

MINUTES
Board of Directors Meeting
Strathmore Public Utility District
Thursday, August 13, 2026 – 6:30 P.M.
19626 Orange Belt Drive, Strathmore, CA 93267
P.O. Box 425 Strathmore, CA 93267

Meeting in person at:

Strathmore Public Utility District Office: 19626 Orange Belt Dr. Strathmore, CA 93267

ATTENDEES:

Christina Lightner, President

Allaney Briggs, Treasurer

Adrian Ordonez, Board Clerk/Manager

Adele Sanchez, Bookkeeper/Secretary

Dennis Keller, District Engineer

Julia Lew, District Counsel

Absent: Nicholas Martinez – Vice President

QUORUM? Yes

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** 6:30 P.M.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**
No public comment.

3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
a. Review of minutes from the Board meeting on Monday, July 20, 2026.
Motion to approve minutes: LIGHTNER Second: BRIGGS 2-0 PASSED UNANIMOUS

4. **FINANCIAL REPORT:**
Presented by MRS. SANCHEZ.

5. **APPROVAL OF BILL AND PAYROLL PAYMENTS:**
Review of District bills and payroll through September 1, 2026.
Motion: LIGHTNER Second: BRIGGS 2-0 PASSED UNANIMOUS

6. **TERMINATION AND/OR ABANDONMENT OF SERVICES:**
(a) *Review of extensions or waivers of payments requested in writing by delinquent customers.*

Account # 20173-00

Motion to grant customer request: LIGHTNER Second: BRIGGS 2-0 PASSED UNANIMOUS

Description (if customer request granted):

Customer is requesting removal of late fees, made payment on a wrong account.

(b) Review list of customers with delinquent accounts.

Motion to terminate services: LIGHTNER Second: BRIGGS 2-0 PASSED UNANIMOUS

(c) *Review of accounts eligible for initiation of abandonment proceedings.*

Account No. 10224C-00, 30097-00

Motion to initiate abandonment proceedings: LIGHTNER Second: BRIGGS 2-0 PASSED UNANIMOUS

7. **WATER USAGE/SUPPLY 2025-2026 & WATER FORECAST 2026-2027:**

Monthly usage: 48 acre feet Year-to-date: 194 acre feet.

8. **CROSS-CONNECTION CONTROL PROGRAM SERVICES:**

Carlos Rayas, cross-connection specialist is reaching out to inquire if the district is needing assistance managing the cross-connection program. He is offering annual program management for \$400.00 per year, billed in quarterly payment of \$100.00 per quarter. The board may or may not approve the request. September agenda- adoption of Cross-Connection Control Program.

9. **AUDIT ENDING JUNE 30, 2026:**

Jaribu Nelson has sent an engagement letter for the 2025/2026 audit. Estimated fees for the audit and other services other than the preparation of the Financial Transactions Report will be \$17,000.00 and \$1,500.00 for the preparation of the Financial Transactions Report. If GASB 68 implementation is required, the fee will not exceed \$1,200.00. \$8,500 will be due with the signing of the engagement letter. The Board motioned to authorize signing of the engagement letter.

Motion: LIGHTNER Second: BRIGGS 2-0 PASSED UNANIMOUS

10. **DIRECTOR SEAT 1:**

One candidate signed up to run for the Strathmore PUD Board, Director Seat 1. Naomi Rodriguez, will be appointed by the Tulare County Board to replace director Lightner. Director Lightner's final month as a board member will be December 2026.

11. **UTILITY BILL DISCOUNT/STAND-BY REQUEST:**

Darrell Levasseur has requested for the board to consider the possibility of reducing the cost of water and sewer service charge for senior citizens and veterans. Other customers have inquired about a stand-by fee for services not being utilized. The Board can discuss the possibility of making the requested changes. Engineer Keller provided legislative information for a senate bill that can make it possible for monies to be available to assist with water rates. There are two parts to the senate bill, one being state wide and the other being more local. If the bill were to pass soon, it would not be implemented until June 1, 2027.

12. **LEGAL SERVICES AGREEMENT:**

Legal counsel Lew has provided an agreement for legal services between McCormick, Kabot & Lew and Strathmore Public Utility District. The term of the agreement will begin August 13, 2026 through August 31, 2029. General counsel services will be at the rate of \$200/hr for the first year, through August 31, 2027; at the rate of \$210/hr through August 31, 2028; and at the rate of \$220/hr thereafter. Paralegal services at the rate of \$125/hr. All billing will be in one-tenth (1/10) hour increments. The board motioned to enter into the agreement.

