



Yosemite West Property & Homeowners, Inc.

YWPHI Board of Directors' Meeting January 14, 2020

The meeting was called to order by President Ted Williams at 7:07pm.

Directors Present: Bert Kroon, Katrin Kuttner, Gary Mazzone, Sergio Pellegrino, Scott Renfro, Mike Stepien, Ted Williams

Directors Absent:

Officers present: Pamela Schulz

I. Minutes

No minutes were read or approved.

References to recent community meetings:

[YW District Advisory Committee Meeting on 12/12/2019](#)

The Yosemite West District Advisory Committee quarterly semi-government meeting discussed water proposals, fire-station development, and utility fee accounting. [Notes](#) and [Agenda](#) published.

[YW District Advisory Committee Meeting on 9/12/2019](#)

The Yosemite West District Advisory Committee quarterly semi-government meeting discussed trash collection, water proposals, utility fee retention, and wastewater leach field land acquisition. [Summary notes published.](#)

II. New Business

1) YWDAC: Apparent discrepancy between stated and expected accumulation of funds from the water+sewer rate increases

Following the March 2018 rate increase, we calculate the additional revenue from water & sewer rate charges to be around \$336,000 up to 11/30/2019 so substantial revenue is accumulating and could total \$490,000 by 6/30/2020. We need to assure that the revenue is preserved for the capital improvement needs (wells, pipelines, etc) and not re-purposed by the county. In the latest YWDAC meeting, the county reported sequestering \$80,000 relating to the water+sewer lawsuit. We're trying to understand the source of the discrepancy. Ted has a meeting scheduled at the county public works office for 1/27/2020.

We need to assure that YWMD Fund 322 is not charged for the county's legal expenses with Colantuono.

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The engagement agreement passed by the Mariposa Board of Supervisors on 4/24/2018 explicitly stated that the Colantuono expenses would be paid by Mariposa County's "Liability Fund" but we can see that YWMD Fund 322 has already been debited \$83,890 (sum of \$26030 in FY18-19 and \$57860 so far in FY19-20).

2) Winter snow propane safety

We've already published flyers and sent reminders. Is there more we can do?

3) Membership update

Ted has sent recent reminders to email addresses that previously expressed interest in YWPHI, but are unpaid for 2019-2020. This netted a couple additional payments, so we're currently at 97 members, which is a nice increase over last year.

4) Yosemite Conservancy well drilling

Yosemite Conservancy is drilling a water well about 1000 feet from the Yosemite West community well. It's likely that both wells will draw from the same source. Some testing is required to ensure one well doesn't pull too much from the other. It's unclear what level of interference is allowed and would be permitted by the state Water Board.

In general, the YW homeowners are concerned that the current community well (well #9 in the 1982 report) is already inadequate to support full buildout of all lots in Yosemite West, and adding any additional load (from Nature Bridge or other commercial users) will only accelerate the time when we hit capacity limitations.

But if a new well does add to total supply capacity, then interconnecting the wells would improve redundancy and reliability compared to having multiple separate fragile systems. It is also likely that the State Water Board would require interconnection before issuing a new water permit to any new well in the same geographic area (within 3 miles). At the YWDAC meeting on 12/12/2019, this specific question was discussed, and it is believed that State Water Board permitting rules would require all wells (including other private wells within the same geometric area) to interconnect supply or be capped.

5) Yosemite Conservancy tree-felling

YC is felling trees along the access road to their new well. Apparently, Blue-Ridge services has a proposal to fell about 2600 trees there, and 25% of the cost still needs to find a funding source. We're trying to make sure that YWMD (meaning our water+sewer ratepayers) aren't charged for this work. It isn't clear why the County is using Blue-Ridge Services grants from CalOES (California Office of Emergency Services) to fell trees on this private land.

The YWMD has been charged \$15880 for dirt road grading in the period from 8/2019 to 10/2019 which was the period when YC was drilling, so we need to make sure those expenses were really motivated for normal maintenance to our existing well.

6) NatureBridge Fire Station

Some discussion in December about funding for a fire station on the NatureBridge campus. At the 12/12/2019 YWDAC meeting, NatureBridge stated their board has not yet approved fundraising for a fire station.

