

Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District

FLOOD CONTROL ZONE 7 ADVISORY BOARD MEETING
NOVEMBER 16, 2016

STAFF REPORT

Item 1. Approval of Meeting Minutes: April 20, 2016

Recommended Action: Approve minutes.

Item 2. Open Time for Items Not on the Agenda

Comments will be heard for items not on the agenda (limited to three minutes per speaker).

Item 3. Zone Engineer's Report

a. Pump Station No. 2 Generator Update

Santa Venetia Pump Station No. 2 is located on a District Property between 401 and 405 Vendola Drive. The existing electrical automatic transfer switch that allows for the transfer of power to the back-up generator was identified as needing maintenance. This type of electrical work requires contractors with pump station experience; the District staff received a responsive bid for \$9,450 after reaching out to multiple electrical contractors with the proper experience. Staff proceeded with this bid and the installation of the transfer switch was completed on 10/24/2016.

The existing stair case at the automatic transfer switch was used as a working platform for operator use. The County's Public Works Department Building Maintenance division installed an upgraded wooden platform at existing automatic transfer switch on 10/24/2016 to improve worker safety and ease of access.

Extending the existing perimeter fence at the pump station would allow protection and space for staff to place a backup portable generator next to the current generator during rain storms, if necessary. Staff received a bid to extend the fence for \$3,424. However, since Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District (LGVSD) owns an adjoining parcel and operates an adjacent sanitary sewer pump station, they are interested in sharing the cost to expand the footprint of the fencing. Staff is working with LGVSD on a cost sharing agreement and a final scope of the needed fencing. This work will likely be completed next spring or summer as this year's rainy season is approaching quickly. Meanwhile, a temporary fence will be placed to secure the pump station area.

b. Estancia Way Automatic Portable Pump Cover

The Estancia Pump Station consists of an automatic portable pump located between 866 and 870 Estancia Way. In an effort to sustain the longevity of the portable pump and to reduce the cost to replace mechanical parts, a steel cage was installed on 4/20/2016 to protect it from tampering and weathering. The cost to install the steel cage was \$4,786.

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c. Sunny Oak Interceptor Repair

At high tides water has been observed spilling out of a manhole that accesses the Sunny Oak interceptor. The purpose of the interceptor is to use gravity to drain storm water to the creek and relieve Pump Station No. 4 from excessive pumping. The District proceeded with the installation of a new gasket and bolt down cover for a total cost of \$942. The effectiveness of this solution was not sufficient. Water continues to leak through the manhole cover. Contractor proposed to break up the sidewalk and remove the existing frame and cover. Install new bolt-down frame and cover and replace sidewalk section. The cost to complete this project is estimated at \$3,624.

d. Meadow Drive Tide Gate

Meadow Drive tide gate is located off Meadow Drive before Santa Margarita Island Preserve Bridge. This facility is opened and closed manually to reduce flooding in its surrounding area. At low tides, the tide gate is opened manually by staff to allow drainage to flow from the Meadow Drive Ditch through an 18" pipe into Las Gallinas Creek. At high tides, it remains closed to prevent sea water flowing in through the 18" corrugated pipe. Recently this year, the resident at 60 Meadow Drive reported high tide flooding that has repeatedly occurred at Meadow and Vendola Drive. Staff is looking into installing an inline rubber check valve to prevent backflow problem at that location. The cost for this product is \$4,100 and the installation cost is approximately \$1,000.

e. Winter Preparedness Update

The District follows an annual program of facility and creek maintenance which mitigates the risk of flooding. This maintenance includes conducting regular inspections of the creeks, floodwalls, and levees within the District's jurisdiction, and frequent testing of pumps, motors, and generators. Creeks, drainage ditches, pipes, trash racks, and pump wet wells are cleared of vegetation, sediment, and trash in the fall and throughout the winter as needed. A facility-specific update regarding maintenance, storm preparedness and response is provided below:

Pump Station Maintenance: Each year before the rainy season as part of an overall preventative maintenance program, the pump station's electrical components are tested and the engines are maintained as well. The generators at Pump Stations #2, #3, #4, and #5 were just load tested and only the results of Pump Station #2 were of concern (see Item 3a above for response). In addition to electrical checks, the wet wells are inspected and cleaned if necessary. All scheduled annual pump preventative maintenance for 2016 has been completed.

In addition to annual preventative maintenance, long-term/major maintenance is performed for select pumps and electric motors. (Individual pumps and motors are scheduled for major maintenance on a six year interval.) Due for planned maintenance this year was the Santa Venetia Pump Station #1 (all 4 pumps). The amount estimated for initial inspection was \$5,000. The final maintenance cost is dependent on the condition of the pumps. Any amount greater than approximately one to two thousand dollars will exceed the Zone's available budget.

Vegetation Maintenance: Vegetation maintenance is performed within existing easement held by the District throughout all Flood Control Zones. The work is typically completed

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by October 15 each year and the goal includes fire fuel reduction and maximizing stormwater flow capacity. Ditches maintained in Zone 7 include: the one between Birch and Mabry Way, Santa Venetia Marsh Levee toe drain ("Estancia Ditch"), and Castro Ditch.

