

Jenny Derry

[REDACTED]
Gilroy CA 95020
[REDACTED]

Letter of Interest – District 1 representative

Santa Clara Valley Water District
Board of Directors
5700 Almaden Expressway
San Jose CA

Dear Board Members:

The appointed District 1 representative on the Santa Clara Valley Water District Board must be able to hit the ground running. I can do that.

My experience is well suited to a position on the Water Board: I have been a land use advisor to the Board of Supervisors, the executive director of the Farm Bureau, and the owner of a design-build firm. Professionally, all of these experiences led me to my current position as construction project manager for the Gilroy Unified School District.

Raised in the Santa Clara Valley rural area, I have a good understanding of District 1 issues. I have farming, ranching and policy work in my background, but I do not currently have any specific ties and would therefore have no conflict of interest.

I also have direct experience with Water District issues. I have appeared many times in front of the Board to discuss water rates and capital projects, and previously served on the Water District committee that wrote the Habitat Conservation Plan.

I have broad experience in analyzing budgets, negotiating change orders, working with constituents, and researching new ideas and technology. These skills would help me be an excellent Water Board member.

My application and my resume are attached. I look forward to speaking with you soon.

Sincerely,



Jenny Derry

**APPLICATION FOR
SANTA CLARA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS - DISTRICT 1**

Please complete this application in its entirety and submit an original signed copy along with a letter of interest containing your name, residence address, occupation, summary of interest in the position, and any other relevant qualifications and experience, to the Office of the Clerk of the Board at 5750 Almaden Expressway, San Jose, California 95118, by **4:00 p.m. Wednesday, December 2, 2015.**

A. CONTACT INFORMATION

Name (First, Last): Jenny Derry			
Residence Address (Street Address, City, State, Zip): [REDACTED] Gilroy CA 95020			
Home Phone: [REDACTED]	Work Phone: [REDACTED]	Cell Phone: [REDACTED]	E-Mail: [REDACTED]

B. QUALIFYING SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS (Please use separate sheet of paper if necessary)

1. Explain why you think you should be appointed to the District 1 Board of Directors seat.

Please see attached sheet.

2. Describe the experience you have that will assist you with the responsibilities required of you while serving as a member of the Board of Directors.

Please see attached sheet.

3. A. What are your detailed thoughts on the current SCVWD practice of using parcel (property) taxes for State Water Project costs versus having the water consumers pay for 100% of these costs?
- B. If some of the costs are to be paid by property owners, should certain property owners who are not able to receive any water from the SCVWD despite asking for water, be required to pay the costs?

Please see attached sheet.

4. Agricultural water rates in both North and South County are heavily subsidized by water consumers and tax payers in Morgan Hill, Gilroy and others. Please explain your reasoning behind supporting the continuation of the rapidly expanding "open space credit" expense or reducing that expense so the SCVWD can use those funds for conservation, reduced water rates and other projects.

Please see attached sheet.

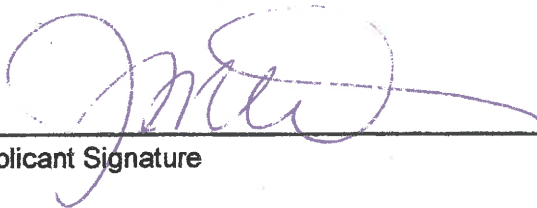
5. What do you think will be the most significant challenges that the District will be facing in the next few years?

Please see attached sheet.

APPLICATION FOR
SANTA CLARA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS - DISTRICT 1

6. What three items would be your highest priority if you are appointed as a SCVWD District 1 Board Member?

Please see attached sheet.



Applicant Signature

Dec. 2, 2015

Date Signed

1. Explain why you think you should be appointed to the District 1 Board of Directors seat.

I grew up in rural Santa Clara County, on Pacheco Pass Highway, on a 5-acre parcel where my dad had his shop. He owned his own business, repairing heavy machinery and farm equipment for the local farmers and dairymen. My mom was an elementary school principal. My two sisters and I were raised on a steady diet of 4-H and FFA projects – primarily raising cattle and hay. Those 4-H projects helped fund my education at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo.

