

**Camino Real Regional Utility Authority
City of Sunland Park/Dona Ana County Joint Utility Authority
Gadsden Independent School District- Board Room
4950 McNutt Rd, Sunland Park, New Mexico 88063**

Meeting On-Line

March 8, 2021

5:30 pm

MINUTES

A Regular Meeting of the Camino Real Regional Utility Authority was held on Monday, March 8, 2021 at 5:33 p.m. On-Line at 4950 McNutt Road in Sunland Park, New Mexico 88063.

PRESENT

Chair Councilor Olga Nuñez

Vice-Chair Commissioner Susana Chaparro (arrived at 5:38 p.m.) (absent at 7:12 p.m.)

Commissioner Diana Murillo-Trujillo (arrived at 5:40 p.m.)

State Representative Ray Lara

Mr. Alex Sierra

Mr. Joshua Orozco

Councilor Alberto Jaramillo (arrived at 5:40 p.m.)

ALSO PRESENT

Mr. Brent Westmoreland, CRRUA Executive Director

Ms. Liliana Arevalo, CRRUA Office Manager

Ms. Mary De Avila, CRRUA Administrative Assistant

Dr. Letty Mora, Psychologist Services and Translation/Interpretation Services

Mr. Eric Lopez, Bridel Facility Ops

Mr. Enrique Palomares, CRRUA Attorney

Mr. Gerald Smola, Camino Real Media Services

Ms. Erika Drummond, Resident

Ms. Michelle Rodriguez, Resident

Ms. Q.R., Resident

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Councilor Olga Nunez called the meeting to order at 5:33 pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Alex Sierra led the audience in the pledge of allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Ms. Mary De Avila, Administrative Assistant called roll call. A quorum was present.

4. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

None

5. APPROVE MINUTES

A. FEBRUARY 8, 2021 REGULAR MEETING

Mr. Joshua Orozco moved to approve the minutes for February 8, 2021; the motion was seconded by Mr. Alex Sierra. The motion carried a 6-0 vote.

Chair Councilor Olga Nuñez	aye
Vice-Chair Commissioner Susana Chaparro	aye
Mr. Alex Sierra	aye
Mr. Joshua Orozco	aye
Representative Ray Lara	aye

B. FEBRUARY 24, 2021 WORK SESSION MEETING

Mr. Joshua Orozco moved to approve the minutes for February 24, 2021; the motion was seconded by Mr. Alex Sierra. The motion carried a 6-0 vote.

Chair Councilor Olga Nuñez	aye
Vice-Chair Commissioner Susana Chaparro	aye
Mr. Alex Sierra	aye
Mr. Joshua Orozco	aye
Representative Ray Lara	aye

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS: Limited to 3 minutes per person.

Ms. Michelle Rodriguez stated that she wanted the board to be aware of what it is going on with the system at the water company. There are many issues; it takes 4 to 5 months to get a corrected bill. I have called the office multiple times and no one answers. The customer service is terrible. The payments are not put in immediately in the system. My bill use to be \$64.00 and now it is up to \$700.00. Mr. Westmoreland did suggested that we may have a leak and Eric Lopez is going to check on that this week. I do not think it is a leak this is more of an error in the billing system.

Ms. Q.R. stated that she has been hearing rumors of some customer bills being credited and she is very concerned about that. She asked the board what are you going to do with the customers that do pay their bill on time are they also going to receive some kind of a credit. Because everyone that decides not to pay their bill is getting credit. Are we all getting free water or only the customers that decide not to pay their bills.

7. STAFF COMMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

None

8. BOARD COMMENTS

Vice-Chair Commissioner Susana Chaparro thanked Chair Councilor Olga Nuñez and Mr. Brent Westmoreland, CRRUA Executive Director for the time spend with her and educating her with what is going on in CRRUA. She also thanked the public present for their comments and asked them to present their comments in a respectful way.

Mr. Joshua Orozco informed the board members that he had reach out to Ms. Terra Winter, CEO and President of Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico, they are a nonprofit that helps other nonprofits manage their funds. I reached out to her asking if she could help CRRUA in setting up a fund where we could help customers that are having difficulty paying their bills. Mr. Brent

Westmoreland, CRRUA Executive Director and I are going to meet with Ms. Winter next week to get some ideas. I understand it is complicated because we are a government entity and cannot give money away but I want to see if we can get a solution to help CRRUA customers. Mr. Orozco also stated that the board appreciated the public attending the meetings and informing them of what is going on. He understands that sometimes it can be frustrating but they need to follow rules set up by New Mexico State Law.

