



PALMDALE WATER DISTRICT

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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PWD BOARD VOTES 5-0 TO ADJUST WATER REVENUES BY 8.1%

Palmdale, CA – At a public hearing attended by a dozen customers Monday night, the Palmdale Water District (PWD) Board of Directors agreed unanimously to increase water revenues by 8.1% annually for the next five years (2020-2024). The new water rates will take effect in January 2020.

The Board voted 5-0 after listening to the ratepayers express their concerns for rising water costs during the hearing's public comment period. PWD also received 101 written letters protesting the plan for the increase, with 13 deemed invalid. It would have taken 15,895 valid letters, or 50% plus one of parcel owners/renters, to prevent the adoption of the rate increase.

Before casting his vote, Board President Vincent Dino assured the audience that he and his fellow Directors have spent hours understanding the 2019 Water Rate Study and how it will impact their constituents.

“I want everyone to know that our vote last night was the responsible vote,” Director Dino said Tuesday. “My fellow Directors and I voted for a plan that will allow PWD to be the top-notch water agency that it

(more)

is while making sure the impact on small water users, or residential users, is minimized as much as possible. We are tasked with ensuring more than 115,000 people continue to have high-quality water in the future, and we did that by adopting this water rate plan.”

The 2019 Water Rate Study, a 6-month-long process, was conducted by Robert D. Niehaus, Inc. (RDN), an independent economic consulting firm. They used economic trends in California and PWD’s detailed financial history to recommend rate structures that would ensure the District meets its financial goals while allowing for infrastructure improvements and keeping rates reasonable for customers.

The average PWD residential customer uses 17 hundred cubic feet (hcf), or about 12,716 gallons, of water per month. The new water rate in 2020 will increase the customer’s monthly cost by \$5.07, or from \$53.56 to \$58.63. RDN’s research shows that this monthly cost remains below the average of nearby water agencies.

The increase in rates and the plan for a \$20 million bond in 2021 will allow PWD to work on \$30 million worth of 100 specific projects in the next five years to tackle aging infrastructure and equipment.

Since 1918, the Palmdale Water District has provided high-quality water at a reasonable cost. We pride ourselves on providing great customer care; advocating for local water issues that help our residents; educating the community on water-use efficiency; and leading our region in researching and implementing emerging technologies that increase operational efficiency. For more information about PWD, visit www.palmdalewater.org.