



Recap of Meeting August 17, 2010

HOA Members Represented

Aldea – The Vistas	Cathedral Canyon #17
Candelwood Villas II	Cathedral Canyon #18
Canyon Shores	Cathedral Springs
Cathedral Canyon #1	Montage at Mission Hills
Cathedral Canyon #5	Rancho Village
Cathedral Canyon #8	Rio del Sol – Las Casitas

Guests Present

Vic Gainer – Palm Springs HOA Presidents Council
Gail Christiansen – Palm Desert HOA Presidents Council
Carol Kocherhans – Palm Desert HOA Presidents Council
Jan Harnik – Palm Desert HOA Presidents Council
Jim Tufo – Parc La Quinta HOA, La Quinta
Dona Huddleton – Summerset, Palm Desert
Don Svinth – Summerset, Palm Desert
Heather Engel – Coachella Valley Water District
Dave Koller – Coachella Valley Water District
Angie Fasano – Coachella Valley Water District
Graham Balog - Teserra
Tom Harebottle – Teserra
Chuck Shepardson – HAS Design Group
Mike Horton – HAS Design Group

Welcome: Bill Rieth, Co-Chair

Treasurer's Report – Al Hallinan, Treasurer

Announcement – Sonja Marchand told the group that AB 1728 – Duchaney – the bill that would allow artificial grass in front yards will be voted on by the Senate on Wednesday, August 24th. She urged all HOAs to call Senator Duchaney at 916.651.4040 to urge withdrawal of the bill.

Guest Speakers – Graham Balog - Teserra, Tom Harebottle – Teserra, Mike Horton – HAS Design Group, Chuck Shepardson – HAS Design Group, “Builders of Exceptional Outdoor Living”

Graham opened the discussion with a brief history of Teserra. Today they are focusing on their work as a General Contractor in the implementation of landscape renovation projects. In those projects they partner with HAS Design Group to develop the landscape designs. He introduced Mike Horton of HAS Design Group. Mike said that there are three principle ways for a HOA to save water.



1. Manage your irrigation system more effectively – this is the least expensive option.
Check for and correct leaks, overspray and runoff.
Make sure you are using the correct sprinkler heads for each application (shrubs vs. turf) – gardeners often replace defective heads with whatever heads they have on their truck. Systems are designed to operate with specific manufacturer's sprinkler heads for proper flow rates and coverage radius areas, mixing them will cause brown spots or soggy spots. Also, check that heads are properly aligned (not tilted sideways) and free of obstructions (overgrown shrubs). Drip irrigation is best.
Clock management – try to water at night and more frequently to minimize evaporation. The same amount of water applied over several clock cycles will minimize runoff.
2. Installation of more effective Evapotranspiration (ET) control timers
They monitor weather and automatically adjust to conditions.
Develop irrigation master plan – list all controllers and sprinkler heads by specific manufacturer head type.
3. Complete demo – this is the most expensive option
Remove all turf and shrubs.
Start over with a completely new irrigations system and clocks.

Mike and Chuck provided a POWERPOINT presentation showing examples of work they have done. And graphics of options they have developed for several HOAs. They included:

Existing green turf.

Traditional Desert option – mostly rocks and decomposed granite.

Lush & Efficient option – mostly water efficient plants with drip irrigation.

The change over from an efficient system for watering grass to an efficient system for watering Desertscape will save in the range of 50 – 70% in water usage.

When you have your gardeners trim shrubs in balls, squares and cylinders it kills the plants. Much better to trim using hand clippers. Trim in the shrub's natural shape, removing no more than 25% of the growth at a time.

Bill Reith invited The Council members to come look at Cathedral Springs HOA, on Landau North of Ramon. They did a complete demo and new installation of their perimeter landscaping this past spring. They worked with HAS Design Group in the planning and Teserra in the implementation. The HOA is very happy with the results. They changed from turf, shrubs and large pine trees to desertscape.

They first did a test area inside the development near their tennis courts to allow owners to observe what was being planned. They had a few objections. After completion of the perimeter project Bill said the Board has received compliments form over 60% of the owners. Many said they did not know that they would be able



to see the mountains before. Bill said that the cost savings from reduced water usage have been clouded due to the fact that since implementation they have discovered two major underground water leaks. Those have been fixed, and now they are beginning to see a 50% savings.

