

VISTA REDONDA MUTUAL DOMESTIC WATER CONSUMERS ASSOCIATION (VRMDWCA)

Friday, December 12, 2025, 4:00 pm (MST)

108 Paseo Encantado SW

DRAFT MINUTES – v. 1

1. **Call to Order and Certification of Quorum:** W. Pierard called the meeting to order at 4:06 pm. B. Garside certified that with 6 of 7 voting members present, the quorum was met.

Board Members Present: Wendy Pierard, president; Audrey LaFehr, vice president; Betsy Garside, secretary; Laurent Cavalie, treasurer; Kristi Brislawn, Kevin Pierard. Adjunct Directors: Donna Defonce Ginsberg, Stephen Warren. Not present: Anthony Moore. Chris van Schayk arrived at 4:31.

Community Members Present: Brian Quinn.

Other: Dennis Trujillo, III-D.

2. **Approval of Minutes of June 6 Board Meeting:** L. Cavalie moved that minutes be approved, A. LaFehr seconded, the motion passed unanimously.
3. **Presentation of Financial Statement:** L. Cavalie commented that it has been challenging to get homeowners to pay their water fees: The last payment was not received until November 15. Discussion ensued around why people were not being responsive, spotlighting owners of vacant lots as an issue among others, and of what the Association might do if this is a problem next year. Because the bookkeeper/accountant tracks fees and duns late payers, this costs the Association – and thus the members.

On the operating side, income is \$6,000 in transfer fees so far this year and \$16,000 in water overage fees. Overage fees are a bit less than last year. Bookkeeping expenses are higher than expected (running down late payers), while emergency maintenance is running substantially over expectations. The capital budget reflects repairs to Well 5; anticipated repairs to aging Well 1 had been budgeted forever but it was Well 5 that broke. Costs for the new well are coming in much later than expected: Only about \$40,000 so far this year on a budget of \$475,000. The Association has the money in the bank to pay for this well—more than one million in capital reserves—so the question is just when the bills are going to come in.

4. **Update on the Water System:** D. Trujillo reported that Wells 5 and 7 are both having ongoing issues. Even after flushing once per week for a month to remove sediment, when Well 5 was turned on the whole pump just shattered. Well 7 has some of the same issues of sediment/turbidity, and has been offline since October 8. There is an engineering plan for both Wells 5 and 7. The Association has been functioning with Wells 1, 2, and 3, turning on Well 4 when needed (manual operation). The wells have been chlorinated to keep water quality and it is all good.

New Mexico Environment Department (NEMD) has been requiring more certifications and trainings, and extra samplings on lead and copper, all of which have been done to good result. D. Trujillo is certified/trained for all the Association needs, but that is taking time.

Reliable wifi is required to run the Vista Redonda system. D. Trujillo relayed a cautionary tale: On November 9, the commercial wifi failed and III-D lost contact with the system for 36 hours. The tank went down to 3 feet, and by hand-checking it was found that all pumps were off. To mitigate this happening again, new radios will feed off towers from multiple cell providers. Well 2 needs another radio because the transmitter is so far down; that will be installed soon.

Well 7: If there is going to be one well the Association opts to shut down permanently, it might be this. In order to keep it running, the filter would need to be upgraded to one that costs in the thousands. This well has been a workhorse over the past 20 years, so it is not a surprise that it is having issues.

D. Trujillo reports that the Association is at about 1-2 percent for water loss, which is good.

5. **Reports of Milky Water on PESW and Vista Redonda:** D. Trujillo commented that in addition to Well 7 sediment/turbidity issues, some of the turbid water may be related to the speed at which the county pulls water from the system when they are grading the roads. There are new county staff working on roads; Dennis needs to help the new guys understand that they need to fill their tanks in 15 minutes, not 5. The fast fill introduces too much churn into the system.
6. **Progress of New Well Project:** D. Trujillo reported that application/designs are under review at NEMD. Contractor Martin/Martin says the review will be complete by December 17. As soon as that review is complete, W. Pierard and D. Trujillo will do required paperwork for Department of Workforce Solutions. This determines where the application will be in the queue for final permit. Once permit is issued Martin/Martin will issue the RFP, which will be open for two weeks.

Discussion of timing of new well: If the new well is not operational by summer, the plan is to put Well 7 back on line with the new filter. The Association may also need to ask homeowners to cut back a little during that peak summer water-usage time.

7. **Discussion on Purchasing Water for Initial Fill of Swimming Pools:** W. Pierard outlined a proposal to ask owners with pools to buy a tanker of water to mitigate the concentrated draw that full fill of a large pool would be on the water system. This could also address a challenge the pool owner would encounter, which is that filling a pool with your hose would be really slow. Discussion of what the size trigger would be: More than 20,000 gallons? Another option discussed would be to schedule initial pool fills, asking homeowners to communicate with the board to ensure that timing of fills would not overburden the system. A third topic was to make it easy for homeowners to find fill companies—maybe recommend a water company to do that initial fill? W. Pierard to draft a resolution for review.
8. **Discussion on Overage Fees:** Vista Redonda has two challenges with overage: Leaks on individual properties, and intentional overages. W. Pierard and L. Cavalie led a conversation about how to better manage the issues related to leaks, which include delayed or no reporting; no scale on relief (same relief if a homeowner loses 5,000 or 90,000 gallons); and how best to

use the new radio-read meters to manage leaks. Should there be a cut-off of gallons? Or a cut-off of 30 days (which is the radio-read cycle)?

The board discussed the usefulness of having a homeowner report leaks to the Association even if they do not ultimately request relief. Just knowing of sources of water loss helps to manage reporting and identification of anomalies in the water system. The leak form on the Vista Redonda website is quite clear on timelines for repairing any size of leak if the homeowner is going to request financial relief, but does not require the homeowner to notify the Association board of any and all major leaks. There was consensus around the table that homeowners should notify the board of a major leak even if they ultimately don't apply for relief.

The sense of the board is that the Association will no longer allow relief requests for previous years. Additionally, if a homeowner does not initially notify the board within 30 days of a leak, that homeowner is not eligible to apply for financial relief at the end of the year.

B. Garside offered to make the website reflect the new reporting requirements, as well as clarifying to whom the form goes (W. Pierard and L. Cavalie). W. Pierard will then send an email to water users.

The discussion about intentional overages was started but will be continued at a later meeting. The board acknowledged that while the Association does need to show beneficial use—that we are substantially using our water rights for the benefit of Association members—there are some homeowners who are using substantial excess water. L. Cavalie presented research on city and county water-use fees, clearly showing that Vista Redonda is charging substantially less for core water use as well as charging relatively low overage fees. Last year the Association got very close to appropriating its full water rights, but the system was heavily taxed to generate that water; the Association has incurred about \$70K in operating expenses due to overuse of the system (breakage and maintenance). There are also capital costs to increase capacity. Discussion centered around the implications of doubling overage fees and/or steepening the increase curve.

9. **New Business:** Discussion of an empty house where there appears to be water use; D. Trujillo will get in touch with the responsible party.

Question about notice of high usage: What is the protocol? The protocol is that when III-D gets a weird radio read, they send someone to double-check the meter in person. If the meter is spinning—indicating the high usage of a leak—they will cut it off right away and alert the homeowner.

10. **Adjournment:** A. LaFehr made the motion to adjourn the meeting, W. Pierard seconded, and all approved. The meeting was adjourned at 6:07 p.m.