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**To:** Yolo LAFCo

**From:** Christine Crawford, Executive Officer

**Re:** Supplemental Information for July 25, 2019 LAFCo Meeting

**Date:** July 23, 2019

Attached please find the new materials for Thursday's agenda packet that came in this week:

**Public Correspondence Re: West Sacramento RD Governance (Item 6)**

- July 20, 2019 letter from Sheila Johnston opposing staff recommendation
- July 22, 2019 letter from Matthew Hargrove supporting staff recommendation
- July 23, 2019 letter from Gregory Price supporting staff recommendation

**Yolo LAFCo Long Range Calendar (Item 9)**

Please see the updated long range calendar

## Terri Tuck

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**From:** Sheila Kolla <sheila\_kolla@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, July 20, 2019 5:43 PM  
**To:** LAFCO  
**Cc:** Christine Crawford  
**Subject:** July 25th Hearing: City of West Sacramento's Application to take over RD 900 and RD 537

Good Evening, LAFCo Commissioners-

My name is Sheila Johnston and I am a very concerned resident of West Sacramento. On July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019, you will review an item to consolidate Reclamation Districts 900 and 537 under the City of West Sacramento, providing the City of West Sacramento full control over our city's flood and internal drainage.

I am writing you today to urge you to vote "NO" on this proposal and instead approve Reclamation District 900's proposal to

- 1) absorb RD 537 and
- 2) relinquish control of the internal drainage canals to the city, leaving all flood and levee maintenance to the Reclamation District. Below, I have outlined the high level concerns as to why the City of West Sacramento should not take on flood control and why the Reclamation District's alternative proposal should be approved.

You should also be aware that the residents of West Sacramento have gathered signatures to protest the City's takeover of our Reclamation Districts. The petition started just 10 days ago and has already received signatures from over 225 residents (and counting) and property owners in West Sacramento. The petition urges Yolo County LAFCo to accept Reclamation District's alternative proposal. You may find the petition, here: <http://chng.it/qkx7qTHQ>

### Trust

The residents of the City of West Sacramento do not trust the City of West Sacramento's motives or abilities to maintain our flood control. The City does not have the expertise or knowledge, or even the liability insurance necessary to ensure that the public will be protected if the City floods. What is even more troubling, in May 2018, the City Council received bad advice from the City Attorney, who stated, ON RECORD, that the city would not be held liable if the city floods. The City Attorney spoke to the Sacramento Bee, citing his advice. You can access the Sac Bee article, here: [Could West Sacramento be forced to pay up if the river floods? Mayor and residents disagree](#)



## **Could West Sacramento be forced to pay up if the river floods? Mayor and...**

West Sacramento's decision to accept greater responsibility for maintaining levees has some residents worried ab...

I bring up this point as the Yolo County Grand Jury supported the resident's concerns that they do not want liability transferred to the City of West Sacramento. The Reclamation Districts have successfully protected residents for over 170 years, combined. Why now, would we want our basic rights muddled into the bureaucracy and red tape of city government?

It is also very suspect that the City is choosing to take over the Reclamation Districts now. Why the rush? If there are concerns from residents, and hundreds of residents, why not pause and understand those concerns, especially as they were validated by the Yolo County Grand Jury?

### **Bandwidth**

The City of West Sacramento does not have the bandwidth nor the expertise to focus solely on flood and levee maintenance. Just yesterday, I received an email from Parks and Recreation that they only have 2 staff dedicated to irrigation issues in the city and it is impossible for them to stay apprised of all maintenance issues. I have included proof of this correspondence. I bring this issue to your attention as if the City cannot adequately staff basic support services, how do they think they can maintain our levees which protect our lives? If our lives were important, why then did the City not secure federal funding for enhancements to our 40+ miles of levees that are overdue for repairs as referenced in a second grand jury report investigating the West Sacramento Area Flood Control?

I personally think that the City has done a lot of things well, however they cannot or should not begin to take over operations that have been performed by experts in flood and levee maintenance for over 170 years.