Guest Speakers – Heather Engel – Coachella Valley Water District
Dave Koller – Coachella Valley Water District

Heather began by distributing a “CVWD 2010-11 Budget Fact Sheet”. She explained that they adopted a \$223 million operating budget last month. It was based on many compromises by the Board and internal District cost cutting. It included a 9 cent increase in rates. The Board had hired a consultant to analyze the budget and he had recommended an 18 cent increase in rates.

The cost of imported water to replenish the valley’s natural aquifer has increased dramatically. State Water Project water has increased from \$8 million in 2004-05 to more than \$40 million in 2009-10. Colorado River water has increased from \$200,000 two years ago to \$7 million in 2010-11.

The District has implemented an early retirement program to keep nearly 70 positions vacant, for an annual saving of \$4 million. They are also funding more projects by use of their Reserves. Using Reserves instead of bond debt saves money, but the Reserves are now depleted. The Mid-Valley Pipeline, currently under construction, will be able to get 40 golf courses off groundwater and on to recycled water.

She turned the presentation over to Dave. He distributed two graphs showing the usage of 4 Cathedral City HOAs considered to be “efficient” over the past two years. The first showed that the usage by each HOA has gone down each year. The second showed that the water bills for each HOA has also gone down each year, despite the rate increases.

He said that CVWD has added 50% to the ET computed necessary water amounts for the period September 27th to November 7th for the annual reseeding period. They have been working with UC Riverside at their Palm Desert campus on test plots to scientifically determined the best times and water application rates for reseeding. They found that the 6 week period late September to early November was best and an increase of water of 50% produced essentially the same result as an increase of 100% in application rate. He distributed two sample water bills to demonstrate the actual 50% addition during the reseeding period in the Water Use History graphs.



They implemented a new computer system in May. With it they lost many of the features of the old system, including the graphs of water usage. Their programmers are working diligently to try to restore the features in the new system ASAP.

He explained that the “water budget” is a computed value. It assumes an irrigation system for watering turf with an efficiency of 60%. It is the landscape area x ETO (by day) x days. If you have pure turf and trees you can be “efficient” if watering properly.

A comparison this year showed the following proportion of users were within their “water budgets”:

Category	June	March
Residential	63	82
Large Users (HOAs)	61	88

In response to a question he stated that CVWD has no plans to provide recycled water to HOAs, only golf courses. This is partially because golf courses normally irrigate at night, resulting in potentially less human contact. Also, during the summer months the water is mixed with groundwater that has a lot of particulate matter that would clog most HOA sprinkler heads but doesn’t affect the large impulse sprinklers used on golf courses.

Another question was about responsiveness by CVWD to complaints of water main leaks. They often go on for weeks before CVWD schedules repairs. He said he couldn’t respond, the HOA is advised to contact the maintenance department persistently. This is a possible effect of the efforts to hold down staff expense.

He offered that CVWD will come out and do a “water survey” at no cost on request.

He suggested that HOAs require landscapers read and keep records of water usage by each meter – as a check for leaks if usage spikes. Information on how to read a meter is on their website at: cvwd.org

Also on their website they advertise classes on efficient water management. They offer for landscapers (in English and Spanish) in June and December and for homeowners in November. The classes are advertised on the website approximately 2 months in advance and you may register online. There is a \$50 fee for the landscaper class and a \$10 fee for the homeowner class. The class provides a certificate upon completion. HOAs should require evidence of completion of this class as part of their landscape maintenance contracts.

Community Forum

No forum

Handouts – in addition to those mentioned above:



- Reprint “Homeowner Irrigation Guide” Coachella Valley Water District - 2010 Brochure
- Brochure “Water Wise” Coachella Valley Water District – Spring 2010
- Brochure “Water Wise” Coachella Valley Water District – Summer 2010
- Brochure “Water Wise at Home” Coachella Valley Water District – 2010
- Letter to “Alarm Company and /or Monitoring Company” from City of Cathedral City July 20, 2010
- Article “Police department launches new ‘alarm response policy’ ” Cathedral City Sun, August 6, 2010
- Flyers, Maxwell Security “Alarm Response” and “Who is Responding to Your Alarms?”
- Reprint of email “Coachella Valley HOA Presidents Council Members/Management Co” by Vic Gainer, August 13, 2010

Website – <http://hoapresidentscouncil.com> , Click on “Cathedral City”

Next Meeting – Tuesday, September 21, 2010 at the Cathedral City – City Hall

Tom Tousignant, Recorder