong and Chair Wilson provided information regarding required agricultural licenses that may be needed for certain agricultural operations. Receive and file.

Motion: Hunter Second: Robillard

Ayes: All present

Absent: Mayes

4. Economic Viability of Agriculture in Riverside

Chair Wilson provided a presentation on how the economic viability of agriculture in Riverside would be very dependent upon the established water rates. He showed how different crops have different profitability levels and how some are more resilient to higher water rates than others. There were a number of questions from the Task Force members with answers provided by Chair Wilson, Joyce Jong and staff. Receive and file.

Motion: Khalsa Second: Sheehe

Ayes: All present

Absent: Mayes

5. Open Discussion

Member Evans handed out and introduced the current WA-Ag rate proposal (v14, dated 11/14/18) that had evolved out from the original WA-9 he had previously presented. Chair Wilson outlined what areas he would like focused on during the open discussion. Significant discussion followed by the Task Force. Chair Wilson requested a motion to close open discussion.

Motion: De Mason Second: Hunter

Ayes: All present

Absent: Mayes

6. Discuss Schedule of Meetings

Alternate Simpson mentioned some concerns member Mateja had about the current proposals that were on the table. Alternate Simpson then made the following motion "The Chairman shall place on the agenda all proposals for in depth discussion, analysis and comparison with the Evan's proposal and any others that may come forth. The Chairman shall direct staff to identify and call out areas or items of each proposal that are identical, similar, or effectively resolve an issue that is before the Task Force and retain these for "call out" in future discussions leading to a final decision on resolving the WA-3 and WA-9 rates. Some discussion followed and many members mentioned they would also like to see more on the other two proposals that had previously been proposed.

Chair Wilson called for a vote.

Motion: Simpson Second: Khalsa

Ayes: All present

Absent: Mayes

No other comments or discussion on the schedule of topics.

7. Emerging Ideas and Questions and Answers

Chair Wilson reviewed the current set of Emerging Ideas and Questions and Answers posed thus far by the Task Force. Alternate Dawson made a few comments regarding his concern for how the term "revenue requirement forecast" was used in the Q&A's.

8. Items for Future Consideration

Public comment: Mr. Carl Pongs spoke about how the Emerging Ideas list has "shutting down the Gage Canal" as one of the ideas. He mentioned how the Task Force and City Council does not have the authority to shut The Gage Canal Company down as it would require the shareholders and Gage Canal Company Board of Directors to vote for such an action. Alternate Moslenko mentioned how there is interest in allowing old Gage customers to recover ownership of lost shares.

Adjourn

By: 

Richard Small, Secretary for Agricultural Water Rates Task Force

Attachments:

WA-Ag Rate Proposal (v14, dated 11/14/18)

Reminder that all Ag Task Force meetings are videotaped and available for viewing at:

<https://riversideca.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>