

Forest View Acres Water District (FVAWD) Policies

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Forest View Acres Water District (FVAWD) Policies

This policy document records FVAWD policy decisions in a central location, and to use that document to ensure that District's Board of Directors defines and implements its "best practices" in a standardized, documented and scheduled manner.

FVAWD is a Special District under Colorado law. As such, it is a local government subject to State and Federal law. All information and policies contained within this document are intended to be in compliance with State and Federal requirements.

I. FINANCIAL

1. Budget & Financial Management

Goal: To implement FVAWD budgets in a manner that supports using budgets as a tool for active financial management, provides necessary fiduciary governance and promotes stability in rates charged to District customers. To manage books in a manner that accurately aligns revenue and expenses with capital improvements and internal cost centers.

Background: The District's fiscal year is the same as the calendar year. The State requires special districts to develop and file annual budgets in accordance with State regulation, and the District meets these requirements. The District also complies with other State requirements, such as those contained in the "Taxpayers Bill of Rights" (TABOR). District has chosen to structure the budget so that it is consistent with District accounting and so that it can be used as a financial monitoring and management tool. Furthermore, the District has recognized that it needs to manage its reserve funds. Operating reserves need to be in place so that the District can address emergencies and unexpected expenses. Capital spending frequently involves projects that span multiple years, have high dollar costs and unknowns that require additional spending; therefore, capital reserve requirements vary from year to year and need to be established based on current and near-term conditions.

Policies:

- (a) The budget will be divided into the major categories of Administration, Operations and Capital Improvements. Operations will be budgeted and tracked to allow treatment of each District facility to be managed as a cost center. For multi-year cash flow management purposes and to even out the impact of large capital expenditures, capital improvement costs will be estimated over a five-year period.
- (b) District financials will be managed on a "modified accrual basis" where reporting is done on a cash flow basis during the year, and then at year-end revenues and costs are accrued to the fiscal year.
- (c) District financials will be produced and reported on a on a monthly basis, and will show a comparison of actual year-to-date revenues and expenses against the budget. These financial reports will be reviewed by the Board at regular monthly Board meetings and, in the case of meeting cancellation or other extenuating circumstance, no less than once a quarter.
- (d) The chart of accounts used in the District's accounting system will be aligned with budget categories.
- (e) The District will maintain an operating reserve equal to three months of operating expenses. The status of operating reserves will be reviewed by the Board at regular monthly Board meetings and, in the case of meeting cancellation or other extenuating circumstance, no less than once a quarter.
- (f) Annually and as part of the budget process, the Board will establish capital reserve requirements for the upcoming two years. Capital reserve requirements will be established in a manner that

considers revenue (from all sources) for capital improvements, projects planned for implementation, unexpected requirements, and cash flow stability.

- (g) Normally, FVAWD will only incur debt in support of capital improvements. Incurring any debt requires Board approval. In the case of bond issues, or other TABOR issues, a District-wide vote is required.

2. Revenue

Goal: To manage revenue in a manner that promotes stability in fees and charges to customers. To augment District revenue with grants and other cost-effective funding sources.

Background: FVAWD obtains most of its revenue from its customers and owners of property within the District. This revenue comes from a combination of fees and taxes. Because FVAWD is a small water district having a small customer base, per-customer/per-owner costs are relatively high in comparison to large water districts and municipalities. While the District needs to raise enough revenue to cover its costs, the Board is also interested in pursuing other revenue sources and in controlling the impact of fees on its customers.

Policies:

- (a) Fees charged to customers will be reevaluated on an annual basis and in conjunction with the annual budget process.
- (b) Changes to fees will normally be made at the beginning of the calendar year, but may be made at other times if needed. All changes to fees require Board approval.
- (c) FVAWD will actively pursue grants as a source of revenue.

3. Expenditures

Goal: To promote Board level review and active management of expenses.

Background: FVAWD has no employees and uses contractors for critical functions such as operations and district management. The District also has capital improvement projects, each of which has significant engineering and construction expense.

Policies:

- (a) A list of expenses will be provided for each board meeting and will be reviewed by Board Members.
- (b) Each check written to cover expenses will be signed by two Board Members.
- (c) For each vendor providing ongoing services to the District, a Board Member will be assigned to monitor spending and review invoices. This specifically includes invoices from vendors providing operations and District management services.

4. Spending Authority

Goal: To provide the ability to address small or unscheduled requirements that will incur an expense.

Background: The Board of Directors meets once a month, whereas the District runs on a 24x7 basis. In cases of emergency or in cases where there is an opportunity to save money, authorized individuals should be empowered to act in the best interests of the District.

Policies:

- (a) The lead Operator will have a spending authority of \$500 per month.
- (b) The District Manager will have a spending authority of \$2,500 per month.