9. PRESENTATIONS & REPORTS

A. MONTHLY REPORTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. DOÑA ANA COUNTY GRANT TO PROVIDE RESIDENTS WITH RENTAL AND UTILITIES RELIEF UPDATE.

Mr. Brent Westmoreland, CRRUA Executive Director informed the board members that in their packet they would find the flyer in English and Spanish that will go out to CRRUA customers in the next months billing with the information on where to apply or call for the Doña Ana County emergency rent and utilities program assistance.

BOARD COMMENTS ON ITEM 9A1

Mr. Joshua Orozco asked Mr. Westmoreland where are these funds coming from, CRRUA or Doña Ana County.

Mr. Brent Westmoreland, CRRUA Executive Director replied these funds are coming from a Doña Ana County grant that will help all Doña Ana County residents.

Commissioner Diana Murillo-Trujillo stated that for many residents that are struggling during the pandemic they can ask for three months ahead of funding to pay their utilities this includes renters and landlords.

Chair Councilor Olga Nuñez asked where can the residents get the application for this funding.

Mr. Brent Westmoreland, CRRUA Executive Director replied on the website that is listed on the flyer.

2. ON-LINE PAYMENT UPDATE.

Ms. Liliana Arevalo, CRRUA Office Manager informed the board members that the payment system with InvoiceCloud is ready to use. The customers can use the link to pay their bills. We will be sending a flyer in English and Spanish with the On-Line payment information and instructions in the next months billing.

BOARD COMMENTS ON ITEM 9A2

Mr. Alex Sierra asked Ms. Liliana Arevalo, CRRUA Office Manager if they encountered any issues with the On-Line payment.

Ms. Liliana Arevalo, CRRUA Office Manager replied yes we did. InvoiceCloud changed the project manager three times. They are one of two companies that is associated with Caselle our billing system to provide the payment option to our customers. Caselle version that CRRUA is using is Caselle Clarity and it took a lot of work around on the programming. Have we been on Caselle Connect which is the latest version the process would of being a lot easier.

Mr. Alex Sierra asked Liliana if Caselle Connect upgrade available to CRRUA.

Ms. Liliana Arevalo replied yes.

Mr. Alex Sierra asked what is the cost to upgrade.

Ms. Liliana Arevalo replied that the system upgrade is no more than \$10,000.00 but it does require time and personnel to make it happened. Caselle Connect has more features that could help us in the office as well as the field staff. For example creating work orders with an iPad in the field as they happened instead of waiting for a paper work order to be created and routed out for information taking more than three days to have the information in the system. Also with Caselle Connect, office staff would be able to see on-line payment right away instead of waiting 24 hours.

Chair Councilor Olga Nuñez asked who is going to have access to the payment reports.

Ms. Liliana Arevalo replied Doña Ana County Finance and CRRUA.

Chair Councilor Olga Nuñez asked how much is the cost to make an on-line payment.

Ms. Liliana Arevalo replied its \$2.95 per transaction for a payment up to \$400.00. If your bill were \$1,000.00, you would need to do three transactions each of \$2.95.

Chair Councilor Olga Nuñez asked how long is the contract with this company.

Ms. Liliana Arevalo replied one year and a half.

Chair Councilor Olga Nuñez asked how are the customers being informed.

Ms. Liliana Arevalo replied right now if they asked if we have an on-line payment option, we are referring them to CRRUA's website. We are also sending out a flyer in the next month billing. In this system, you can pay your bill and register to have access to your bill. You can view and print your bill.

Chair Councilor Olga Nuñez asked is the on-line payment information in Spanish on the website.

Ms. Liliana Arevalo replied unfortunately it is not, InvoiceCloud does not translate any of their information but they do have an interacting voice respond telephone system that you can use.

Chair Councilor Olga Nuñez asked how is the customer going to use that.

Ms. Liliana Arevalo replied we will provide the number to the customer now and it will be provided in the flyer. I will ask InvoiceCloud to provide the number on the website page.

Vice-Chair Commissioner Susana Chaparro stated that if CRRUA is going to mail anything out regarding the on-line payment perhaps CRRUA can explain in both English and Spanish so no one has an issue understanding.

