

**Gualala Community Services District
Draft Special Meeting Minutes**

11/26/2024

5:00 p.m.

Location: Coast Life Support District

38901 Ocean Dr, Gualala, CA

OR VIA TELECONFERENCE or ZOOM MEETING

Call-In Number: (669) 900-9128 or Zoom Meeting Link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83718880350?pwd=NjdKd3JjZzYyT3M5R0EvajE1emdCUT09>

Meeting ID: 837 1888 0350

Passcode: 089172

This is a regular meeting of the GCSD and will be conducted as set forth in the GCSD Policy Manual. After a motion is made and before it is voted upon, that subject is open to discussion from the floor. Public input during Public Comment and on agenda items will be limited to three minutes for each person. Comments on agenda items shall be limited to the subject under discussion. This meeting is being recorded as set forth in the GCSD Policy Manual.

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. PUBLIC COMMENT: Members of the public may address the Board of Directors on any item of interest that is within the jurisdiction of the Board.

There were 10 members of the public present either on zoom or present at the meeting. No members of the public choose to speak

III. ROLL CALL: J. Denten X R. Burke X B. Jones Resigned D. Denten X G. Abel X

IV. CLOSED SESSION

Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release; Govt Code §54957(b)

V. Action Items:

1. Discussion and possible action on hiring a contract operator.

The General Manager informed the Board that he has officially accepted a new position with the City of Exeter to become their new Public Work Director. He explained that once he receives confirmation of passing the background check and pre-employment physical, he will provide the District with a 60-day notice of his departure. He also shared that he had a phone conversation with Cal Rural Water regarding the possibility of contracting out operations for the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) and collection system. Additionally, he mentioned scheduling a phone meeting with Water Talent, a company recommended by Cyril Barmore of RCAC.

District Counsel Andy Turner commented that he has previous experience working with Cal Rural Water. He explained that the organization can provide a contract operator for a specified period while the District searches for permanent staff.

VI Discussion Items:

1. Discussion on Lift Station #3 overflow.

Michael Benson, a member of the public, inquired about the spill report filed by the General Manager (GM) with local and state agencies, including CalOES, the National Response Center, SWRCB, Mendocino Environmental Health, and through the CIWQS website. Mr. Benson specifically asked when GM Chris Troyan last physically inspected the lift station.

The GM responded that he last checked the lift station at 8:00 PM, at which time it was functioning normally. He estimated the overflow occurred between 2:00 AM and 8:00 AM, a duration of approximately six hours, with an estimated flow rate of 275 gallons per minute (GPM). This resulted in an approximate total overflow of 99,000 gallons, which entered a storm drain located about 20 feet west of the lift station and ultimately discharged into the Pacific Ocean. The GM provided the incident numbers for reference: CalOES incident number 24-6579 and National Response Center report number 1417146.

The GM explained that the overflow was caused by an electronic failure in both the primary and backup float systems. The primary transducer loop failed, and the backup float system's relay, which signals the programmable logic controller (PLC) to activate the pumps, also malfunctioned. Because of this, the floats never triggered the pumps to operate. On Friday, November 22nd, the GM and Board Member Randy Burke used the remote-start feature of the backup generator as a temporary solution. When the sewage level rises in the wet well, the float triggers the generator to start, which powers the pumps, which then lower the water level and shut down the generator, ensuring emergency functionality.

On Monday, November 25th, Aqua Sierra sent a technician to troubleshoot and replace the faulty relay and repaired the transducer. The GM confirmed that the lift station has been fully operational without further issues since the repairs. He also mentioned exploring emergency funding options to address the aging collection system.

VII. CLOSED SESSION REPORT

The Board convened in a closed session pursuant to Government Code §54957(b) to discuss matters related to public employee discipline, dismissal, or release. After reviewing evidence presented by management and the affected employee, the Board deliberated and, following a motion that was seconded, unanimously voted (4-0) to terminate Michael Benson's employment with GCSO. No further actions were taken in accordance with the Brown Act.

Following the decision, Michael Benson expressed gratitude to the Board and the District for his nine years of service and wished everyone success moving forward. General Manager Chris Troyan informed Michael that his final paycheck would be available at the District office the following morning and requested that he return all District property, including keys, tools, and other items, at that time.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT