

Big Lagoon Community Services District

PO Box 847 Trinidad, CA 95570 biglagooncsd@gmail.com

REGULAR MONTHLY BOARD MEETING AGENDA

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Big Lagoon Community Services District will be held **Tuesday, June 15 at 6:00 p.m.**

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, and until further notice, this and upcoming BLCSD meetings will be held using ZOOM.

The public may submit written comments or questions on any agenda item to the Board at: biglagooncsd@gmail.com up until 5:00 PM on Monday, June 14, 2021, or verbally request being added to one or more agenda items after the Call to Order.

The Information Packet **[P]** for this meeting is attached to the emailed Agenda. You can also request the Packet by emailing biglagooncsd@gmail.com.

To join via

ZOOM: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86284416406?pwd=Z2d0SzJyZnhSenNPZEc3VkFXaTZ6dz09>

By Phone: (669) 900-9128 Meeting ID: 862 8441 6406 Passcode: 450453

1. Chair's Call to Order (Bill)
2. Invite public to address item(s) on the Agenda (Bill)
3. Agenda for June 15, 2021 (Bill) Amend / Approval
4. May 18, 2021 Unapproved Meeting Minutes **[P]** (Bill) Amend / Approval
5. LACO Report (Rod Wilburn, VP of Engineering)
6. Announcing logo poll results (Joey)

7. School Pipeline Project update **[P]** (Bill)

Agenda Items 8-9-10 up for a vote:

8. Leak Adjustment Policy (Chuck & Joey) Discuss / Approval

9. Volunteer Waiver **[P]** (Gus) Discuss / Approval

10. School Portables (Dick) Discuss / Approval

11. Public Comment – Any member of the public may address the Board on any item that is not on the agenda.

By law, the Board cannot take action on items that are not on the agenda.

12. Future Agenda Items from Board Members

13. Adjourn

Meeting Packet Documents **[P]**:

Agenda Item 4: Unapproved Meeting Minutes May 18, 2021

Agenda Item 7: School Pipeline Project Update
Agenda Item 9: Volunteer Waiver

Community Correspondence

MAY 18, 2021 UNAPPROVED MINUTES

BIG LAGOON COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

**Unapproved MINUTES of the Regular Monthly Board Meeting – Tuesday May 18, 2021 - 6:00 PM
Teleconference Via Zoom**

OPEN SESSION

1. Chair's Call to Order (Bill)

The open/regular meeting of the Big Lagoon Community Services District convened at 6:03PM.

Board members in attendance: Bill Wenger, Chair; Gus Satein, Vice Chair; Dick Maier, Treasurer;

Chuck King, Director; Joey Blaine, Director

Staff in attendance: Mara Friedman, Board Secretary; Val Castellano, Water Operator;

Dana Hope, Meter Reader

Community members in attendance: Greg Sideroff, Susan Perkins, John Donohoe, Margie Adler, Mary Coakley, Louise Minor, Larry Davis, Rob Wilson, Cindy Maier, Sheila Cruson

Chair read aloud an email submitted by Sheila Cruson and Heather Kurwitz that was not included in the Community Correspondence document. This email will be added to the Information Packet.

2. Invite Public to Address Item(s) on the Agenda (Bill)

Greg wants to address items 6/7/8/11; Dana wants to address item 7; Dick wants to address item 9;

Margie wants to address item 11; Rob wants to address item 11.

3. Agenda for May 18, 2021 (Bill) Amend / Approval

There were no changes to the agenda.

Agenda is approved as distributed by Bill.

4. April 17, 2021 Unapproved Meeting Minutes (Bill) Amend / Approval

Joey made the following corrections - Agenda Item 7 Website: add that we are in full WCAG compliance.

Greg made the following corrections - Agenda Item 10.2 Public Comment: Steve Madrone is a county supervisor, not a planner.

Minutes are approved as amended.

5. Vice-Chair's Report (Gus)

5.1 Last month the board received advance notice from Val that he will leave his position as water operator in one year (2022). If we are able to recruit a volunteer from our community, Val will help train a new water operator. Val has served our community since 2016. We appreciate all his good work as water operator, and will miss his diligent service. Finding a new water operator will be a high priority for the Board.

5.2 We received cost estimates from Badger on three different types of meters. Gus plans to present an information packet at the next meeting.

6. Treasurer's Report (Dick)

6.1 May Financials – P&L Balance Sheet

Dick asked if there were any questions regarding the May financials. In answer to Greg's question regarding the balance of \$13,470 in our accounts receivables, Dick answered that due to Covid, some of our neighbors have not been able to pay their water bill on time. We have suspended interest and late payments during the Covid period. On June 15th, the state is scheduled to reopen. If this occurs, Dick will reinstate interest and late fees.