3. JULY 2020 TO FEBRUARY 2021 BILLING ADJUSTMENT REPORTS AS RECOMMENDED BY THE EXTERNAL AUDITORS.

Ms. Liliana Arevalo, CRRUA Office Manager informed the board members that the adjustments report is presented for information purposes and it was a recommendation by the external auditors to presented to the CRRUA board. On the right side of the report sheet, there is the justification of each adjustment done. The meter reading is the number one issue. I have corrected readings base on the readings brought in by the field staff. The total for eight months is \$57,428.00 worth of adjustment that I had to do due to meter reading issues in

the field. The field staff is not bring in the correct meter readings. Other reasons for adjustments are metron meters mechanical issues, assignment of connection rights, historical issues, wastewater reviews, leak adjustments and bin. I do have recommendations that will help with some of the meter issues. Replace non-functioning meters on a more timely basis, rotate reading routes among staff-not the same person reading the same area every month, implement a meter monitoring/auditing program for both electronic and metron meters to catch non-working meters and meter reading issues, replace remaining mechanical meters and implement a meter replacement program.

BOARD COMMENTS ON ITEM 9A3

Mr. Joshua Orozco asked Ms. Liliana Arevalo, CRRUA Office Manager that when an adjustment is done they have to have backup documentation.

Ms. Liliana Arevalo replied yes.

Mr. Joshua Orozco stated that he just wants for the customers present to know that adjustment cannot be made for no reason and every year we need to get an outside auditing company to audit CRRUA's financing and that is including any adjustment done.

Ms. Liliana Arevalo replied yes.

Mr. Joshua Orozco asked Ms. Liliana that meter readings were the number one issue, was this on the mechanical meter that had to be visual read or on the electronic.

Ms. Liliana Arevalo replied both.

Chair Councilor Olga Nuñez asked Ms. Liliana Arevalo who determines that the meter has been tempered with.

Ms. Liliana Arevalo replied a report from the system tells me when I do the down load from the laptop. At this point, I issue a work order for verification and repair.

4. BRIDEL FACILITY MONTHLY REPORTS FOR JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2021.

Mr. Eric Lopez, Bridel Facility Operations presented to the board members and the public present the January and February 2021 operations monthly reports of the CRRUA water and wastewater system.

BOARD COMMENTS ON ITEM 9A4

Mr. Alex Sierra thank Mr. Eric Lopez for his presentation and asked if the ¾" line repair was before or after the meter.

Mr. Eric Lopez, Bridel Facility Operations replied after the meter but they have to be available to turn the water meter off for repairs and back on after the repairs.

Mr. Joshua Orozco asked Mr. Lopez that on the backflow prevention ordinance would it be possible to piggyback on the Las Cruces ordinance.

Mr. Eric Lopez replied yes.

Mr. Joshua Orozco asked when is the next state testing for arsenic.

Mr. Eric Lopez replied it should be this year around June. Based on our success we are on a three-year monitoring.

10. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

1. APPROVE AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION 2020-3 A RESOLUTION AMENDING THE CAMINO REAL REGIONAL UTILITY AUTHORITY WATER RULES AND REGULATIONS (ADOPTED PURSUANT TO THE CAMINO REAL REGIONAL UTILITY AUTHORITY WATER ORDINANCE (ORDINANCE NO. 2011-01) FOR THE PURPOSE OF AMENDING RULE 20 TO ADD SUBPART C TO ESTABLISH A CREDIT ADJUSTMENT POLICY & PROCEDURE RELATED TO WATER LEAK.

Commissioner Diana Murillo-Trujillo moved to postpone item 10, 1 until April 12, 2021 meeting; the motion was seconded by Representative Ray Lara. The motion carried a 6-0 vote.

Chair Councilor Olga Nuñez	aye
Commissioner Diana Murillo-Trujillo	aye
Mr. Alex Sierra	aye
Mr. Joshua Orozco	aye
Representative Ray Lara	aye
Councilor Alberto Jaramillo	aye

2. ESTABLISH A TIME-LINE ON WATER AUDIT REQUEST.

Mr. Brent Westmoreland, CRRUA Executive Director informed the board members that after talking to Mr. Eric Lopez, Bridel Facility Operations the time-line on water audits would be two weeks to accomplish after he received them.

