



MEMORANDUM

FC 14 (02-08-19)

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Richard P. Santos
ECCC Chair

SUBJECT: Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee
(ECCC) April 18, 2022 Meeting Summary

DATE: May 10, 2022

This memorandum summarizes the Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee (ECCC) meeting held on April 18, 2022, where discussion occurred on the following items:

1. Approval of January 18, 2022 Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee Meeting Minutes.

The Committee unanimously approved the January 18, 2022 meeting minutes.

2. Elect 2022 Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee Officers.

The Committee, by roll call vote, unanimously reelected Director Santos as the Committee Chair, and Director John Varela as the Committee Vice Chair.

3. Update on Valley Water's Encampment Cleanup Operations.

Director Varela asked status of City of San Jose (CSJ) participation with the creek cleanup schedule per the MOA including fiduciary responsibility; requested updates on encampment cleanups in south county; made staff aware about encampments on Pajaro and portion of Upper Llagas; and mentioned that majority of encampment notifications he received were from Gilroy. Ms. Jennifer Codianne, Deputy Operating Officer, clarified that the encampment cleanup schedule presented on Slide 2 of the presentation of this item is Valley Water (VW), not CSJ schedule; that CSJ and VW operate together on certain parts of that schedule and on equitable distribution of work priorities; that under the MOA, there is no cost sharing, and instead CSJ provides police, outreach services, landfill tags while VW provide labor, and equipment; that staff would look into encampments in Pajaro and portion of Upper Llagas; that most encampments in the south are on Uvas, West Branch Llagas, Upper/Lower Miller Slough, Gilroy lands, school districts, and the railroad; and that most encampments on Uvas are within City of Gilroy jurisdictions, not VW.

Director Keegan mentioned that it is important that the Committee is informed about the extent of criminal activities and environmental issues related to encampments that could give them better data for an opportunity to work with individual cities or the county in terms of social services to address these concerns. Regarding grants, Director Keegan mentioned that there are community members supportive of the grant applications presented by staff, and suggested that the Board members could assist in terms of utilizing their contacts.

Chairperson Santos inquired about status of partnership with the Eastside School District, and requested staff to reach out to them, if needed, and come back to the Committee for discussion and recommendations. Ms. Codianne informed the Committee that the county is entering into an MOA with the city for collaboration on cleanups; that she had no specific information on the Eastside School District partnership; that one of our grantees was in contact with school districts; that many school districts own creek lands which make encampments a countywide

issue; that in Gilroy, the school district worked with the City of Gilroy on cleanups on school properties; and that VW had offered and had done joint cleanups with the county.

Director Keegan recommended a special committee meeting with school districts to provide outreach.

In response to Chair Santos inquiry, Ms. Codianne informed the Committee that the Coyote Creek Patrol refer people to the proper outreach agency that could help them with their specific needs such as mental issues.

4. Standing Items.

In response to Director Varela's inquiry on beautification programs in South County, Ms. Kristen Yasukawa, Program Administrator, informed the Committee that the Office of Civic Engagement would soon secure a consultant that would help put together a strategic plan for public art that would include South County within the next two years.

5. Review 2022 Environmental Creek Cleanup Committee Work Plan.

The Committee requested that at the next meeting of this Committee, a date would be decided on a Special Meeting with members of school board in a meeting of this Committee. Private owners could also be invited, to begin discussion on how we could help each other on encampment issues. Chairperson Santos would discuss with Mr. Rick Callender, Chief Executive Officer, on the best approach to the planned reach out.

Director Varela requested comment from the rest of the Committee on what impact, if any, could Valley Water do to assist the city, private property owner, school district, when a non-profit group is trying to help by leasing lands to groups that are involved in encampments; announced that he would do a site visit on encampments; and would refer to Ms. Codianne on what Valley Water could offer, or is unable to offer, in terms of assistance to major problems created from encampments such as trash, hazardous materials, and police activity.

Chairperson Santos requested staff to bring timely information to the Committee such as the tiny homes to be built in San Jose District 4, trash that ends at Berryessa from close by encampment sites, or other huge encampments adjacent to a creek where trash ends up.

6. Public Comments

Mr. John Davis, a San Jose resident, expressed concern on the continued presence of trash and fallen trees and on the no specified flow reduction at Coyote Creek where he owns properties; inquired about progress and location of Stream Maintenance Program Phase II project permitted under the US Army Corps of Engineer (USACE), and whether the City of San Jose (CSJ) has a permit similar to Valley Water in the mitigation of stream flow; and asked about a contact person in CSJ to answer the question on if they have a permit.

Ms. Codianne announced that the Stream Maintenance Project started in 2014 with permits under USACE, valid until CY 2023, and seven other regulatory agencies; that most of the property lands by Mr. Davis is under the jurisdiction of the city, and offered to jointly work with the city to do cleanups; and that the contact for trash cleanup which is not a permitted activity is Ms. Olympia Williams of Beautify San Jose program.

Chairperson Santos and Mr. Carlos Orellana, District Counsel, announced that no further discussion could be made on a topic that was not on the agenda; and requested Ms. Codianne to reach out to Mr. Davis, and for the Chair and Mr. Davis to connect off-line.

Ms. Kama Fletcher, Downtown Streets Team Director of Development, announced that she was speaking on behalf of the Santa Clara County, Downtown Streets Team (DST) Director, regarding grant applications submitted to VW. Three Standard Grant applications were submitted to Valley Water by DST on March 4, 2022. One application was for a Volunteer Cleanup and Education project for Upper Penitencia Creek, and two were for Pollution Prevention for Sunnyvale East Channel and Guadalupe River. Ms. Yasukawa announced that the FY22 Standard Grant cycle closed on March 4, 2022. After evaluation of scores, staff would be bringing funding recommendations to VW Board of Directors at the June 14, 2022 Board date where the agenda will have information on status of grant applications. Since this meeting, the FY22 standard grant funding recommendations will now be going to the Board on May 24, 2022 instead of June 14, 2022.

Board member comments and suggestions can be forwarded to Eva Sans, Assistant Deputy Clerk II, by email to esans@valleywater.org or phone at (408)630-2306.

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