### **Transparency**

As a strong proponent of transparency, it bothers me to my core that LAFCo is recommending consolidation without cause. The most recent LAFCo MSR (published in Spring 2018) cites website enhancements. That is NOT cause for a complete absorption of the Reclamation Districts. Furthermore, the Yolo County Grand Jury report raised the following concerns:

"Before YLAFCo voted in February 2018 to approve the Final MSR/SOI for RD 537 and 900 (recommending only for the reclamation districts to become subsidiaries under City), it received financial opinions from both sides, but did not conduct an independent, thirdparty examination, nor was a deeper investigation undertaken to determine which assumptions were accurate. Other than requested projected cost information from the affected parties after a governance change, there is no YLAFCo procedure or policy that triggers an independent, third-party examination in contentious situations. According to the December 14, 2009 YLAFCo Fee Schedule found on the YLAFCo website, there is no listing for this type of examination nor an associated fee."

How is it in the best interest of the residents of West Sacramento to accept staff's recommendation, knowing that a Grand Jury does not believe due diligence was completed? Is this the precedent you wish to set for our future, subpar analysis of our future public safety?

LAFCo Commissioners, this is your opportunity to uphold transparency and protect our constitutional rights to oppose the hasty decisions by city government. The City Council has not acted in the best interest of residents of West Sacramento and should not be trusted with our levee maintenance.

Please consider the numerous amounts of residents that disagree with the City's action to take over the responsibilities of Reclamation Districts 900 and 537 without cause.

Sincerely,

Sheila Johnston  
3780 Bridgeway Lakes Drive  
West Sacramento, Ca 95691

[THIS EMAIL ORIGINATED FROM OUTSIDE YOLO COUNTY. PLEASE USE CAUTION AND VALIDATE THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE EMAIL PRIOR TO CLICKING ANY LINKS OR PROVIDING ANY INFORMATION. IF YOU ARE UNSURE, PLEASE CONTACT THE HELPDESK (x5000) FOR ASSISTANCE]

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**MATTHEW G. HARGROVE**  
**Resident of West Sacramento/Property Owner in RD 900**  
**matthewhargrove@msn.com**

RECEIVED

JUL 23 2019

YOLO LAFCO

July 22, 2019

Yolo Local Agency Formation Commission  
Erwin Meier County Administration Building  
625 Court Street, Suite 107  
Woodland, CA 95695 VIA EMAIL

**RE: Resolution No. 2019-10 West Sacramento RD Reorganization/Consolidation -- SUPPORT**

Yolo County LAFCo Commissioners:

As a West Sacramento resident and property owner within Reclamation District 900, I **SUPPORT** the reorganization and consolidation plan proposed in Yolo LAFCo Resolution Number **2019-10** and urge you to approve it.

Reclamation districts were originally created by Congress to reclaim land from swamps and operated mainly in rural agricultural areas. Your staff report notes that, since they were first implemented in California early last century, there has been very little change in their governance structure.

Our area has seen a big change in population and land-use, especially in Southport, which has gone from primarily agriculture with few people and no local city government – to primarily suburban with many people and a city government. Now is a good time to reboot how these once rural services are provided in our urban/suburban city.

#### **CONSISTENT SERVICE TO ALL PARTS OF CITY**

Due to previous Yolo LAFCo decisions, West Sacramento residents enjoy service from one police force, one fire department where we used to have three, one public works department -- and all other aspects of local civic life, services, and governance under one city-wide management.

The exception is for levee maintenance and internal drainage services which are fractured. Within our city limits, portions of these functions are managed by two separate independent boards, city staff, and a state agency.

Multiple entities create an uneven, complicated, and diffuse governance system making it difficult to know who does what, where. This dispersal of authority also seems to have stymied participation and interest from the public and has made transparency and accountability difficult to track.

We don't have four separate police forces, no longer have multiple independent fire departments, or numerous public works departments working in different areas on their own. These are all important functions of public safety with high amounts of risk, yet the city manages them all. Multiple agencies responsible for levee and internal drainage issues is unnecessary and creates different levels of service for residents depending on where they live.

Please consolidate these functions and task the city, the entity that Yolo LAFCo tasked with providing all other important city services, to manage them.

#### **GIVE ALL RESIDENTS A VOICE**

To compound the issues above, the two RDs have independent boards that consist only of landowners, and the areas of Broderick and Bryte, where the bulk of the residents in those neighborhoods live, have no local representation at all.