7) Discussion about YW community fire (pick up) truck

In addition to wildlands fires, our community continues to have a risk of structure fires, exacerbated by the closeness of structures and the many older structures that were built before fire-sprinklers were required by code in 2011.

Response time to structure fires is key, but we are such a distance from existing fire response teams that we continue to need to consider how local neighbors can help. In past decades, community fire-hose trainings were held, but newer thought is that the only effective response would be some mobile equipment such as a dedicated fire pick-up truck parked within the community.

Ted and Sergio have had an informal chat with Kelly Martin about this idea. With her retirement, we need to figure out who to brainstorm this idea with. Ted will send email to find the new fire Chiefs both in YNP and Mariposa County and introduce to Sergio. Sergio will follow-up with the YNP and CalFire fire chiefs. This effort will likely require a combination of some CalFire grant/loan and a fund-raising effort. **Action item: Sergio and Katrin** will sketch out a more detailed proposal for the next BoD meeting.

8) Potential Yosemite West Water District Proposal

Ted has previously shared notes from the December 12, 2019 YWDAC meeting. Mike Reynolds is also no longer superintendent at Yosemite National Park, and the idea of a “water workshop” lost momentum. The County and NPS are apparently proceeding with CEQA/NEPA studies and have engaged civil engineering consulting firm Provost&Pritchard to prepare reports for technical evaluation, impact study, and recommendations for a new regional YWWSA (Yosemite West Water Service Area). The YWDAC specifically requested better communication and updates from our district Supervisor Rosemarie Smallcombe, but we hear little. There is concern that YW property owners’ interests are being overrun, and there will not be enough opportunity to be involved in the contracts or voting for approval of these large changes that affect community viability.

The Provost&Pritchard contract expenses are estimated to be \$40000, and the engagement agreement enacted by the County says that NatureBridge will pay. But we have already seen that the first charges of \$1623 have been charged to YWMD Fund 322, so this needs correction.

9) Mandatory Trash Collection Idea

Wawona has mandatory trash collection. It’s an interesting question if there would be broad support for having trash collection included as a utility on the water and sewer bill and thus ensure universal service. Rates could be differentiated by category of usage (full-time resident, part-time resident, rental) for fairness.

Having unlocked dumpsters potentially could make an improvement in the trash issues that the community experiences. Locked dumpsters perennially cause problems of trash being left outside dumpsters that then habituates bears and other animals to dangerous human contact.

10) Are there ways we could build a better relationship with the county?

Some suggestions from the discussion: fund raising, building relationships with county officials/staff, building relationships with other parts of the county, gifts to schools/libraries, other ways to give back to the county.

11) Rules for structure density

When the 3 parcels surrounding the YW mailboxes were authorized at the 12/2/2016 Planning Commission meeting, the resolution explicitly stated each parcel would be allowed just one single family house (+ one Auxillary Dwelling Unit) for a total of 2 structures per parcel, per law in the Mariposa County General Plan. Yosemite Conservancy is pushing the county to modify the County General Plan to allow Planned Residential Developments (PRDs) on Rural Residential Zoned parcels, such as the 32 acre parcel above the YW mailboxes, now owned by YC. This would affect housing rules for the entire county. We need to be diligent to include community input for such a large change, and to be alert if this issue comes up at Board of Supervisor or Mariposa Planning Commission meetings in the spring/summer 2020.

12) Picnic Hosting

Mike believes that his house will still be available for the Memorial Day picnic.

13) Solar light for the mail shed

Katrin ran into the mailman and he said he cannot see in the mail shed in winter when he's there late in the day. Would it be possible to add a solar-powered light to the shed? **Action item:** Bert will take a look and see what he can find. Pamela can make sure Bert gets reimbursed if there's an option that's less than \$250.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by

Scott Renfro

Edits included by:

Ted Williams

Schedule of next meetings:

YWPHI BoD meetings are on 2nd Tuesday of each January, April, July, and pre-Labor day:

- April 14, 2020 by phone at 7pm
- July 14, 2020 by phone at 7pm
- September 6, 2020 in person at 3pm
- January 12, 2021 by phone at 7pm

YW DAC meetings are on 2nd Thursday of each March, June, September, and December:

- March 12, 2020 in person at 2pm
- June 11, 2020 in person at 2pm
- September 10, 2020 in person at 2pm
- December 10, 2020 in person at 2pm

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