The District's vegetation maintenance program is permitted through a Routine Maintenance Agreement with the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) which streamlines the permitting and reporting process. The routine maintenance agreement expired in December; staff started the application for a 5-year extension in October, 2016.

Levee/Floodwall Maintenance & Rodent Control: The wooden floodwall that sits atop the earthen levee along Vendola Drive is inspected biannually by District staff. Inspections are performed where permission is granted by the private property owner as most of the levee is located on residential property and/or access is through private yards. With the help of Santa Venetia Neighborhood Association (SVNA), staff was able to obtain signed Rights-to-Enter forms from most homeowners this summer, however 10 forms remained unsigned. As previously mentioned at the last AB meeting, five high priority properties along Vendola Drive were previously identified, and all were repaired in summer of 2016. In addition, staff was able to repair the next two priority properties on the inspection list. Staff anticipates more properties to be repaired next summer depending on the available budget.

As a reminder, property owners with wooden floodwalls should coordinate landscaping efforts adjacent to the levee with the District.

Rodent control efforts on the earthen levees are ongoing, and are conducted in accordance with the County's Integrated Pest Management policy. Gopher activity has decreased compared to previous years, but abatement and bentonite pumping will be implemented if necessary. Residents who notice rodent activity can contact the District to request information on how to fight burrowing rodents in their yards and/or report problems in nearby levees.

Precipitation and Stream Gauge Maintenance: The District owns several precipitation and stream gauges throughout the County which help inform staff of water levels in creeks and heavy rainfall in real-time. At our previous meeting your Board expressed the desire to upgrade the rain gauge in Marin Civic Center to ALERT 2. Although the cost would be grant-funded, there are ongoing annual maintenance costs estimated at \$3,000. Since this rain gauge will benefit both Zone 6 and Zone 7, a cost share was proposed to the Zone 6 Advisory Board. Zone 6 Advisory Board suggested seeking a possible third party to share the maintenance cost. In response, staff reached out to LGVSD. On October 24, 2016 the LGVSD Board approved contributing \$1,500 to the on-going maintenance costs for the rain gauge at Marin Civic Center. This will lower the approximated annual cost for Zone 6 and 7 from \$1,500 to \$750.

Recommended Action: Approve the annual contribution of \$750 from the Zone 7 budget for gauge maintenance.

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Storm Response: Before, during, and after storms, the District, with the help of the Conservation Corps North Bay, inspects and clears flood control facilities as needed. They are also available for sandbagging and/or tarping levees and creek banks if requested. The District keeps sand and bags, for authorized emergency use only, at Pump Stations #2, #4, and #5. Additionally, District crews make rounds to all of the District pump stations to make sure they are in working order, and receive alarms from the pump stations to warn of emergency situations.

The District also has a fleet of portable pumps which are maintained and tested prior to the winter season and some are pre-deployed in key locations, such as on Meadow Way and Estancia Way.

Item 4. Watershed Program Update

a. Stakeholder and Community Meetings:

The Gallinas Watershed Program held a community meeting on April 5, 2016 to present and receive feedback on all of the Watershed Program findings. Senior Watershed Planner Laurie Williams presented an overview of the Gallinas Watershed Program to the San Rafael City Council on May 2, 2016.

b. Gallinas Watershed Program Final Report

The draft Final Report has been completed and has been posted to the Gallinas watershed Program webpage. Please email comments on the draft to Laurie Williams at lwilliams@marincounty.org by Friday, December 16, 2016.

For the Final Report and all Program deliverables, please visit the Gallinas Watershed web page at http://www.marinwatersheds.org/gallinas_creek_flood_protection.html

Item 5. Zone Funding Outreach Plan

District staff anticipates a maintenance budget shortfall by the end of 2017. 2016 polling results did not show that Zone residents were ready to approve a special tax measure to fund maintenance and improvement projects. Based on these polling results, additional outreach and education is recommended.

Recommendation: Staff recommends that the Advisory Board create an ad-hoc subcommittee of two Board members to work with staff to develop and implement an outreach plan over the next year.

Key messages of the outreach plan could include:

The community of Santa Venetia relies on levees and pump stations to protect it against flooding; these local flood facilities require annual maintenance and periodic upgrades to maintain their effectiveness and efficiency; as of October 2016, Zone 7 has enough funding to cover minimal maintenance to flood protection infrastructure through 2017. After 2017, the Zone will begin to expend reserve funding and it is forecast that with current expenditures the Zone will be in a deficit mode by 2018. The annual \$200,000 from the ad valorem portion of the tax roll may not be sufficient to maintain existing facilities. Since its inception, Zone 7 has relied on

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locally-generated, locally-controlled funding; for 21 of the past 34 years to repair and build new flood facilities. Zone 7 has benefitted from special taxes in addition to its small portion of the regular property tax. However, no special tax contributions have been approved since 2007; local funding is needed to attract grant funds.

Potential outreach strategies include online community surveys; landowner workshops for levee/gopher/vegetation control; levee walks, pump station open houses, and staffing tables/booths at community events, plus contributing to articles in the SVNA Communicator.

Item 6. Schedule Next Meetings

Per the new Advisory Board by-laws approved by your Board and adopted by the Board of Supervisors, the next regular meeting will be February 22, 2017.