



AGENDA ITEM: 9

MEETING DATE: January 16, 2025

Staff Reports

January 16, 2025

TO: BCSD Board of Directors

FROM: Elaine Cervantes

RE: Staff Report

Cc: Marisol Camacho, Morelia Avila, Alfredo Soliz

Board Members,

Financial Help for our Residents

I had the pleasure of meeting with John Hernandez from VET NET. During our conversation, John expressed his understanding of the challenges our residents are facing due to the water rate increase and the difficulties these times have brought.

In collaboration with John, he will be arranging a meeting with the James Irvine Foundation to request a \$1 million donation to help support the residents of Biola with the rate increase. This is incredibly exciting news and holds great promise for our community. Additionally, we will be meeting with representatives from both the foundation and Wells Fargo in the upcoming week.

Stay tuned for updates as we continue to work toward solutions for our residents.

Well 4

We are pleased to share that Well #4 has been repaired and is now fully operational as of Tuesday, January 7, 2025. Previously, we were addressing a broken Cla-Val that required repair. The original estimate from the Cla-Val Company was approximately \$3,572.00. However, additional issues were discovered during the repair process, which increased the total cost.

Please see the attached for more details. While the work has been completed, we are actively negotiating the final cost and hope to reduce it further.

Thank you for your patience as we worked to resolve this issue and restore service.

Fresno County ATP Cycle 5 Sidewalk Project

As the Fresno County ATP Cycle 5 Sidewalk Project nears completion, Fresno County Public Works is now requesting payment for items previously discussed on January 12, 2023, with the prior management.

It was agreed that the district would cover the cost of the fire hydrant relocation and the relocation of miscellaneous water and sewer lids/boxes, totaling \$53,000. This amount is payable to Fresno County Public Works.

Please refer to the attached correspondence and meeting minutes outlining the agreement and the agreed payment terms.

Food Distribution drive-thru Protocol

At the November Board meeting, the Board recommended reintroducing the drive-thru process for food distributions. However, for January's distribution, the representatives decided to continue with the walk-thru process instead. The protocol for drive-thru distributions remains available should any of the food representatives choose to implement it in the future. For now, the decision to maintain walk-up distributions prioritizes the safety and well-being of all participants.

***Biola Food Distribution Schedule and Important Information**

The Biola Food Distributions are held three times a month:

- **1st Thursday of the Month** at 8:00 AM
- **2nd Wednesday of the Month** at 8:00 AM
- **4th Wednesday of the Month** at 4:00 PM (No distribution on Christmas Day-cancelled)

On the 2nd Wednesday of the month, United Health will be present to provide free health screenings to residents and anyone interested, at no cost.

Please be mindful that all participants are volunteers, especially during these cold months. We also want to remind everyone that the quantity of food we receive from the Fresno Food Bank can vary—sometimes there's plenty, and other times, there isn't enough. Unfortunately, this is beyond our control, and we appreciate your patience and understanding.

Community Water Leaders Gathering

This week, we received an email from Self-Help Enterprises announcing that they will be hosting a Community Water Leaders Gathering on Saturday, January 18, 2025, from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM in Clovis, CA. They have expressed a strong interest in Biola's participation, recognizing our community as a solid model for others.

They would greatly appreciate it if Biola's leaders could attend and contribute to the conversation. For more information, please see the attached details.

Water System Upgrade Project

As you know, the district lost the Water System Upgrade Project that was originally scheduled for completion in February 2023. This project, initiated in 2018, aimed to provide Biola with a 500,000-gallon water storage tank, smart meters throughout the community, and booster pump replacements. Estimated at \$4 million, the project was crucial for Biola's water infrastructure.

On May 24, 2024, the State Water Board sent a denial letter citing a lack of communication between the Engineer and the District back in 2021-2022. This project is vital for Biola, especially considering the \$200,000 in losses from leaks over the past year. While the current Board and staff were not involved during the initial stages, they fully recognize the importance of moving this project forward.

Since then, the current team has taken significant steps, including numerous emails, phone calls, and outreach to politicians for assistance. With support from our current engineer, AM Consulting (led by Alfonso Manrique), he arranged a meeting on Friday, November 15, 2024, with Assemblymember Esmeralda Soria's representative, District Director Gilbert Felix, and five members of the State Water Board. During this meeting, we emphasized the significance of this project for Biola and its residents.

While we are uncertain whether this will be enough to overturn the State Water Board's decision, we are committed to continuing the fight. We will explore every avenue, whether through the State Water Board or alternative funding sources, to ensure this critical project becomes a reality for Biola. **As of January 10, 2025 we are still waiting for a response from the State as to their decision.**

Jakara Movement and UC Merced

Jakara Movement and UC Merced have started on the Mural that was approved by the Board last month. The artist will work on the Mural through November and December with a ribbon cutting of the completed work is now scheduled for Wednesday, February 26, 2025 @ 4:00pm.

Toys with Santa

Thank you to everyone who attended the Toys with Santa event on December 22, 2024. Our community came together to serve hamburgers and hotdogs to 400 people and distribute toys to 260 children. It was a wonderful event, and we extend a heartfelt thank you to all who contributed financially or volunteered their time. Your support is deeply appreciated!

***BOARD PACKETS** – Agendas and Board Packets will be sent by email effective August 1, 2023. If a hard copy is needed copies will be available at the office for pickup at your convenience, every Friday before the scheduled Board Meeting of every month. Thank you for your patience as we try and be a little more efficient with staff time and safety.

As a reminder the office hours are as follows:

Monday – office closed

Tuesday – 8:00am –5:00pm

Wednesday – 8:00am –5:00pm

Thursday – 8:00am – 5:00pm

Friday – 8:00am – 2:00pm