



**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
BIOLA COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT
June 20, 2024**

The Board of Directors of the Biola Community Services District met for its Board Meeting on June 20, 2024 at the Biola Community Center, Biola, California.

The following were present:

Board of Directors:

Jennifer Duarte, Board President
Carlos Rodriguez, Vice President
Martha Madera, Board Treasurer
Reyes Lozano, Board Member

The following seat is vacant:

Board of Directors:

Vacancy, Board Secretary

Staff – Present.

Public:

Licia Clark, Mationa Veneros, Hilario Bolanos, R. Flores Martinez, Carmen Zamora, Natalia Meza, Angelica Cortez, Martha Palmeno, Phillip Cervantes, Mercedes Ramos, Susana Barrios, Lorena Lopez, Joaquin Soto, Elizabeth Pozos, Maria M. Cruz, Lucrecia Soriano, Maria Carbajal, Maria Vargas, Mayra Escareno, Diane Gonzalez, Maximo Pozos, C. Rodriguez, David, Pedro Carmona, Natalia Vasquez, Soledad Lopez, Leonardo Gala, Baltazar Carmona, Fabian Reyes, Veronica Reyes, Candelario Raya, Cecilia Paramo, Rosalba Gomez, Guillermina Cervantes, Maria Suarez, Jose Suarez, Maria Mondejar, Imelda Zarate, Gabriel Chavarin, Demecio Flore, Jose Luis y Bernarda Zarate, Leticia Diaz, Francisco Torres, Adela Lozano B., Linda Gloria, Juana Hernandez, Bernardo Quintana, Griselda Hernandez, Maria Soto, Salvador Moreno, Dora Villafana, Maria Santos, Maria Barreras, Ignacio Celis, Karla Gutierrez, Margarita Altamirano, Manuel Aguilar, Antonio Rodriguez, Javier Del Toro, Yvette Ibarra, Antonio Camacho, Marissa Herrera, Trinity Navarro, Luis Hernandez, Epifanio Hernandez. Jose Meza, and more.

Roll Call

Roll Call was called.

Call to Order

President Duarte calls the meeting together at 6:00 PM. Spanish translation is provided for this meeting.

Item 1.0 –Public Comment

- Licia Clark shares information on the summer Enrichment Program that starts July 8-25th for 5-11 years old. Anyone interested can apply.

- Meliton Vasquez- Requests traffic markings in the community to prevent cars from speeding and failing to stop for the safety of children and pedestrians. The board chair instructs the staff to provide him with the Sheriff's contact information, as the Sheriff previously mentioned reporting speeding vehicles.
- Ignacio Celis- Requests to install a light on a post on H Street.

Item 2.0 – Consent Calendar

The Board Treasurer, Madera, noted a typo in the June 20, 2024, agenda item 3. She corrected the description year to read "2024-2025."

2a. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes Dated May 16, 2024.

2b. Approval of Financials ending May 30, 2024

A motion is made to approve the May minutes and financials.

MSC Madera/Lozano Roll Call Vote: 4 Ayes 1 Vacancy

AGENDA ITEM

NEW BUSINESS-

Item 3.0 – Hold Public Hearing for the Adoption of the 2024-2025 District Proposed Budget

The Board of Directors held a public hearing prior to the adoption of the 2024-2025 Proposed Budget. The following procedure was followed for this public hearing:

- A. Open Public Hearing*
- B. Presentation by Elaine Cervantes, General Manager*
- C. Public Comments*
- D. Close Public Hearing*
- E. Board Discussion .*

The Board President opened the public hearing at 6:17 PM. General Manager Elaine Cervantes presented that the budget has remained unchanged since 2018, with the same categories and four part-time employees. In 2021-2022, an audit revealed a deficit of over \$37,000, and a report on this is available. The previous board was aware of this issue. She acknowledged that communication, especially in Spanish, needs improvement. However, including interpretation services in the budget will incur additional costs. The District has not charged late fees for customer bills since COVID-19. Notably, a large amount of customers do not pay their bills. Since 2021-2022, the District has been operating with a deficit.

