Fallbrook Bonsall Village News

OPINION

Rainbow MWD opposes pension increase

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Guest Editorial

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The Rainbow Municipal Water District (Rainbow MWD) has taken a position opposing the planned increase in employee pensions by the regional water supplier, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD).

In a letter to MWD Board Chairman Timothy Brick, Rainbow Board President Rua Petty pointed out that as a result of MWD's mandatory 30-percent water cuts for agricultural customers and recent double-digit rate increases for all ratepayers, Rainbow customers have endured significant financial hardship.

"The public perception of a 25-percent spike in retirement benefits concurrent with a 20-plus-percent increase in MWD water rates just doesn't pass the smell test," he wrote.

MWD recently passed on a 21-percent increase in water costs and has indicated they will follow with a 20-percent increase next year as well.

The initial hike resulted in an increase to the consumer of about $0.30 per billing unit. One billing unit equals 748 gallons of water.

The pension proposal, part of a five-year labor contract, was scheduled for a vote by the MWD board on September 15, but that vote was delayed after many retail agencies – including Rainbow MWD – voiced opposition to the plan. The delayed vote will allow the MWD directors adequate time to study the proposal.

Petty closed his letter by adding, "I strongly encourage you to send your negotiators back to the bargaining table with explicit direction to do the hard job of negotiating successor agreements that contain significant employee concessions without any substantial increases in employee benefits."

2 comments for "Rainbow MWD opposes pension increase"

1. **Paul** says : 8:03 am Fri, Sep 25th, 2009

It's pretty ignorant to form an opinion BEFORE learning the facts of any decision. When I pointed out that MWD expended over 80 million dollars last year for low flush toilets and other water saving devices in order to free up more water for development in Southern California, where was the outrage then?

2. **Frankie the Butcher** says : 8:04 am Fri, Sep 25th, 2009

I would agree that even if, as stated by MWD that this increase is offset by other employee "concessions" that with the term of this negotiated labor agreement will be to the benefit of MWD and its customers, this decision is not in the best interest of the consumers of the commodity they supply. It is like saying, in a poor example, the Medical Doctor's Association would like to remove everybody's index finger so they can someday learn how to re-generate fingers....and in the long run, it is for a good cause... but everybody is already saying that I'm paying an arm and a leg for medical coverage already... use the money I already pay you (and my arm and leg I gave you) to find a way to re-generate fingers... It is a terrible time for pension enhancements, even if it has some sort of silver lining in the future as stated by MET....we already pay an arm and a leg, don't ask for our index fingers until our other financial arm and leg are healed...bad timing...

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