



**CITY OF RIALTO**  
**REGULAR MEETING OF THE WATER SUBCOMMITTEE**  
**October 23, 2024 - 10:00 A.M.**  
**MINUTES**

The Regular meeting of the Water Subcommittee of the City of Rialto was held in the Civic Center Council Chambers located at 150 S. Palm Avenue, Rialto, California 92376, on Wednesday, October 23, 2024.

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**CALL TO ORDER**

Call to order at 10:01 A.M.

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**ROLL CALL**

Senior Administrative Analyst Nicole Hemmans took the roll call.

**Subcommittee Members / City Staff:**

Mayor Deborah Robertson  
Council Member Ed Scott  
G. Michael Milhiser, Interim City Manager  
Tim Sullivan, Public Works Director  
John Rossi, Interim Utilities Director  
Robert Messinger, Deputy City Attorney  
Toyasha Sebbag, Assistant to the City Manager  
Nicole Hemmans, Senior Administrative Analyst

**Additional Attendees:**

Steve Dopudja, DWC Consultant  
Peter Luchetti, RWS/Table Rock  
Rolf Ohlemutz, RWS/Veolia  
Samantha Ferguson, BMLA Design Consultant

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**CLOSED SESSION**

- ◆ None

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Public comment received on October 23, 2024:

- ◆ None

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Approval of the Minutes of the August 28, 2024, and September 11, 2024, Meetings.

- ◆ Rolf Ohlemutz added to the minutes of the September 11, 2024, meeting:

Tab Item WS-24-1690

The payroll hours for the Automatic Meter Infrastructure (AMI) project that Rialto Water Services (RWS) provided were an *estimate* and not an official document.

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**NEW BUSINESS ITEMS**

**WS-24-1785 – Request for Feedback on the California Growing Water Smart Grant Update.**  
**(ACTION)**

Staff requested that the Water Subcommittee provide feedback on the California Growing Water Smart Conceptual Landscape Design update for the Plant Median Palette.  
(ACTION)

**Questions & Comments**

- ◆ Councilmember Scott asked how wide the median has to be to accomplish the design pallet being displayed; the medians on Riverside are narrow.
  - Ms. Ferguson advised that the displayed pallets are intended to show design only and displayed design pallets for medians on narrow and wide streets.
- ◆ Councilmember Scott inquired whether a citywide survey had been conducted.
  - Ms. Sebbag advised that a citywide survey was not conducted, but one was taken during the Pet-a-Palooza event. The survey was also posted on the City’s website for an entire week.
- ◆ Councilmember Scott asked how the residents were informed the survey was available on the website.
  - Ms. Sebbag advised that it was a short turnaround, so the survey didn’t go out to the entire city. The survey was available to everyone who visited the city website for a week.
- ◆ Councilmember Scott made it known that more people live in the community than there are people who attend Pet-a-Palooza.
- ◆ Councilmember Scott asked if staff knew why the Mediterranean Design (Design Option 3) was the least favorable.

- Ms. Sebbag advised that staff only has an explanation of why the most desired design was selected but do not have an explanation as to why the Mediterranean design was the least favorable.
- ◆ Mayor Robertson inquired whether the landscape designs could exist without an irrigation system.
  - Ms. Ferguson advised that they would not.
- ◆ Mayor Robertson advised that the medians do not have irrigation, and we do not plan to install irrigation.
  - Ms. Ferguson advised that an irrigation system will need to be installed if the city wants to improve the medians.
- ◆ Mayor Robertson stated that the objective of what we are trying to accomplish is figuring out what can go into any of the medians and sustain itself once it is established. Instead, pallets that require irrigation are displayed.
  - Ms. Ferguson confirmed that the typical conservation plants do require water; however, they require the least amount of water compared to other plants.
- ◆ Mr. Sullivan, Public Works director, stated that the original estimate of approx. \$1,500,000 for irrigation at 6 of the medians has been updated to cost approximately \$750,000.
- ◆ Mayor Robertson stated that the project Mr. Sullivan is referring to was decided to not move forward due to the impact of the cuts in the roads.
- ◆ Councilmember Scott stated there was a misunderstanding of the council's direction. His understanding of the project was to bring consistency in design among the medians throughout the city because the current design pallet does not have consistency, and most other cities do.
- ◆ Councilmember Scott asked which of the 3 designs follow through with the grant?
  - Mr. Sullivan confirms that designs #1 and #3 conform to the grant requirements.
- ◆ Councilmember Scotts feedback on overall preference of pallets is to go with design #3.

- ◆ Mayor Robertson advised she would not provide feedback until it is confirmed that at least 10% of the surveys came from residents on Baseline Blvd.
- ◆ Mr. Milhiser asked if there is an *appetite* within the budget to fix the irrigation issue on Baseline.
  - Councilmember Scott said that we have to fix Baseline, so the answer is yes, but it has to involve the community.
  - Mr. Dopudja suggested citywide exposure of the survey to get the entire community involved.
- ◆ The feedback from the Water Subcommittee was to promote the survey to the entire community and return in January.

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**WS-24-1784 –Request Feedback on Proposed Revisions to the Rialto Municipal Code § 11.04.145 Moratorium on Trench Cuts in Newly Paved Streets. (ACTION)**

Staff request that the Water Subcommittee provide feedback on Proposed Revisions to the Rialto Municipal Code § 11.04.145 Moratorium on Trench Cuts in Newly Paved Streets. (ACTION)

**Questions & Comments –**

- ◆ Mayor Robertson asked how many times a scenario has occurred where the moratorium is an issue to our residents and contract vendors.
  - Councilmember Scott advised he knows of 4 residential scenarios.
  - Mr. Sullivan is aware of 1 single-family residence.
- ◆ The Water Subcommittee's feedback was in support of proposed revisions to the Rialto Municipal Code § 11.04.145 Moratorium on Trench Cuts in Newly Paved Streets.