After her presentation, public input was received. Complaints highlighted issues with budget transparency and accessibility, including the lack of documents in Spanish, unclear financial changes, the need for audits and workshops, better access for non-tech-savvy individuals, posting information on doors, including linguistic translators in the budget, and concerns about high bills and overspending.

The public hearing closed at 7:15 PM.

Item 4.0 - Approval of the 2024-2025 District Budget

Public input was received, with many comments urging against approving the budget as it currently stands. The board of directors then deliberated among themselves.

The board has decided to table this item until the July agenda. They will return with detailed information and provide it for the public during a Special Meeting, with interpretation services available in Spanish.

Item 5.0- Public Hearing to Consider the Water and Wastewater Sewer Rates

The Board of Directors held a public hearing prior to considering the approval of water and wastewater rates. The following procedure was followed for this public hearing:

- A. Open Public Hearing*
- B. Presentation by Dan Bergmann, Rate Consultant*
- C. Public Comments*
- D. Close Public Hearing*
- E. Board Discussion.*

The Board President opened the public hearing at 7:47 PM. Rate Consultant Dan Bergmann presented the item, stating that 7% of customers aren't paying their bills and it has been 10 years since the last increase. He mentioned that the District is moving away from the current tiered rates and emphasized that if the rates are not approved, the process will have to start over. This would mean incurring more costs, sending out another notice, waiting another 45-day period, the District going further into debt, and higher rates to cover the additional debt. The District would also have no money left and would need to do more public education.

Brian Pacheco, County Supervisor, was also present. He stated he represents the western portion of the county. In his 10 years as an elected official, he has brought \$7 million into the community by installing sidewalks and curbs. Brian introduced Amina Flores, Deputy CAO from the County, noting she is an expert in budget matters.

Public input was received, with complaints including a demand for Spanish translations on documents and in meetings, a need to actively seek grants, cutting unnecessary spending, highlighting the community's severe impoverishment, opposing the rate increase, and advocating for a fairer increase instead.

The public hearing closed at 8:56 PM. At the end of the hearing, Board President Duarte stated that 141 protests were received, which did not constitute a majority of votes.

Item 6.0-Consider Approval of the Water and Wastewater Rates For Fiscal Year 2024/25 Through 2028/29 and BCSD Policy Number 2907

Public input was received many comments they are aware the need for an increase, but at a fair amount. The board deliberated.

A motion is made to approve Resolution 2024-09 Water and Wastewater Rates For Fiscal Year 2024/25 Through 2028/29.

MSC Rodriguez/Lozano Roll Call Vote: 4 Ayes 1 Vacancy

**A motion is made to approve the BCSD Policy Number 2907.
MSC Rodriguez/Lozano Roll Call Vote: 4 Ayes 1 Vacancy**

Item 7.0- Board Member Communications Information

Any Board member may make an announcement, report briefly on their activities, or ask a question for clarification:

- Board member Lozano inquiry project going on Biola Ave.

Item 11. Staff Reports

General Manager, Elaine Cervantes, presents her staff report.

Item 12.0- ADJOURNMENT 9:23PM

The next regular meeting of the Board of Directors is Thursday, July 18, 2024.

At 9:23p.m. on June 20, 2024 the Meeting of the Board of Directors was adjourned. A letter was submitted by the public to the board of directors in English and Spanish with a list of 95 signatures of concerned residents.

I, Marisol Camacho, Board Clerk to the Board for the Community of Biola, do hereby declare under penalty of perjury that the above Minutes are a true report of all action minutes taken at the Regular Board of Directors meeting held on June 20, 2024 at the Biola Community Services District, 4925 N. 7th Street, Biola, CA 93606.

Approved:

Date

Marisol Camacho, Board Clerk

**NEXT MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
July 18, 2024 – Regular Meeting, Biola, CA at 6:00PM**