

MINUTES OF THE
PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE OF THE
VISTA IRRIGATION DISTRICT

November 19, 2019

A meeting of the Public Affairs Committee of Vista Irrigation District was held on Tuesday, November 19, 2019, at the offices of the District, 1391 Engineer Street, Vista, California.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Sanchez called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Committee members present: Sanchez and Miller.

Staff present: Brett Hodgkiss, General Manager; and Marlene Kelleher, Director of Administration.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as presented.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT TIME

No public comments were presented on items not appearing on the agenda.

5. SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST

See staff report attached hereto.

The Committee and staff discussed the scholarship contest, including information submitted as part of the application package. After careful consideration, the Committee recommended requiring applicants to list their grade point average on the application form; however, applicants would not be required to submit transcripts. The Committee also decided to maintain the prior year's scholarship award amounts ranging from a minimum of \$1,000 to a maximum of \$3,000 with a total of \$6,000 available for all awards. The Committee will present the above recommendations to the Board for consideration at its December 18, 2019 meeting.

The Committee and staff reviewed and discussed the scholarship application materials, including a new essay topic/question, timeline and promotion of the scholarship contest to local high schools. The Committee suggested preparing a brochure again this year to assist high school counselors and others with promoting the contest.

6. 2019 ANNUAL REPORT AND 2020 SPRING NEWSLETTER

See staff report attached hereto.

The Committee and staff discussed the format and topics that will be included in the annual report, which will be produced in electronic format only and made available on the District's website. Ms. Kelleher presented ideas for content for this year's annual report including, but not limited to, a San Diego County Water Authority (Water Authority) report highlighting the Water Authority's 75th anniversary, the value and quality of tap water, and highlighting the District's reservoir projects. The Committee and staff also briefly discussed summarizing the District Financials section (in one or two pages) rather than simply including the same information that is presented in the District's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

Ms. Kelleher informed the Committee that staff proposes to produce a Spring/Summer newsletter and expects it to be four pages in length; it will incorporate condensed demographic and financial information along with several of the articles from the annual report. Staff also proposes to produce a two-page Fall/Winter newsletter, which will include articles on relevant water related topics and/or District activities and projects.

7. COMMENTS BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

None were presented.

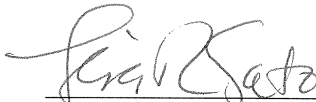
8. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, at 11:53 a.m. Chair Sanchez adjourned the meeting.



Patrick H. Sanchez, Chair

ATTEST:



Lisa R. Soto, Secretary
Board of Directors
VISTA IRRIGATION DISTRICT



**PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Item: 5

**Meeting Date:
Prepared By:
Reviewed By:
Approved By:**

**November 19, 2019
Alisa Nichols
Marlene Kelleher
Brett Hodgkiss**

SUBJECT: SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST

RECOMMENDATION: Review and provide feedback on draft application materials, including the essay question and timeline for the Vista Irrigation District Scholarship Contest.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION: On April 17, 2019, the Board awarded six \$1,000 scholarships to the contest winners.

FISCAL IMPACT: \$6,000 for the scholarship contest is included in the budget.

SUMMARY: Each year, the District invites high school seniors who live or go to school within its service area to compete for a scholarship. The purpose of the scholarship program is to increase student knowledge and awareness of water related issues affecting the District and its customers. Students who compete for a scholarship must complete an essay and provide a one page personal statement related to their background and/or goals; selection criteria also include community involvement or volunteer service, and letters of recommendation.

In December 2018, the Board authorized the Public Affairs Committee (Committee) to restructure the scholarship contest with the goal of increasing participation. After careful consideration, the Committee decided to remove the requirement to submit transcripts as part of the application process and offer up to six scholarships with a minimum scholarship award amount of \$1,000 and a maximum scholarship award amount of \$3,000, providing the Committee (and the Board) the flexibility to award multiple scholarships based on the quality of the applications. The District received 16 applications compared with six in the previous year.

At the conclusion of last year's contest, the Board recommended the Committee discuss including transcripts and/or a question regarding the student's academic pursuits to help better understand an applicant's academic path and achievements and providing the application in an editable electronic format.

DETAILED REPORT: Staff has prepared a draft application package and brochure for the Committee's review and feedback. The scholarship contest requirements, as presented in the draft application package, are the same as last year. Per the Board's suggestion, staff has included a new essay question/topic and created a fillable electronic application form.

Staff anticipates distributing application packages and brochure to high school counselors within the District's jurisdictional boundaries in December. Follow-up calls will be made to counselors to ensure the application materials were received. Additional scholarship promotional efforts will include placing information about the scholarship in high schools' monthly scholarship bulletins and on daily video bulletins (if space is available), issuing a news release, and announcing the program on our website. Application materials will also be made available on the District website.

As proposed, application packages would be due to the District by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, February 28, 2020. The Committee, which serves as the competition judges, could meet in the following weeks (based on Committee members' availability) to review the applications and recommend a winner(s). The Committee's recommendation for the winner could then be submitted to the Board for consideration at a meeting in April. A certificate could then be presented to the winner at the next scheduled Board meeting. As in the past, once the student has enrolled at a university, college or vocational school District staff will forward a check to the school on behalf of the student(s).

ATTACHMENT: Draft scholarship application package and brochure.



SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION PACKAGE

Vista Irrigation District (VID) invites local high school seniors to compete for scholarship(s) from VID. Up to six scholarships may be awarded; the minimum scholarship award amount is \$1,000 and the maximum scholarship award amount is \$3,000. Winners will be selected based on the quality and originality of an essay prepared by the applicant as well as school and community involvement. Applications will not be accepted if all criteria are not met, including correct formatting. **Applicants must submit each of the following documents by 5:00 PM on Friday, February 28, 2020:**

1. Completed application form.
2. School/Community involvement:
 - a. One letter of recommendation from a high school faculty member.
 - b. One letter of character reference from a personal or professional associate.
3. A personal statement (**two pages or less, Arial font, 12 point type, with 1 inch margins top, bottom, left and right, and line spacing set to 1½**). Suggested topics include the student's reasons for applying for the scholarship or seeking a higher education, the student's educational/career goals, personal background or interests.
4. An essay (**two pages, Arial font, 12 point type, with 1 inch margins top, bottom, left and right, and line spacing set to 1½**) addressing the following topic/question:

California requires water agencies, like Vista Irrigation District, to meet water-use efficiency standards. Describe how you can best reduce water use and how you can (or do) encourage water-use efficiency in your community.

The essay will be judged on originality and demonstrated understanding of the question.

Students may obtain an application package from their Scholarship Counselor or from VID by contacting Alisa Nichols at (760) 597-3173. The application package and related materials are also available on the district's website (www.vidwater.org).

A completed application package must be submitted to Vista Irrigation District, 1391 Engineer Street, Vista, CA 92081-8840, **by 5:00 PM on Friday, February 28, 2020.**

VID will review qualified applications and select winner(s) who will receive scholarships. Once enrolled at a college, university or vocational school, VID will send a check directly to the school on scholarship recipient's behalf.



2020 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

(Competition is open to all high school seniors who live or attend school in VID's service area)

Name: _____

Telephone number and best time to call: _____

Address: _____

High School: _____

How did you learn about the VID Scholarship? _____

Post high school education plans (college, vocational school, etc.)

Service and/or other extracurricular activities performed through school or volunteer organizations, community groups, church or clubs, etc. (Include contact name/telephone for verification where possible)

Honors or special recognitions received (school or other)

If employed, job title and total hours per week: _____

Job Responsibilities: _____

Who Said Money for College is Hard to Find?

Talk to your
school counselors
visit
Vista Irrigation District
website at
www.vidwater.org
download a fillable pdf
application to apply for
the scholarship.



Alisa Nichols

1391 Engineer Street

Vista, CA 92081

Email: anichols@vidwater.org

(760) 597-3173

Applications and additional information are
available on the web at www.vidwater.org



2020 Scholarship Contest

**Do you
need
money for
college?**



Vista Irrigation District Scholarship Contest

Up to six scholarships may be awarded; the minimum scholarship award amount is \$1,000 and the maximum scholarship award amount is \$3,000. The purpose of the scholarship program is to increase knowledge and awareness of water related issues impacting their community.

Students may download a fillable pdf application package at www.vidwater.org or contact Alisa Nichols at (760) 597-3173 to have the materials mailed to them. Applications are also available through high school counseling offices.

Applications must be received at the District's office by **5:00 PM on February 28, 2020**. Eligible students must live or go to school within the Vista Irrigation District service area.



Scholarship Awards

Maximum Award \$3,000

Minimum Award \$1,000

Applying is Easy!

**Submit the following to
VID by 5:00 p.m.
February 28, 2020**

- ◆ Completed application form.
- ◆ One letter of recommendation from a high school faculty member.
- ◆ One letter of character reference from a personal or professional associate.
- ◆ A personal statement. Suggested topics include reasons for applying for the scholarship or seeking a higher education, educational & career goals, personal background or interests.
- ◆ A two-page essay addressing the following topic/question:

California requires water agencies, like Vista Irrigation District, to meet water-use efficiency standards. Describe how you can best reduce water use and how you can (or do) encourage water-use efficiency in your community.



**PUBLIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Item: 6

Meeting Date:	November 19, 2019
Prepared By:	Alisa Nichols
Reviewed By:	Marlene Kelleher
Approved By:	Brett Hodgkiss

SUBJECT: 2019 ANNUAL REPORT AND 2020 SPRING NEWSLETTER

RECOMMENDATION: Discuss information to be contained in the 2019 Annual Report and 2020 Spring Newsletter.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION: None.

FISCAL IMPACT: Printing costs for a four-page newsletter are estimated at \$3,000. Based on information received from Infosend, the District's bill printing and mailing service provider, staff does not anticipate any additional postage costs associated with inserting the newsletter in with the water bills. Design and layout of the annual report and newsletter are performed in-house by District staff. There is no cost associated with posting an electronic version of each document to the District's website.

SUMMARY: Each year the District prepares an annual report that includes its financial statements, demographic data and articles about various water related topics, such as water conservation, infrastructure improvements and security. Prior to beginning the layout and design process, staff meets with the Committee to receive input regarding the contents of annual report. Staff is working on the 2019 Annual Report and would like to get the Committee's ideas for content.

Staff is also formulating ideas for the 2020 Spring newsletter and would like to get the Committee's thoughts on the content for the newsletter.

DETAILED REPORT: Since the first edition, the annual report has been primarily a financial report, in that it focused on the District's audited financial statements. The annual report has also included District demographics and other statistical data shown in graphs. Over the years, articles about District activities and projects, and other water related topics have been added.

In recent years, the annual report has only been produced in an electronic format. In lieu of printing the annual report, which had very limited distribution, the decision was made to develop an expanded newsletter and mail to all customers with their water bills. The newsletter has included some articles and demographic information from the annual report as well as other relevant/timely information.