

May 9, 2015

City of Rio Dell  
Kyle Knopp, City Manager  
675 Wildwood Ave.  
Rio Dell, CA 95562

Dear Mr. Knopp:

Re. Water rate study and council minutes

The minutes that are posted by the City for the June 3, 2014 City Council meeting are missing every other page (within the 6.17.14 agenda packet). We request a copy of the minutes that is complete. That meeting included the vote for approving \$25,000 for a water rate study by Bartle Wells in order to raise the water rates in response to a large deficit (agreement under consideration was included in the 6.3.14 agenda packet). The partial minutes that are posted by the city include a discussion of the rate study and its need by then City Manager Jim Stretch and the council and I believe a vote was taken by the council to approve the agreement. The subject of the Bartle Wells water rate study has come up many times in conversations by the council (noted in minutes), including on 8/19/14 by Councilmember Melissa Marks and City Manager Stretch referring to the rate study addressing the Old Ranch Rd water issue. During the recent May 3, 2015 City Council meeting, you stated that the city was going to utilize another agency to do the rate study that is needed under Prop 218. At that time, I asked about the Bartle Wells study and was told that the city had never entered into an agreement with them for the rate study which was surprising.

The subject of the water rate increase and the large water fund deficit has come up numerous times since 2014 which makes it difficult to believe that the city would only now be looking at initiating the Prop 218 process to raise rates. The issue of the water rate increase was also part of the discussion with metering the fire hall and including the water usage for city properties into the formula. Bartle Wells correctly identified a long standing problem with the city and fire properties receiving "free" water that was being subsidized by the other rate payers which is a direct violation of Prop 218. The city was forced to address the issue and there were a few very well attended meetings in 2014 regarding this. The need to correct the illegal subsidies was part of the process for Bartle Wells figuring the number of rate payers for both the sewer rate increase study and the water rate increase study.

The city can certainly chose to work with another contractor rather than Bartle Wells however if the city has decided to change directions on the water rate study since June 2014 then that needs to be disclosed to maintain transparency. There have been too many references to the water rate study being done by Bartle Wells since June 2014 by council members, city staff and members of the public to believe that the city never entered into an agreement for this service.

We are requesting:

- the complete minutes for the 6.3.14 City Council meeting
- All proposed and/or signed agreements, MOU's or change orders with Bartle Wells for any services from January 2014 forward
- Copies of invoices received from Bartle Wells from January 2014 forward
  - Please note if any of the invoices remain unpaid or disputed
- Copy of any correspondence (electronic or written) between the City and Bartle Wells regarding the Water Rate Study from June 2014 forward
- Copy of any correspondence (electronic or written) amongst staff members, including council members, regarding Bartle Wells and/or water rate study from June 2014 forward

Electronic copies of the documentation requested is preferred.

Please let us know if any clarification is needed for this request for public records. We look forward to receiving the requested documentation within 10 working days of this request.

Regards,



Steven L. Wolff

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