6.2 Upcoming Rate Adjustment

Our total operating expenses have increased during the last five years, due to insurance rate increases and increased maintenance costs. Our last rate increase of 5 percent was 5 years ago. Our revenue has increased over our operational expenses. If we are not able to replace Val's position with a volunteer, we will have to pay for a water operator. This could be as much as a \$1000 per month expense and could effect possible rate adjustments. Greg commented that he and Franya support a rate increase as long as it is based on tier pricing for volume of usage. They feel this would encourage water conservation and they would like the board to consider this.

Dick cannot see any reason for rates to increase at this time, as we are financially sound (no debt and \$138K bank balance). Bill mentioned rate of inflation and \$60 five years ago equates to \$66 today. There are 4 factors that contribute to our operating expenses: repair and maintenance of the system; utility rates; insurance; testing. Rob agrees with Greg regarding a tiered rate system. He also noted that if we are not able to replace Val with a volunteer, we might need to raise our rates. Dick agrees with Rob on this point. Dick noted that the water usage is approximately 20% of our bill. If a tiered system is adopted, the complexity of calculations might take him an entire day to process the bills, instead of half a day. Gus suggested that if we incur more expenses, we should perhaps raise our base rate, which is a fixed cost for everyone. This would make Dick's job less cumbersome than adopting a tiered rate system.

Regarding website credit card payment option: Joey noted that Streamline online payment option is now available at no cost. There is a 3.8% convenience fee transaction cost for each consumer. This feature could be up and running in a month if we decide to implement it. Joey commented that he personally prefers to make online payments with a credit card rather than sending a check. Joey will explore more about this feature.

7. Leak Adjustment Policy (Chuck)]

It is assumed everyone has had an opportunity to read through the Leak Adjustment Policy (LAP). As there are no changes, we moved to discussion. Greg encouraged us to create a LAP checklist/submittal form that would be posted on our website. This form will help to eliminate gray areas. Joey agrees and said he will use Streamline's form creation option to create a LAP form. Both Dana and Gus concur that posting clear guidelines on our site will take out the guesswork and standardize the process. Chuck will have a draft form ready for our June meeting. In answer to Dana's request that the community have another chance to review the LAP, Joey will post the LAP on our website and an email will be sent out with a link to the form. If requested, we can also provide a printed copy of the LAP.

8. Website Status Report – BLCSO Logo (Joey)

We have four logo designs to consider. Joey will create a poll on our website that will allow the community to vote on the logo they prefer. Greg thanked Joey for our great website. It was suggested that we might create some kind of 'splash' to get the community excited about our logo and the new website. Dana suggested that

we send out an email that combined both the LAP for review and the vote for our new logo. Margie suggested there be a deadline to vote on the logo, and she will help Joey get the word out. We will copyright our logo after the design is chosen. In answer to Greg's question, Joey replied there is a way to track visitors to the site and so far we've had 380.

9. Water Operator's Report – 2020 Consumer Confidence Report (Val)

Ensuring a healthy and reliable water service is Val's biggest priority. We are using 5-8k gallons of water a day. All is stable and our water is great. The annual report has been submitted, as has the consumer confidence report. The consumer confidence report has been posted at the school. It can be posted on the website and can be printed out by our customers if they want. In answer to Dana's question, Val noted that one the biggest dangers to our system is high-density development.

10. Meter Reader's Report (Dana)

Dana read the meters on 5/2. She appreciates the email reminder sent to district customers the morning of the reading. Laura did the digging and Gus and Dick were also present for the readings. Dana noticed an improvement in the cleanliness of the meters, both inside and out. Originally there were 6 meters of concern. Two warning notices were sent out. Gus noted that a number of meters are in very poor condition, and that some shutoff valves need to be upgraded. The district will develop a plan to replace worn-out meters and/or valves in phases. Val has ordered 10 valve components that are identical to those used to repair the valve at 181 OV, for a total of \$800. Dick noted that in addition to updating meters/valves, we should consider replacing the boxes. The idea of reducing meter reading frequency was discussed. Currently our volunteers devote 2 hours to reading the meters every other month. Sometimes undetected leaks are discovered when reading the meters, which encourages keeping the current schedule. More volunteers will lessen the load on Dana. Rob offered to help as soon as he is able, and Louise and Greg also offered to help Dana. The subject of smart meters was discussed, which would be an additional expense. Gus will present information regarding the different types of meters available, their respective pros and cons, and associated costs. It was noted that there are two types of digital meters, radio read and cellular.

11. Storage Capacity & Fire Suppression Status Report (Dick)

The new board was seated in December 2020. In the January meeting, the topic of fire suppression was raised by John D. Our total water storage is 10K gallons. Consequently, we are not well prepared to put out a structural fire. If there were to be a house fire, we would run out of water in 10 to 15 minutes. A working group was formed in January to investigate the issue of fire suppression. During the 4-month period starting in January, extensive research was done on this issue. We received feedback from other water districts, and met with Cal Fire. On the funding front, we had discussions with Quinn Donovan from USDA-RD, and Tom Warnock from Pace Engineering. Tom had given a 1 ½ hour presentation at our April meeting of his findings and recommendations regarding our system. Tom estimated that the project to update our water system would cost around \$3 million, which was a shock to the people attending the meeting. During a meeting with USDA-RD it was discovered that we did not qualify for an initial grant of 30K, matched with 10K from the district, for a 40K preliminary engineering study that is required for any application for funding from state or federal agencies (CA Water Boards and USDA-RD).

Dick emphasized that our most important priority is to preserve the high water quality that we deliver to our district.

We are now back to the original issue of storing more water at our well site. Any improvement will likely be self-funded. The working group has put in well over a hundred hours on this and is still investigating. Each month the Board will be updated on the working group's findings. All in all, it's been a huge education on the complexities involved.

Rob suggested that in light of the estimated costs associated with updating our system, we might consider raising our water bill to start building up our reserves. Chuck asked about the possibility of grants. Dick noted that there are lending sources that offer loans at 1.75% over 40 years, but this is through state and federal agencies (CA Water Boards and USDA-RD). We don't want to create any financial hardship for anyone within the district. We need to first decide WHAT we are going to do, and then figure out HOW we will fund it.

Bill stated that based on the need for water security, we received a green light from CA Water Boards to move forward with the funding application to replace the unpermitted PVC pipe that runs from the well to the school. It is hoped that CWB will pay to replace the pipe at little, or no cost to the district. The steps involved in applying for state funding can be a 5-year process. Meanwhile, the school will be getting a grant for a new hydration system to replace the old water fountains.

Greg thanked Dick for helping to clarify this confusing process. Dick responded that he had started creating a flow chart to outline everything, but stopped when he realized that the proposal from PACE Engineering was unrealistic for just 42 hookups.

Val mentioned that he received an email from CA Water Boards informing him that within 2-3 years we will be required to do an inventory of each connection running from the meter to the house. Bill stated that this is a topic to be addressed at a future meeting.

Bill noted that the working group would be getting two more water system assessments from qualified engineering firms, along with estimates for preparing the preliminary engineering report.

Dana suggested that educating our community about our water system would be highly beneficial.

12. Public Comment

Answering Dana's request, Bill shared a brief history about our water system, and it's relationship to Big Lagoon School.

Greg noted that there are a lot of rumors floating around regarding the history of our water system. Bill mentioned he is putting together a history of our water system. Greg expressed appreciation for holding the meeting on Tuesday night.

Chuck wanted to know if our water system is out of compliance with regard to fire flow. Are we at risk of being sanctioned or penalized if we can't deliver needed fire flow to the school? Can the school district sue us if there is a fire? Dick noted that the school is not actually part of BLCSD, but rather a customer. Gus feels it would be prudent to have an attorney review our relationship to the school.

Dana replied that there is documentation that we are 'married' to the school, and she does not lean toward the district retaining a lawyer. She cautioned against posting titles and deeds on the website, to which Dick replied that deeds are public documents.

Margie suggested educating our neighbors as to what it means to be a Special District. She thanked everyone for the mutual respect present during the meeting. The civility displayed tonight helps her believe in the future high functioning of our district's ability to address the important issues that have come to light.

13. Future Agenda Items from Board Members

Dick stated that finding a new water operator will be our number one priority.

Susan asked if Val has a backup or is the water operator a one-person position? Val replied that he does not have a backup. He added that the water operator's responsibilities can be divided up into various tasks and that he will be happy to train anyone interested. If we hire someone, they would come here at least once a week, and be on-call for emergencies. Greg suggested that we create a water operator job description. Dana added that we could offset the cost of hiring an outside water operator by cross training volunteers to support the operator on non-critical tasks that don't require D1 certification.

14. Stakeholders Q&A Meeting on Thursday, May 20, at 6:00PM

The idea for having a Stakeholders Q&A meeting came from Dana and Dick. The format will be a moderated open forum in which residents of the community can share ideas, comments, and suggestions. There is no set agenda. Dick will moderate the first meeting, and he will share community feedback with the Board. The Board will take turns moderating the stakeholder meetings. The secretary does not take notes during these meetings.

15. Adjourn

With no other business, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:26 PM.

The next regular meeting will be June 15, 2021 at 6PM on Zoom.