The two RDs landowner boards' requirement for participation is owning residential or non-residential property within the district; to serve you do not even need to live in West Sacramento. People that rent homes/apartments, people that live in mobile home parks, and even people that live in a home owned by a relative or friend but are not on the land deed, have no say in the governance of either board.

Elections rarely happen for the RD governing boards as the process is arcane and set-up for a time when these districts were operating in rural areas with low population and/or where many of the properties were purely agricultural.

Individuals serving on these boards past and present are dedicated and have done a great job and should be applauded. However, the system itself needs modernization to better reflect today's expectations of public engagement.

We regularly vote for councilmembers and school board members and our mayor stands for re-election every two years. As a modern representative democracy, we give the public the opportunity to endorse – or not endorse – their service on a regular basis. However, in all my years voting in West Sacramento, and since I first bought property here in the 1990s, I cannot ever remember being asked to vote on a single reclamation district board member.

This seems like a system of governance that once operated in this manner for a valid purpose, but as times and land-use patterns have changed drastically, has become outmoded. We are no longer a sparsely-populated agricultural area that needs to accommodate distant landowners and our governance structure should be updated to reflect that.

**ORIGINAL INCORPORATION RECOMMENDATION WAS CITY SHOULD TAKE ON RD FUNCTIONS**

Resolution 2019-10 will complete the Yolo LAFCo process started so many years ago in 1979 when the agency was presented a plan to consolidate special districts and create new general city by the East Yolo Local Government Reorganization Committee, which resulted in the City of West Sacramento's 1987 incorporation.

*"The Fiscal Feasibility of Forming a General Law City in East Yolo"* report was completed, presented to LAFCo, and set the template for the new city in which we now live. Prior to becoming a city, our area was serviced by a bunch of single purpose special districts and/or distant entities. Consolidating all of that into a single multi-purpose agency was the purpose of becoming a city.

On the reclamation districts, "Recommendation 11." from page 91 reads: *"The city government should succeed Reclamation District 537, 811, 900, and State Levee Maintenance Area No. 4 only after the city is well-established and more of the Southport area is developed."* The City of West Sacramento is now well-established, and the Southport area has been more developed. (Referenced portion of this document follows).

Six of the twenty seats (30%) of the committee making this recommendation at the time represented area reclamation districts; and the committee was chaired by a then-sitting RD 900 board member. Aside from assuring the city was established and the then agricultural area was more developed, these experts didn't express any qualms about the city they were creating managing these functions.

Please help us fulfill our original reason for incorporating as a city -- self-determination through unified civic governance controlled by residents in the city – and reorganize and consolidate these functions as recommended.

**PLEASE SUPPORT RESOLUTION NO. 2019-10**

This area today is drastically different than it was 80 years ago – even just 32 years ago when we incorporated as a city. What was once vast farmland with few people and no local city government, is now a modern urban and suburban city with a well-functioning government in place.

The RDs have served our community well, but it is time to evolve and re-visit that original recommendation for the city to manage all the functions within in its city limits. It is time to consolidate and reform these districts by supporting Resolution No 2019-10.

Thank you for taking my views into consideration and thank you for your public service.

Respectfully,



Matthew G. Hargrove  
[matthewhargrove@msn.com](mailto:matthewhargrove@msn.com)

Referenced Yolo LAFCo document:

