

ACWD General Manager (GM) Report Nov - Dec 2020

I attended a two-hour webinar on October 30th regarding the SAFER (Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Fund) program that is being developed by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB).

I have been keeping a close eye on this program because I think that Allegheny will qualify for help through it in the future.

Most of the webinar was about an online “dashboard” that they are developing. The dashboard can be used to compare water rates with other small water systems (small being defined as 3,000 or less connections) and it measures different things like long-term sustainability etc. The dashboard will also allow systems to input different rates to see how they score on various things such as sustainability and affordability. Of course the “dashboard” will only be as good as the data that is used to build it and this is was one of the main topics: how to standardize some of the financial reporting that is done so that the districts can be compared to each other more effectively.

The part of the webinar that caught my attention was a brief conversation about how “affordability” is measured. The state is looking at different ways to calculate affordability benchmarks to use in tandem with the percentage of median household income formula currently used. For example, one alternative mentioned was: “How many hours at minimum wage does it take to pay for water on a monthly basis”? This is still being developed, so it will be interesting to see what they come up with.

AGENDA ITEMS

Under New Business Agenda item 5b The estimate for the audit for this fiscal year is \$2,950 which is \$150 more than was budgeted. I am not aware of any special districts that pay less than \$5,000 for their annual audit and I have been keeping tabs on this. I recommend that the board accept the engagement letter. The full letter is posted on the district website meeting page.

Correspondence since last meeting:

Incoming: Notice from State Controller regarding new reporting requirements on the annual Gov. Compensation report, Notice from Calif. Dept of tax and fee admin that they have a new online platform for paying water rights fees (it is not mandatory to use it),

Outgoing: