

SAN BERNARDINO VALLEY WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

MINUTES OF THE OUTREACH COMMITTEE

January 7, 2013

9:30 a.m.

ROLL CALL/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Manuel Aranda, Jr., Chairman  
John Longville, Director  
David Raley, Director

STAFF PRESENT:

Daniel Cozad, General Manager  
Angie Quiroga, Recording Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT:

None

1. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

2. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES FROM AUGUST 1, 2012

It was moved by Director David Raley and seconded by Director Manuel Aranda to approve the minutes of the August 1, 2012 meeting.

4. DISCUSS OUTREACH ACTION PLAN

Director Aranda presented the members with a list of historical outreach programs that SBVWCD has previously participated in and the programs that the District is involved in now. He stated, going back 10- 15 years, no one knew who SBVWCD was. Director Raley asked if there is a goal or objective for the committee. Daniel Cozad stated they need to determine what the committee is attempting to have known. Aranda said we have been very limited because of our budget and people are continuously asking what the District does. So the question is, "What is it that we want to convey to the public? What

we do, how we do it and why we do it?" Aranda wants to express the value of water to the public because they don't understand the value. Raley feels that the District's functionality, what we do, what we are chartered to do, that it may not be in our interest or responsibility to promote water. In a global sense, since we do deal with water, maybe we should be a participant but he is not too sure how outreach helps us fulfill our mission. Aranda states the public just doesn't understand what we do. We need to reach out to the public. Raley feels the activities of the directors is different from the activities as a District. Daniel states it is critical to have a goal. We need to at least be able to describe why we spend money on outreach. Communication of what we do, our role even though it is narrow, it is important and we want to make sure people understand. We do want to be a part of the overall water world. Board member outreach is both in the interest of the Board member and in the interest of the District because they are the key communicators.

John Longville arrived at 9:46.

Aranda said we have been doing a job well but the problems now are different than 10 years ago. Do we want to let the public know these new issues? Raley states that he does not think it is important to tell the public what we do because there is not a lot of interest there. Having read all the public documents during the attempt of consolidation by Muni, he feels we were criticized that what the District provides was costing too much for too little benefit. Aranda stated that was a legitimate criticism but now we have made changes. Everyone is now interested in what we do and we are part of a greater group and that is what he feels we should tell the public.

Aranda wants to decide to what extent the Director's participation should be for outreach. He is willing to help anyone with their presentation but he feels it is very important to let people know the District is alive and doing something.

Daniel agrees but wants to get the goals stated. Daniel thinks we need political support. For the people that are around and go to chambers, just remind them that we are here and the importance of our role. We might need their help with a bill or something in the future and we want them to understand our need to occasionally raise our rates. He thinks outreach is important but we need to know why we are spending this amount of money to reach this goal. What are we really expecting to get out of the work? So in a year, at the next meeting, we can determine if we achieved what we set out to do. Aranda agrees political connections are extremely important. We need to put out something that shows how important it is that we are our own entity.

Raley states he is more interested in trying to promote the wash plan now than promoting putting water into the ground. The wash plan has more environmental issues, trails, etc. that people would be more interested in. Daniel suggests that they determine what stories they want to tell, the key messages that they want to get across, and what are the hooks that will keep people listening. The water story is small but it's our core mission for being here so it should be included in everything. The natural resources management piece, wash plan, is more topical, more controversial and easier to get people to listen to.

Including conservation and other elements, these are all a part of the communication baseline for outreach.

Aranda states “That’s the story we tell but who do we tell it to?” He feels the stakeholders know what we are doing. We should be talking to our constituents. He feels there is a failure to communicate.

Longville stated his general perception is that the overwhelming mass of our constituents don’t know we even exist and we don’t need to focus on the people that are not in a position to affect us. If there was a greater interest with the public at large then it would be more important to do outreach to them. One way the committee could be helpful is by reaching out to small companies such as landscape businesses and providing conservation tips. No one is out there trying to show these small companies how to use less water. Aranda agrees that in California, we abuse water. We love our pools and green lawns. Californians water bills are going up but not enough to hurt them. Aranda feels like we will be in trouble in the near future and need to educate our legislatures about water.

Raley asks Aranda what problems he thinks we have as a District. What problem do we need solved? Raley does not think the District has a problem. Daniel feels the topical problem of the day comes and goes. The key message of the moment often changes. He thinks Longville is correct as far as our target audience. We talk to our stakeholders and partners all the time. As far as the general public and general outreach, we don’t have any program for that but we can only do it by participating in some small way with others like Muni and the BTAC’s Outreach and Conservation Committee. We can play a little role and help out with it so that we are doing our part as a water agency. We also have the school presentations. The sphere, the wash plan, these are things that we can talk about and have key messages for. Daniel does not think the District has a huge problem either. He says that 9 yrs. out of 10, we have plenty of water in this particular area. The rest of the watershed and state can suffer significantly but we don’t suffer because we put a lot of water into the ground. Getting the messages clear is going to help reinforce who we are and why we are here.

Raley feels that the sphere of influence has some esoteric point of view and doesn’t think currently that it is that significant to convey to the public. What is it that we want to achieve and how much is going to be allocated to Outreach? He states the District is probably better known in Highland than anywhere else because of the coverage we get in the paper and that maybe we need a PR effort with the other newspapers. How much is the Board willing to allocate to these efforts? If it is important and highly valuable what we are achieving, Daniel believes, even though we don’t have a ton of money, the Board would probably be willing to spend a substantial amount. But if it’s minimally important, then we probably don’t want to spend much, if any, on it.

Aranda agrees that we should not just through money away. We will present it to the Board once we understand our goal and can show them the pieces of how we are going to reach our goal.

Daniel says we need to start with the audience first and describe the audience. We need to touch them once in a while, send them something. So job one is to communicate what we do to our stakeholders, partners and community leaders. We can reach the general public through participating with others in larger outreach programs. For conservation, let's determine if there is a special niche out there that isn't being addressed by someone else in a way that is meaningful such as with the landscapers and well owners and give them information regarding conservation tips. There is an unreached population; that is our customer.

Raley wants to present something to the Board showing that we have an outreach committee, here's why we have one, this is what we do and how much money we will need. Aranda does not want to go to the Board for money now until the committee knows more specifically what we want to do and how we will accomplish this with our outreach programs.

Daniel says the members should continue their thoughts with a one or two sentence mission for the committee itself and communicate through email. Also, state the goal of communicating what we do and the relevant issues to the audience that we have selected. The methods of how we do this will be determined at the next meeting. Things to think about: What kinds of things would you want to do press releases about? Are there things that you have seen that have been effective? What would be useful that people would not through away.

**The committee asked Daniel to take the concepts discussed and draft a plan for their review by email and to put it and the methods and cost on the next agenda which should follow the next Board Meeting.**

#### 4. ADJOURN

There was no further business. Manny adjourned the meeting at 10:31