**AN ANALYSIS OF  
THE FISCAL FEASIBILITY OF  
FORMING A GENERAL LAW CITY  
IN  
EAST YOLO**

**February 1979**

**Prepared For:  
Yolo County Local Agency Formation Commission**

**Prepared By:  
East Yolo Local Government Reorganization Committee**

**EAST YOLO LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANIZATION COMMITTEE**

Bryte Fire Protection District

Vic Albericci  
Everette Richardson

Clarksburg Fire Protection District

Jane Klotz  
George McDonald

County of Yolo

Dave Barton  
Art Edmonds

East Yolo Community Services District

John Freeman  
Jacob Misfeldt

Reclamation District No. 537

Bud Fourness  
Robert Ishimoto

Reclamation District No. 811

Al Collins  
Stan King

Reclamation District No. 900

Edward Bryan  
William E. Denton - Reorganization Committee Chairman

Washington Fire Protection District

Walter Eklund  
Ernest Otten

Westgate Fire Protection District

Robert Collins  
Joe Meier

Public Members

James Cameron  
Arthur Lawrence

**“Flood Control, Levee Maintenance, and Storm Drainage”**  
Page 18:

FLOOD CONTROL, LEVEE MAINTENANCE, AND STORM DRAINAGE

Yolo's flood control and levee maintenance services are provided by Reclamation District 900, Reclamation District 537, and State Levee Maintenance Area No. 4. The area's storm water drainage service is furnished by Reclamation District 900, Reclamation District 811, Reclamation District 537, and Storm Drain Maintenance District No. 3. The Reorganization Committee concluded that RD 537, RD 811, RD 900 and State Levee Maintenance Area No. 4 should not be included in a reorganization forming a general law city in East Yolo. Instead, the Committee felt that a city should succeed these districts only after it was well established and more of the Southport area was developed. Therefore, no costs for flood control and levee maintenance are shown under the present cost of municipal services in unincorporated East Yolo, and only the costs of Storm Drain Maintenance District No. 3 are used to determine the present cost of storm water drainage service.

**“Findings and Conclusions”** Page 91:

- both county service areas, Storm Drain Maintenance District No. 3, and County Road Districts No. 1 and 2.
- 10. The effective date for incorporation of a city should be July 1.
- 11. The city government should succeed Reclamation District 537, 811, 900, and State Levee Maintenance Area No. 4 only after the city is well-established and more of the Southport area is developed.

... should provide all the public services and not

Gregory A Price  
Resident of West Sacramento/Property Owner in RD 900  
[gregaprice@yahoo.com](mailto:gregaprice@yahoo.com)

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JUL 23 2019

YOLO LAFCO

July 23, 2019

Yolo Local Agency Formation Commission  
Erwin Meier County Administration Building  
625 Court Street, Suite 107  
Woodland, CA 95695  
VIA EMAIL

**RE: Resolution No. 2019-10 West Sacramento RD Reorganization/Consolidation -- SUPPORT**

Yolo County LAFCo Commissioners and Alternate Commissioners:

As a West Sacramento resident and owner of property within Reclamation District 900, I write to let you know I **SUPPORT** the Reclamation District Reorganization and Consolidation plan proposed in Yolo LAFCo Resolution Number 2019-10 (resolution) and urge you to approve it.

Reclamation Districts were originally created by Congress to reclaim land from swamps – what we call wetlands today in California – and operated mainly in rural/agricultural areas. Your staff report notes that since they were first implemented in California early last century ago there has been very little change in their governance structure.

Our area has seen a big change in population and land-use, especially in Southport, which has quickly gone from primarily agriculture and no local city government – to primarily suburban with a city government. I think now is a good time to reboot how these once rural services are provided in what has become a successful urban/suburban region.

#### **COMPLETES ORIGINAL INCORPORATION RECOMENDATIONS**

Resolution 2019-10 will complete the Yolo LAFCo process started so many years ago in 1979 when the agency was presented a plan to consolidate special districts and create new general city services by the East Yolo Local Government Reorganization Committee, which resulted in the City of West Sacramento's 1987 incorporation.

"*The Fiscal Feasibility of Forming A General Law City in East Yolo*" report was completed, presented to LAFCo, and set the template for the new city which we now live. Prior to becoming a city our area was serviced by a bunch of single purpose special districts and/or distant entities. Consolidating all of that into a single multi-purpose agency was the purpose of the exercise of becoming a city.

On the Reclamation Districts the report recommended: "*a city should succeed these districts only after it was well established and more of the Southport area was more developed,*" and your predecessors heeded that recommendation.

However, the City of West Sacramento is now "well established" and Southport is "more developed." Please help us fulfill our original reason for incorporating as a city -- self-determination through unified civic governance – and reorganize and consolidate these functions as part of our city civic leadership structure.

#### **PROVIDES CONSISTENT SERVICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

Due to previous Yolo LAFCo decisions, citizens in West Sacramento residents enjoy service from one unified police force, one unified fire department, one unified public works department -- basically one responsible city government for all other aspects of local civic life, services, and governance (aside from WUSD which is a unified entity in its service to our city).

However, within just our city limits portions of these activities are directly managed by a City Council, two independent property-based boards, and a state agency.