Mr. Eric Lopez, Bridel Facility Operations informed the board members that this week he had received four audits. He has schedule to go out to the different address to get the first meter readings. The second meter reading would be taken Wednesday. Then call the customer to set an appointment with them to go over the findings and then with Mr. Westmoreland and Liliana.

BOARD COMMENTS ON ITEM10, 2

Chair Councilor Olga Nuñez stated that it was a good time-line on water audit request.

3. APPOINT A SUBCOMMITTEE FOR ACCOUNTS REVIEW.

Mr. Brent Westmoreland, CRRUA Executive Director informed the board members that this item is to appoint the subcommittee members, discussed in the work session, to review accounts that are in question.

Chair Councilor Olga Nuñez stated that board member Mr. Alex Sierra volunteered himself for the subcommittee. She stated that as per Mr. Brent Westmoreland, CRRUA Executive Director, it could be up to three board members this is to avoid having a quorum.

Mr. Brent Westmoreland informed the board members that the City of Sunland Park, City Manager is interested in serving in the subcommittee.

Mr. Alex Sierra stated that he is asking the board to give consideration in this subcommittee to address individually customer accounts that are in question, that the customer is not satisfied as we saw in the public comments today, with the resolution of the issue. What I plan to do is to review the account usage and history with the customer and the board member representing the customer. I ask the

board member to bring the account to the subcommittee. Work with the subcommittee, discover what is causing the issues, and then work to resolve them. Mr. Joshua Orozco stated that what he was understanding was that they could have up to three board members on the subcommittee but also additional.

Mr. Brent Westmoreland replied yes it is possible it is up to the board to make that determination.

Mr. Joshua Orozco stated that his understanding was that the subcommittee did not have any power it is only to review accounts in question, search for solutions and present a report to the board.

Mr. Brent Westmoreland replied that the subcommittee reviews the account and if they find issues that is an administrative decision they can make a recommendation and we will follow thru. If it is something that needs to be brought to the board and a recommendation is made for them for a vote that would take place as well.

Mr. Joshua Orozco stated that he volunteers if no other wants to.

Commissioner Diana Murillo-Trujillo stated that she would like to be part of the subcommittee.

Chair Councilor Olga Nuñez volunteered to be in the subcommittee.

Representative Ray Lara asked how would the outside member serve on the subcommittee.

Chair Councilor Olga Nuñez stated that it would only be for input of information.

Mr. Joshua Orozco stated that he could be the backup member if needed.

Chair Councilor Olga Nuñez stated that the subcommittee volunteer members are Mr. Alex Sierra, Commissioner Diana Murillo-Trujillo and herself.

Commissioner Diana Murillo-Trujillo stated that it would be a good idea to have the City of Sunland Park City Manager as well. He has expertise on water and billing.

Chair Councilor Olga Nuñez stated that they would verify that he is available.

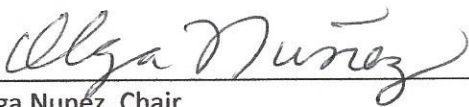
11. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Councilor Olga Nunez moved to adjourn the Camino Real Regional Utility Authority Meeting with no objections.

The meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

APPROVED AND ADOPTED on this 12th day of April 2021.

CAMINO REAL REGIONAL UTILITY AUTHORITY



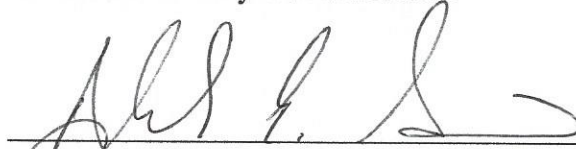
Olga Nuñez, Chair

Commissioner Susana Chaparro, Vice-Chair



Alberto Jaramillo, Board Member For / Against
City Councilor for the City of Sunland Park

Diana Murillo Trujillo, Board Member For / Against
Doña Ana County Commissioner



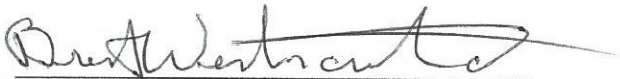
Alex Sierra, Board Member For / Against
Delegate of State Senator Joseph Cervantes

Ray Lara, Board Member For / Against
State Representative



Joshua Orozco, Board Member For / Against
At-Large

ATTEST:



Brent Westmoreland
Executive Director