



# CITY OF BISHOP

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## Minutes

### Water and Sewer Commission

14 November 2012

#### (1) Call to Order

Chairman Pecsí called the meeting to order at 7:03 P.M.

#### (2) Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Pecsí.

#### (3) Roll Call

##### Commissioners Present:

Martin, Pecsí, Cross, and Bhakta

##### Commissioners Absent:

Mathieu

##### Others Present:

David Grah, Public Works Director  
Deston Dishion, Public Works Superintendent  
Michele Thomas, Public Works Secretary

#### (4) Public Comment

None

#### (5) Correspondence

Pecsí questioned the letter dated 28 September 2012 in which Dee Dean stated she paid \$488.80 in August and her fee now is \$544.84 a month. Thomas explained that the property was previously a hotel with a laundry. A while back, it was converted to a multi-family consisting of 8 units. In spring 2012, it was discovered the account was still being charged for a laundry that has now been taken off. Dean has stated that there are only 7 units because a year or so ago, they converted 2 of the units into 1. A building permit was not issued for the work and the city has informed the owners they will need to purchase a permit to have the work inspected prior to being charged for 7 units. Dean has not done this yet. The account is currently charged \$381.28/month for 8 multi-family units.

#### (6) Approval of the Minutes

Vice Chairman Cross moved to approve the minutes of the 10 July 2012 meeting as written and motion carried.

**(7) Dee Dean – Owner, Sierra Wave Apartments**

Grah stated that the letters and previous discussions with Dean have been focused on the fairness of her charges. The 2013 rate study will focus on improving equity as much as possible with the flat rate system. In the letter dated 28 September 2012, Dean wrote that Grah was closed to discussion and Grah explained that this was not his intention. According to the current rate structure, Dean is being charged appropriately. Grah also added that Dean indicates her tenants are all low-income seniors. The city offers a 25% discount to low-income seniors, 65 years and older, if they meet the states very-low income requirements. As part of the discount, the account must be in the senior's name. The city is not in a position to offer the discount to this account because the guidelines don't apply. Peci added that Grah addressed these rates in his 15 August 2012 letter.

Grah said that he hopes all these comments regarding equity will be addressed in the next rate study.

**(8) Charging multi-unit properties**

Some City of Bishop customers with a vacant multi-family unit have requested they not be charged water and sewer fees for their vacant unit. These requests mainly come from customers that have a house with a second unit sometimes referred to as a mother-in-law unit. Customers are charged a flat rate fee depending on how many units are on the property not by usage since we do not charge by meters. Rates are assessed regardless of its vacancy status.

Staff has drafted a policy to determine whether a unit exists based on the presence of a toilet. If a property owner has a second unit they do not use as a living quarters, they may remove the toilet after applying for a building permit. The toilet connection is to be severed and filled with concrete to the satisfaction of the City of Bishop Building Inspector.

**(9) Incentive program update**

In spring 2012, the commission approved the continuation of the rebate incentive program with a \$2000 budget for the 2012/2013 fiscal year. In June, a flyer was mailed to all addresses in the billing system advertising the program. Since the time of the mailing, there have been 15 rebates redeemed by water customers.

**(10) Water usage and revenue by general user category**

The commission asked for updated charts showing water usage in 7 general user categories. Grah provided several charts including July and August summer months, January and February winter months, May, and revenue from 2011. There have been no changes to the breakdown of revenues, so the 2011 chart still applies.

There are differences in percentages of use in the summer months from the winter months which are represented by irrigation. Seasonal differences in visitors are also reflected in the graphs. It is important to compare the revenue chart with all the usage charts when talking about equity because in theory, in a perfect system, the percentages would match.

### **(11) Meter readings**

Water consumption has slowed down this month to around 700,000 gallons per day compared to over 2.2 million gallons per day during the summer. Meter readings are for informational purposes only.

### **(12) Cash balance and revenue and expenditures update**

Balances for both water and sewer are up substantially from the start of the year due to yearly payments received in July. There are two projects to be completed this fiscal year, the Headworks project and the Tank project, which will take large chunk of the balances.

### **(13) Public works reports July and August**

Dishion highlighted work completed in July and August. Conspec replaced the last 2 inch water main in the city on Church Street with a new 8 inch line. Staff continued bi-weekly sampling of ponds and monitoring wells to work on the nitrate issue with Eastern Sierra Community Sewer District. Staff worked with Digital 395 on an agreement for access to city buildings. A monthly Warren Street Focus Group meeting was held. Staff met with the Wye Road and North Main Street area property owner on acquisition of right of way for the Wye Road Intersection Improvements project. At their 13 November meeting, the City Council approved the execution of the agreement for the purchase of the property. The environmental document has been started for the Warren Street project. There will be a workshop 12 January 2013 in hopes to receive more public input on the design. The design will be worked on in a year; and 1-3 years following the design the project will be built.

### **(14) Staff and commission reports**

Grah shared with the commission information regarding upcoming, current, and future projects. Grah provided a project list and is unclear if the spreadsheet has been updated since the last time it was presented to the commission. An updated list will be provided at the January meeting. Grah stated that the concrete construction with the Headworks project is underway and should be finished early December. The replacement of the trunk line between town and the plant is still in preliminary design. Staff is working with LADWP to tie down the location, and could be built as early as spring. The tank project design continues with the plans and specifications in hopes to construct next spring as well. Water line could be replaced this winter on Clarke Street from Third to Main Street. There hasn't been any new information regarding breweries in Bishop. Interviews were conducted for the next rate study. Willdan was selected as the consultant with a \$30,000 contract. The main focus of the study will be to improve the equity of the system. The study should be complete mid 2013 with the rate adjustments implemented 1 July 2014.

### **Items to be Discussed at the Meeting of 8 January 2013:**

- Updated project list
- Meter readings
- Public Works reports for September, October, November, and December
- Cash balance and revenue and expenditures update on water and sewer reserves

**(15) Adjournment**

Chairman Pecsì adjourned the meeting at 7:53 P.M. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be Tuesday, 8 January 2013 at 7:00 P.M. in the City Council Chambers.

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Joe Pecsì, Chairman

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Michele Thomas, Secretary