Motion: LIGHTNER Second: BRIGGS 2-0 PASSED UNANIMOUS

13. **RESOLUTION FOR PAYMENT FROM WATER TO SEWER:**

Resolution No. 2026-7-20-13 to pay back sewer from water for payment of monies borrowed. The board may or may not authorize the payment.
TABLED.

14. **WATER TREATMENT PLANT STORAGE TANK REPAIR:**
Engineer Keller is requesting direction on searching for financial help to make repairs or replacement of the storage tank at the water treatment plant. Engineer Keller has drafted the letter for technical assistance request to the State. Underserved Disadvantaged Community Technical Assistance is a possibility to assist the District as the technical assistance.
15. **CONFLICT-OF-INTEREST CODE REVIEW:**
County of Tulare is requiring special districts to review their conflict-of-interest code. Action must be taken no later than October 1, 2026. The board can discuss and make amendments if necessary. No changes are needed.
16. **RATE FEE SCHEDULE:**
The board will review the rate fee schedule and make changes if necessary. Motion to approve or deny the rate fee schedule. Customer is requesting a stand-by rate for dwellings not being utilized. Direction given to engineer Keller will research the fixed costs associated with possibly implementing a stand-by rate.
17. **RESOLUTION NO. 2026-9-13-17 BUDGET AMENDMENT:**
District staff will comment on an amendment needed to the budget. The board motioned to approve the resolution to make changes to the current budget for Water and Water Treatment.
Motion: LIGHTNER Second: BRIGGS 2-0 PASSED UNANIMOUS
18. **RESOLUTION FOR TOWERPOINT WATER TOWER PURCHASE:**
Resolution No. 2026-7-20-20 authorizing the wireless communications facilities Easement and Purchase Agreements with Towerpoint Communications and approval of the agreement with counsel Lew's changes.
Motion: LIGHTNER Second: BRIGGS 2-0 PASSED UNANIMOUS
19. **CV-SALTS PARTICIPATION FEE:**
Central Valley Salinity Coalition has sent out a reminder to renew the districts participation in the CV-SALTS Program by August 31, 2026. The board motioned to authorize payment for the program.
Motion: LIGHTNER Second: BRIGGS 2-0 PASSED UNANIMOUS
20. **HIRING OF OFFICE ASSISTANT:**
The board can discuss and give direction for hiring of an office assistant. Starting pay rate \$20.00/hr to 24.00/hr depending on experience. Motion to authorize posting and hiring of an office assistant.
Motion: LIGHTNER Second: BRIGGS 2-0 PASSED UNANIMOUS
21. **EMPLOYEE COMPENSATION:**
District manager has provided employee evaluations and is requesting a 5% merit increase based on annual evaluation. The Board motioned to approve the 5% merit increase and confirm the step increase for the distribution grade 1 certification to begin August 1, 2026.
Motion: LIGHTNER Second: BRIGGS 2-0 PASSED UNANIMOUS
22. **UPDATE/ REPORTS:**
Will-Not-Serve letter was provided for APN 215-250-014. The parcel is outside of Strathmore PUD boundaries.

Public records request for the groundwater monitor well installation project at the wastewater was provided to DG Construction, Inc. by manager Ordonez via email.
23. **CLOSED SESSION ITEM:**

Time in: 8:25 p.m.

Time out: 9:31 p.m.

CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL CONCERNING SIGNIFICANT EXPOSURE TO LITIGATION. [GC 54956.9(d)(2): one case, facts not known to potential plaintiff

CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL CONCERNING POTENTIAL INITIATION OF LITIGATION. [GC 54956.9(d)(4)] Three cases.

CONFERENCE WITH REAL PROPERTY NEGOTIATORS [GC 54956.8]

Property: Water Tower, Strathmore California.

Agency Negotiator: Adrian Ordonez and Julia Lew. Negotiating Parties: Strathmore Public Utility District and TowerPoint.

Under Negotiation: Terms for purchase agreement.

Annual Personnel Evaluations (Gov. Code Section 54957). Positions: all District employment positions

Conference with Labor Negotiators (Gov. Code Section 54957.6), Agency Representatives: Adrian Ordonez and Julia Lew. Employee groups: all unrepresented employees

Action taken: No action to report.

24. ADJOURNMENT:

Motion: LIGHTNER Second: BRIGGS 2-0 PASSED UNANIMOUS

Time: 9:34 p.m.

Note: California Government Code § 54957.5 requires all public agencies to make available to the public any documents provided to at least a majority of the agency's elected officials or distributed to those officials within seventy-two hours of a regular meeting. Copies of such documents shall be made available to the public no later than the time they are distributed at the following address: 19626 Orange Belt Drive, Strathmore, CA 93267.