Fast forward 40 years, and I am still a resident of rural Santa Clara County, where my husband and I have raised three daughters. I've been active in the communities of Gilroy and Morgan Hill for decades, and have seen the growth and the subsequent successes and failures of our communities and our landscapes.

I have the desire to serve the public with the knowledge I have gained from many years of work in the fields of agriculture, public policy and project management. A position on the SCVWD Board of Directors would allow me to funnel my skills into work that will be meaningful to the future of the Santa Clara Valley.

I have the humility to admit I don't have all the answers, to seek out experts who do, and to negotiate the best solution for all parties. As a project manager responsible for publicly funded school facilities, I use this process on a daily basis so that the end result is a great facility for the students who need it, at a good price for the taxpayers.

I have the ability to make difficult decisions, after carefully considering different viewpoints, financial impacts and the bigger picture of Santa Clara Valley as a whole. My personal and professional experiences have prepared me to represent the interests of District 1.

I have a vision for Santa Clara County that combines efficient water delivery with successful farmlands and environmental stewardship of our many parks and waterways. These entities need protection from encroachment, so that future generations will be able to enjoy both the visual and the physical enjoyment that comes with acres of working farms and green spaces.

2. Describe the experience you have that will assist you with the responsibilities required of you while serving as a member of the Board of Directors

As a member of the Board of Directors, I will need to analyze water and resource issues, interact with constituents, make decisions regarding water rates and expenditures and be able to articulate those decisions. I am qualified to do so.

As a policy advisor to Supervisor Don Gage, my job was to recognize problems brought forth by staff or constituents, investigate all sides of an issue, and present all of the information to the Supervisor so he could make policy decisions. I often negotiated middle ground between staff and constituents, and wrote policy papers to communicate with other agencies.

Interacting with constituents requires time, patience and a willingness to listen, something I am required to do every day with my home remodel clients. Issues that affect a person's home or property are very personal, and the only way to truly understand the problems are to listen to people. I am comfortable speaking to people about controversial issues, something I did often when I was a newspaper editor and while I was at the Board of Supervisors.

I have experience tackling large budgets and like to work with staff to make sure I understand the work that occurs behind the dollar figures. At the Board of Supervisors, I was responsible for analyzing the budgets of the departments of building, planning, fire, transportation, parks and recreation, and the Water District. As the Executive Director of the Farm Bureau, I formulated and administered our nonprofit budget with my Board of Directors. I am fiscally conservative, and am proud of my record of managing \$13.3 million in public school construction projects with change orders of less than 5 percent.

Finally, after interviewing staff, gathering information, talking to experts and thinking about the long range impacts of an issue, I am able to articulate my decisions. After working as a writer and editor for a decade, and representing the farming and ranching community in public forums, I am able to publicly speak about my viewpoints. While I know my conclusions will not please all constituents, my decisions will be well grounded and communicated.

3. A. What are your detailed thoughts on the current SCVWD practice of using parcel (property) taxes for State Water Project costs versus having the water consumers pay for 100 percent of these costs?

The SCVWD must balance the need for income with the desire to encourage agriculture, working lands and open space. If 100 percent of SWP costs were to be borne by water consumers, many farmers and others with working open space might not be able to afford to continue to do business in the Santa Clara Valley.

The costs of doing business in a largely urban county are high: housing, transportation and other raw material costs continue to rise. If water rates can stay at a reasonable level, this will encourage long-term investments into farming and natural resources. All of these factors need to be taken into consideration before deciding what percentage of the SWP water should be borne by water consumers.

B. If some of the costs are to be paid by property owners, should certain property owners who are not able to receive any water from the SCVWD despite asking for water, be required to pay the costs?