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**WS-24-1786 – Request for Feedback on the Rialto Habitat Nature Center. (ACTION)**

Staff request that the Water Subcommittee provide feedback on the Rialto Habitat Nature Center (RHNC) Community Building. (ACTION)

**Questions & Comments**

- ◆ Mayor Robertson asked what department will be handling the maintenance of the RHNC?

- Mr. Dopudja advised it would be the Community & Recreation department overseeing the maintenance.
- ◆ Mayor Robertson asked what kind of water fountains will be on the facility.
  - Mr. Dopudja advised that it would be consistent with all the Rialto Parks and Recreation Facilities.
- ◆ Peter Luchetti requested that Veolia receive an update on the RHNC project in relation to the Wastewater Treatment Plant operation.
- ◆ The Water Subcommittee's feedback was for the City and Veolia/RWS meet to review the RHNC project entirely.

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**WS-24-1787 – Request for Feedback on the Memorandum of Understanding with San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District, San Bernardino County, and San Bernardino County Flood Control District regarding the Cactus Basin Recharge. (ACTION)**

John Rossi requested that the Water Subcommittee provide feedback on the Memorandum of Understanding with San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (SBVMWD), San Bernardino County, and San Bernardino County Flood Control District regarding the Cactus Basin Recharge. (ACTION)

**Questions & Comments**

- ◆ Councilmember Scott asked Mr. Rossi if he's read the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and does it address rainfall and surface water?
  - Mr. Rossi indicated that he has read the MOU, but it does not address issues of rainfall and surface water. Instead, it is simply an agreement to initiate an MOU to start the discussions of addressing the Cactus Basin Recharge.
  - Councilmember Scott's concern is that he doesn't see SBVMWD addressing rainfall and surface water.
    - Mr. Rossi advised he will address Councilmember Scott's concern with the SBVMWD.
  - The Water Subcommittee's feedback was to provide a memo presenting the statistics of the Cactus Basin Recharge, which Mr. Dopudja advised he would provide.

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**WS-24-1788 – Request for Feedback on the Operation of City Well 2. (ACTION)**

Staff request that the Water Subcommittee provide feedback on The operation of City Well 2. (ACTION)

## Questions & Comments

- ◆ Mr. Dopudja explained that the elevated level of arsenic was a result of a sample being taken too soon after the well began production, which led to a higher reading. Over time, as the well continued to operate, the arsenic levels decreased to an average of approximately 6.5 MCL, down from a one-time elevated measurement of 9.7 MCL recorded in March 2023.
- ◆ Mr. Dopudja advised that Soto Resources is actively looking for grants for City Well 2.
- ◆ Councilmember Scott asked if we've communicated with Congressman Aguilar about the importance of City Well 2.
  - Staff advised that they will bring the City Well 2 project to the attention of our lobbyists.

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### **WS-24-1789 – Request for Feedback on the Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Project Bidding Issues. (ACTION)**

Staff request that the Water Subcommittee provide feedback on Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Project Bidding Issues. (ACTION)

Staff recommends that the Water Subcommittee provide feedback on RWS-Veolia Recommendation and Approaches 1 and 2 pertaining to the Project Bid:

1. RWS-Veolia Recommendation: Award a contract to USG Water for a total amount of \$8,730,796.75.

2. RUA Approach 1: Direct RWS-Veolia to prepare a Final Construction Work Authorization (FCWA) with USG and award a contract to USG for a total amount of \$7,734,339.

3. RUA Approach 2: RWS-Veolia's bidding preparation for the AMI project does not appear to have met prudent industry standards. Their approach has made it challenging for direct comparison of all three vendors. After staff discussion with the City/RUA legal counsel, this could pose grant compliance challenges. Provide feedback that staff negotiate a City/RUA-initiated project with Aqua-Metrics who appeared to be the original lowest and responsive bidder.

4. Provide alternative feedback.

## Questions & Comments

- ◆ The Water Subcommittee's feedback was for City staff and RWS/Veolia to further this discussion in a separate meeting and

work together to agree for this item to be presented at the next City Council meeting.

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**WS-24-1792 – Request for Feedback on the Lead Copper Rule Regulation (LCRR) and Lead Service Line (LSL) Inventory Update. (ACTION)**

Staff request that the Water Subcommittee provide feedback on the Lead Copper Rule Regulation (LCRR) and Lead Service Line (LSL) Inventory Update. (ACTION)

**Questions & Comments**

- ◆ Councilmember Scott requested the number of homes with unknown service lines on the customer side.
  - Mrs. Hemmans advised that the number of unknown customer service lines that are 10,157.
- ◆ Councilmember Scott asked how much the cost of test kits to residents will be and what budget would fund it.
  - Mr. Rossi advised it would cost approximately \$60 per test kit and be funded from the City's General Fund.

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**WS-24-1794 – Utilities Director Update. (ACTION)**

Utilities Director Update provided by John Rossi.

**Questions & Comments**

- ◆ None

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**UPCOMING MEETINGS/OTHER DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- ◆ Confirmed cancelation of the November 27, 2024, and December 25, 2024, meetings.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

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