Submitted by Mara Friedman, Board Secretary

The School Pipeline Project

There are two government-sponsored funding sources available to districts:

- California Water Boards: awards grants to ensure water quality and security
- USDA: awards grants for general infrastructure improvements

The Challenge

BLCSD doesn't qualify for state funding, as we don't have a water quality issue

Water delivery to the school does qualify, as the pipe to the school is not secure

Pipeline History

The existing, unpermitted PVC pipe, placed by Bud Peltonen in the mid-80's, is susceptible to falling trees, vandalism, and other hazards associated with not being properly buried. Over the years there have been at least four major breaks in the pipe at much expense, and many hours spent looking for each break. The pipe runs through dense vegetation, including sensitive riparian habitat, and it is necessary to clear away brush when looking for a break. Each repair to the pipe has required the services of a professional plumber.

Project Cost Burden to BLCSD

The pipeline project depends on receiving substantial grants from the state, at little expense to BLCSD. Because a majority of the students at Big Lagoon School are disadvantaged, and half the students are Native American, the school may qualify for the maximum grant amount possible. The district may be willing to pay \$10,000 if the Rancheria also contributed \$10,000, with the state funding most of the project.

One Step Forward, Two Steps Back

The next step in the process was to have a kickoff meeting with our water inspector/regulator, and senior leadership at CA Water Boards. Before the meeting could take place, I received an email stating that the project had been put on hold due to the district's opposition to the project. As many of you know, we received a few emails protesting the project based on fears of what it might cost.

The Future

The district is at a critical juncture. Do we continue to patch and repair the PVC pipe going forward? Are we willing to spend whatever is necessary to find and repair future leaks? The pipe may well be approaching end of life, with more breaks happening with increasing frequency.

Update

CA Water Boards will grant the project up to \$180,000 based on awarding \$45,000 for each connection on the pipeline, of which there are four. There will be upfront costs to the district should we pursue this project, and these costs will be reimbursed at the start of construction. See the email below.

Mon, Jun 7, 7:47 AM

to me, rmcpa1, Dana

Hello Bill,

Looking back at this email, I realize I made a typo. The estimated grant funding limit is based on a cost per connection, so I believe your project could potentially receive 90% grant funding for up to \$45,000 per connection. I hope this helps to clarify.

Thank you,

Emma Blankenship

Small Community Technical Assistance

1001 I Street, 16th Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814

Bill Wenger <bill@biglagooncsd.com>

Tue, Jun 8, 9:54 AM

to Emma@Waterboards, rmcpa1, Dana

Hi Emma,

I agree with your assessment. I will provide an update on the School Pipeline Project next Tuesday at our regular board meeting, with no action being taken until our July meeting. This will give the district plenty of time to consider the project, and whether to pursue it.

Regards,

Bill

ACTIVITY: _____

The undersigned voluntarily wishes to participate in the above **ACTIVITY**. I understand that this **ACTIVITY** can be hazardous, with the potential for serious injury or death, and possible property damage. The risks include, but are not limited to: those caused by terrain, facilities, temperature, weather, condition of equipment, vehicular traffic, negligent and non-negligent action of other people including, but not limited to participants, volunteers, officers and citizens. I hereby assume all the risks of participating in the **ACTIVITY**. I certify that I am physically able to participate in the **ACTIVITY** and have not been advised otherwise by a qualified medical person. I further agree and warrant that if at any time I believe conditions to be unsafe, I will immediately discontinue further participation in the **ACTIVITY**.

GENERAL AGREEMENT, WAIVER AND RELEASE (Adults over 18)

In consideration for being permitted by the Big Lagoon Community Services District (BLCSD) to participate in the above activity, I hereby waive, release, and discharge any and all claims for damages for personal injury, death, or property damage which I may have or which may hereafter accrue as a result of my participation in said activity. This release is intended to discharge, in advance, the BLCSD (it's officers, contractors and agents) from and against any and all liability arising out of or connected in any way with my participation in said activity, even though that liability may arise out of negligence or carelessness on the part of BLCSD (it's officers, contractors or agents).

Knowing the risks involved, nevertheless, I have voluntarily applied to participate in said activity, and I hereby agree to assume any and all risks of injury or death and to release and hold harmless BLCSD (it's officers, contractors and agents) who through negligence, carelessness, or any other act or omission might otherwise be liable to me. I further understand and agree that this waiver, release and assumption of risks are to be binding on my heirs and assigns.

I further agree to indemnify and to hold BLCSD (it's officers, contractors and agents) free and harmless from any loss, liability, damage, cost or expense which they may incur as a result of any injury and/or property damage that I may sustain while participating in said activity.

I HAVE CAREFULLY READ THIS AGREEMENT, WAIVER AND RELEASE AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CONTENTS. I AM AWARE THAT THIS IS A RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND A CONTRACT BETWEEN MY SELF AND BLCSD AND I SIGN IT OF MY OWN FREE WILL.

Signature: _____

Printed

Name: _____

Date: _____