There may be a middle ground here. If property owners are not able to receive any water from the SCVWD, but want to retain the right to receive water in the future, they may need to "reserve" future water rights through a discounted fee. The funding of this needs more discussion, since it is very likely that the extended drought will make water delivery more difficult or impossible.

4. Agricultural water rates in both North and South County are heavily subsidized by water consumers and taxpayers in Morgan Hill, Gilroy and others. Please explain your reasoning behind supporting the rapidly expanding "open space credit" expense or reducing that expense so the SCVWD can use those funds for conservation, reduced water rates and other projects.

First, I disagree with how this question is worded. The question implies that if the open space credit is reduced, that money might be used for reduced water rates for non-agricultural users. I doubt that very much. There are numerous unfunded and important capital projects that have been waiting for funding for years, and I believe those would likely use up any savings to be had by reducing the open space credit.

The open space credit is designed to encourage the continuation of agriculture in Santa Clara County – a noble policy that has helped maintain a vibrant agricultural economy, in the middle of one of the fastest growing urban areas of the country. Our area is known for technology and yet we still have vast areas of farmed land and beautiful open space. This is a credit to the Santa Clara Valley Water District's longstanding support of farming.

If the open space credit is reduced, and farmers pay more for water rates, they will consider farming in nearby areas that offer more reasonable ag water rates. We recently lost a very large agricultural processing business, Chiala Farms, to San Benito County. The building permit process was easier and the ag water rates are around 80 percent less than in Santa Clara County. I would not want to see this become a trend.

That said, this is a bigger issue. We need to consider all income and expenses in balancing the budget, including staffing, benefits and pensions, some of the most costly items. The costs of potentially losing agricultural operations must be weighed with the dollar value of increased ag water rates.

5. What do you think will be the most significant challenges that the District will be facing in the next few years?

1. Lack of water: Despite the El Niño year that we are anticipating, all signs point to an extended drought period beyond that. The District will be fighting for water allocations along with much larger urban areas, and will need to make difficult decisions regarding rates and uses of water.

2. Balancing the budget: Santa Clara Valley residents are smart and will find ways to save water when we are in a drought. This will result in lower income to the Water District. However, many costs of running an agency are fixed and do not necessarily coincide with lower water usage. Therefore, choices in programs will need to be made. In that case, the District may need to go "back to basics," and delay many capital projects or ancillary programs, or find alternate funding sources.

3. Urban pressure on rural lands: As Silicon Valley businesses continue to succeed, more workers will need more housing. This will continue to put pressure on the southern end of the county, where there is more room to grow. In the urban areas, infill developments are still possible. All of this will put a strain on available water and natural resources.

6. What three items would be your highest priority if you are appointed as a SCVWD District 1 Board Member:

1. Adopt a reasonable budget: The Water District must continue the work it is doing to keep costs down, so that the burden is not placed on the ratepayers. I believe that the staff's critical thinking and the Board's scrutiny can produce a good budget, focused on the basic services and essential facilities that the District must provide to the residents.

2. Look for ways to expand the use of recycled water: The drought has made it crystal clear to public agencies that expanding the use of recycled water is of paramount importance.

The keys are owning the technology to treat wastewater, building pipelines for distribution, and educating the public. We must actively pursue this alternative, and be the leader in bringing the cities and school districts together on this issue.

3. Support policies that will lead to a successful balance of agriculture and open space: During my tenure at the Farm Bureau, we were early adopters of the state's Ag Water Quality Program. Through the program, 150 farmers and ranchers received training on methods to reduce water use and increase water quality. The program resulted in written environmental plans covering more than 33,000 acres in the Santa Clara Valley. Our program received the highest environmental award given out in the state, the Governor's Environmental Leadership Award.

Agriculture and environmental interests can coexist peacefully and can actually strengthen each other. I found this to be true in much of my work at Santa Clara County and the Farm Bureau and I look forward to the chance to do more to bring these two groups together.

Jenny Midtgaard Derry

[REDACTED]
Gilroy CA 95020
[REDACTED]

Profile

A results-oriented professional project manager with proven leadership ability. Exceptional communication skills, with the ability to formulate plans of action and foster teamwork within diverse groups of people.

