

AWA APPROVES ANNEXING SUNCATCHER LANE PROPERTY TO CAWP SYSTEM

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(*Sutter Creek*) At their Board meeting Thursday, Amador Water Agency Directors approved annexing an upcountry residence into the Central Amador Water Project (CAWP) system.

Property manager Jill Wade, representing property owner Richard Biama, told directors that the well on the 7.85-acre residential property at 16375 Suncatcher Lane, off of Tiger Creek Road in Pioneer, had gone dry. Wade requested annexation to the adjacent CAWP system and a water connection for the home on the property in lieu of installing a new well.

Directors had questions about the intent of the property owner to subdivide the property in the future, as an application to divide the property into three parcels had been reviewed by the Amador County Planning Commission last year. AWA staff clarified that future requests for future additional service to the property would be subject to water availability and all fees and requirements in place at that point in time.

AWA legal counsel Steve Kronick was also consulted on whether or not there is adequate water supply to provide water service to the single family home, after considering the current and projected future water requirements of the existing customers and wholesale districts.

With Kronick's opinion that the 389 CAWP properties currently on "stand-by" do not have a guaranteed right to water service, and that the CAWP system has a pending application for an additional 1050 acre-feet that will likely be approved by the state, Directors unanimously approved the annexation resolution.

Earlier this month, another annexation request came before the AWA Board from East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD), owner of the Camanche Hills Hunting Preserve, to annex that property on Curran Road in Ione. The 83-acre property is adjacent to Lake Camanche Village Water Improvement District No. 7 and has had problems with well water quality for some time, according to AWA General Manager Gene Mancebo.

In May, 2010, the California Department of Public Health allowed the Camanche system only five new connections until the Agency can complete a water sustainability study now underway. EBMUD's request is for one connection, for water service equivalent to four dwelling units.

Directors asked staff to request that EBMUD help pay for that water sustainability study as one of the conditions of receiving service. The public hearing on the annexation request for the Camanche Hills Hunting Preserve will be held on October 14 at 9:30 am in the AWA Board room.

In other news:

- The AWA Board directed staff to request a meeting with Amador County supervisors to explore renegotiating the terms of a \$900,000 loan from the Amador County Water Development Fund, due on December 31, 2010. It was originally planned that USDA grant funds for the Gravity Supply Line (GSL) would be used to pay back the 6-month “bridge loan,” borrowed to pay the past costs for the GSL in May. The USDA grant application process has been delayed and the AWA Board has frozen the GSL project, making it unlikely that the USDA grant money will be available by the end of the year. Supervisors John Plasse and Ted Novelli and county counsel Martha Shaver each addressed the AWA Board with questions about how AWA planned repay the loan without the USDA grant funds. Directors approved a motion to meet with the County on a 4 -1 vote, with Director Dunn opposed, that also directed staff to continue researching affordable commercial loan options and report back to the Board.
- AWA staff will meet with the Jackson Valley Fire Protection District to determine the condition of fire hydrants on the Lake Camanche Village water system. In a letter to the Agency, Jake Herfel, chair of the JVFPD, brought to the Board’s attention at least two fire hydrants on the system that are not functioning, and asked for an estimated repair date for these two hydrants. Currently, the Camanche system has no money in its budget for repair or replacement of hydrants. AWA Board also directed General Manager Mancebo to consult with the Agency’s insurance agency for a recommendation regarding the Agency’s liability in this situation, and report back to the Board.
- AWA Board of Directors has scheduled a workshop to discuss in detail the 17 conditions required by the USDA before the Agency can receive a multi-million dollar grant and loan project to pay for the proposed Gravity Supply Line, should the AWA Board decide to build the gravity-fed raw water project. The workshop will be held at 9 am on Thursday, October 7 in the AWA Board Room. At this workshop, the Board will consider directing staff to proceed with getting construction bids on the GSL to confirm costs.

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