All of these entities do basically the same thing in their respective areas and creates an uneven, complicated, and diffuse governance system makes it difficult for the average citizen like me to know who does what where. This confusion also seems to have stymied participation and interest from the public and makes transparency and accountability difficult.

This gets even further confused with the functions of the West Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency's duties and responsibilities building new levees, and adds a JPA to the complicated mix of flood control entities.

We don't have four separate police forces, multiple fire departments, or numerous public works departments. These are all important functions of public safety with high amounts of risk, yet the city manages them all. Multiple agencies responsible for levee and internal drainage issues is unnecessary and doesn't serve all the city equally.

Please consolidate these functions and task the city, the entity that Yolo LAFCo tasked with providing all other important city services, to manage them too.

### **GIVES ALL RESIDENTS A VOICE**

To compound the issues above the two RDs have boards that consist only of landowners and the area of Broderick and Bryte where the bulk of the residents in those neighborhoods live have no local representation at all.

The two RDs are currently governed by landowner boards with the only requirement for service is owning residential or non-residential property within the district. To serve you do not even need to live in West Sacramento. People that rent homes/apartments and people that live in mobile home parks, and even people that live in a home owned by a relative or friend but are not on the land deed have no say in the governance of either board.

Furthermore, elections rarely happen as the process is arcane and set-up for a time when these districts were operating in very rural areas where few people lived and/or where many of the properties were purely agricultural and had no residences.

Individuals serving on these boards past and present are dedicated and have done a great job and should be applauded. However the system needs a bit of modernization. It's a validation of their great service that they have been able function so well in an organization that was created to serve a completely different environment.

In all my years voting in West Sacramento and since I first moved here in the mid 90s, I cannot ever remember being asked to select a Reclamation Board Member. This seems like an antiquated system of governance that once served a valid purpose but times and land use patterns have changed drastically and now it time for an update.

We are no longer a sparsely populated agricultural area that needs to accommodate distant landowners and the governance should be updated to reflect broader representation of residents.

### **CONCLUSION – PLEASE SUPPORT RESOLUTION NO. 2019-10**

This area today is drastically different than it was 80 years ago – even just 32 years ago when we incorporated as a city. What was once vast farmland with no local city government, is now mostly suburban with a well-functioning city government in place.

Its time to re-visit that original recommendation for the city to manage these functions. Its time to consolidate and reform this function to be more efficient, transparent, accountable, and more accessible to all residents in West Sacramento. Thank you for your service to Yolo County.

Yolo LAFCo Resolution No. 2019-10 – SUPPORT Page 2  
July 23, 2019

Respectfully,

Gregory A Price  
gregaprice@yahoo.com



## Long Range Meeting Calendar – Tentative Items (UPDATED)

July 25, 2019 LAFCo Meeting

Meeting Date	Tentative Agenda Items	Location
Aug 22, 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <del>Protest Hearing for West Sacramento Basin Reclamation District Reorganization Proposals (assuming either #925/#926 or #930 is approved) (to be rescheduled; required to be a minimum of 30 days after approval date)</del></li> <li>• JPA Service Review for YCPARMIA (Yolo County Public Agency Risk Management Insurance Authority)</li> <li>• <b><u>Watts –Woodland Airport, Inc. request for municipal water Out of Agency Services from the Wild Wings County Service Area</u></b></li> <li>• <b><u>Yolo LAFCo Response to Grand Jury Report</u></b></li> </ul>	<p>West Sacramento</p> <p><b><u>Woodland</u></b></p>
Sept 26, 2019		
Oct 24, 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FY 19/20 Q1 Financial Update*</li> </ul>	Woodland
Dec 18, 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direction to Staff Re Convening a Shared Services Workshop*</li> <li>• Adopting LAFCo 2020 Meeting Calendar*</li> </ul>	Woodland
Jan 23, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2019 Website Transparency Scorecard Report</li> <li>• FY 19/20 Q2 Financial Update</li> </ul>	Woodland

**Shaded** meeting dates note those scheduled while EO is working remotely

\* Notes items that are flexible and will be scheduled as appropriate

## New Proposals Received Since Last Meeting

Date Received	Proposal
<b><u>July 22, 2019</u></b>	<b><u>Watts –Woodland Airport, Inc. request for municipal water Out of Agency Services from Wild Wings CSA</u></b>