Experience

Construction project manager

Gilroy Unified School District
November 2013 to present

- Manage school construction projects from design approval to final sign-off by the Department of the State Architect (DSA)
- Lead teams of architects, contractors, state inspectors, school personnel and private funders, when applicable
- Oversee daily construction activities and make decisions on-site when unexpected situations arise
- Resolve disparities between approved plans and on-the-ground realities, and mediate disputes between parties
- Review and approve project build schedule, approve payments and negotiate all change orders
- Key projects include construction of new high school football stadium, renovation of track and field facility, and construction of an elementary school in less than 9 months
- Construction manager for \$13.3 million in public school projects with average change orders of less than 5 percent

Senior Project Manager & Designer

Jenny Derry Design
June 2006 – Present

- Design commercial and residential remodels in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties
- Oversee structural engineering and Title 24 energy reports
- Negotiate permits with cities and counties, including 15 public agencies within Santa Clara and San Mateo counties
- Create project budgets, negotiate all change orders and supervise construction
- National design award winner for historical renovation of 1920s home in Gilroy
- Have designed more than 50 commercial and residential remodels

Executive Director of Nonprofit Agricultural Organization

Santa Clara County Farm Bureau
2001-2007, further consulting from 2007-2009

- Directed land use policy, political programs and outreach as Executive Director of this nonprofit political organization
- Worked with an elected Board of Directors to formulate policy, work with government entities, and represent members

- Chief spokesperson for the successful "No on Measure A" campaign, which focused on the rights of landowners in Santa Clara County
- Member of the committee that wrote the Habitat Conservation Plan for Santa Clara County, a 50-year regional plan to protect endangered species and natural resources while allowing for future development
- Leader in the development of the Ag Water Quality Program in Santa Clara County, a program funded by the State Water Resources Control Board with a goal of reducing or eliminating non-point source pollution discharge to surface waters from agricultural lands

Policy Advisor - Agriculture, Land Use, Water and Transportation

Santa Clara County Supervisor Don Gage

1997-2001

- Policy advisor to Supervisor Don Gage in District 1, responsible for agriculture, land use, water and transportation issues
- Analyzed land use proposals, formulated new planning and building policies, and mediated land use issues on behalf of constituents
- Analyzed Santa Clara County budgets as related to the departments of planning, building, parks, roads & airports and the Santa Clara Valley Water District
- Wrote policy referendums, position papers and speeches on a variety of subjects and attended community meetings to address constituents' concerns
- Served as mediator for the diverse committee that wrote the Santa Clara County Animal Ordinance, which outlines allowable uses on small rural lots

Writer & Editor

Various media organizations

1991-1997, also a columnist from 1997-2003

- Reported on Santa Clara County government and issues, including the Board of Supervisors, Santa Clara Valley Water District, agriculture, water and the environment
- Directed teams of editors, writers, graphic designers and photographers to produce news and lifestyles coverage for several newspapers, including The Dispatch (Gilroy), Free Lance (Hollister), Morgan Hill Times and Monterey Herald
- Special Projects Editor for South Valley Newspaper Group, responsible for creating and designing new publications, with a team of graphic artists and writers
- Wrote a weekly cooking column called "Jenny's Kitchen" for 10 years
- Winner of more than 10 individual awards from the California Newspaper Publishers' Association for news and feature writing, editorial columns and graphic design

Education

California Polytechnic State University – San Luis Obispo

Bachelor's degree – Journalism 1990

Concentration – Agricultural Communications

Continuing education – Architectural Design for Disabilities

Volunteer Work

Gilroy Foundation – Ambassador and Grants Committee Member

Gilroy Unified School District Surplus Property Advisory Committee – Chairperson, committee to advise on property for future schools

St. Joseph's Family Center – Former board member and project coordinator

Latino Family Fund – Member and fundraising committee

Gilroy Garlic Festival – Volunteer since 1981