- (c) Each individual Board Member will have a spending authority of \$500 per month. Additionally, individual Board Members will have spending authority of \$2,500, limited to cases where the Board Member is on-site and the expenditure is needed to address an emergency.
- (d) Emergency situations that may require spending in excess of individual spending authorizations will require majority approval by a quorum of the Board of Directors, will be documented via e-mail and ratified and the next Board meeting.
- (e) The Board of Directors may revoke this authorization at any time, and may revoke this authorization for any individual at any time.

5. Fraud Prevention

Goal: To take active measures to prevent fraud and misappropriation of District funds.

Background: In 2004, FVAWD discovered that the District's bookkeeper had embezzled a significant amount of District funds. The District recovered the embezzled funds, although full recovery took over two years and included significant effort (e.g., to rebuild records and get new contractor support) and additional expense (e.g., prosecution of the bookkeeper, rebuilding of District records and legal costs). Subsequently, the Board of Directors chose to implement controls to avoid future embezzlement.

Policies:

- (a) On an annual basis, the District will conduct financial audits. These audits will be performed by a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) who has no conflict of interest and who is not performing bookkeeping or financial management services for FVAWD. These audits will be performed even if not required by State regulation.
- (b) The FVAWD Treasurer will review bank statements, compare them to financial reports and will report to the FVAWD Board of Directors that the financial reports match (or have discrepancies with) the bank statements. The Treasurer will report the results of these reviews at regular monthly Board meetings and, in the case of meeting cancellation or other extenuating circumstance, no less than once a quarter.
- (c) All checks will be signed by two Board Members.
- (d) Signature cards used by the District's banks will only be signed by Board Members and in the presence of two Board Members.

II. GOVERNANCE & ADMINISTRATION

6. Governing Documents

Goal: To provide consistency in the District's governance and to ensure that governing documents are reviewed and maintained.

Background: FVAWD is considered a local government by the U.S. and Colorado and, more specifically, is a Special District as defined by the State of Colorado regulation. As such, FVAWD is subject to Federal and State laws and regulations, and to oversight by governing organizations. In addition and as a local government, FVAWD maintains its own Rules and Regulations, Policies and Procedures.

Policies:

- (a) The District's Rules and Regulations will be reviewed every four years.
- (b) The Board of Directors may modify the Rules and Regulations at any time, with majority vote and in a regular board meeting.
- (c) The District will comply with applicable Federal and State law and regulation. All policies in this document will conform to Federal and State requirements.

- (d) When conflicts occur, Colorado regulations will have precedence over District regulations, and Federal regulations will have precedence over both. In cases of conflict between the District's Rules and Regulations and any other District document, the Rules and Regulations will have precedence.

7. Policies & Procedures

Goal: To record policy decisions in a single document and to implement standardized, documented methods of managing the District and of performing key functions.

Background: The District has made substantial progress over a number of years in building key documents and in implementing improved management and operating practices. And while the District has recorded policy decisions in meeting minutes, this method does not always provide for quick verification of District policy. The District has chosen to record policies in a single document, and to establish supporting procedures where needed.

Policies:

- (a) The Board may establish or modify District policy or procedure, with majority vote and in a Board meeting.
- (b) Policies and procedures will be implemented immediately upon being established, unless otherwise specified by the Board. In these cases, a plan and due date for implementing the policy or procedure will be established.
- (c) Policies and procedures are subordinate to the FVAWD Rules and Regulations.

8. Administration & Management

Goal: To document and schedule activities that should be performed and to ensure that actions and issues related to these activities are addressed in a timely and well-managed manner.

Background: Under Colorado law, FVAWD is a Special District. As such, many of its actions are governed by Colorado regulation and have defined due dates and compliance requirements. In addition, FVAWD has a series of items that are managed on a pre-scheduled basis.

Policies:

- (a) At the beginning of each year, the District shall prepare and authorize an annual administrative resolution itemizing all items requiring performance under Colorado law. This resolution will include required due dates and assign responsibility for each item.
- (b) At the beginning of each year, the District shall prepare a resolution itemizing FVAWD-specific items that are to be performed. This resolution will include all items identified in District policy as well as additional items identified during the previous year. The two resolutions may be, but are not required to be, combined into a single resolution.
- (c) A "Look-Ahead" report will be provided to the Board at each Board meeting showing scheduled events for the current year. This report will include major regulatory due dates and milestones for vendor and Board projects.

III. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

9. Planning

Goal: To support systematic improvements, replacements and upgrades to FVAWD facilities and infrastructure, and to manage these changes to District assets in a manner that sets priorities, controls

rework, simplifies operations, increases overall system robustness, reduces water loss and reduces the number of emergency responses.

Background: FVAWD first began providing water services in 1957. Over the years the infrastructure was implemented piecemeal, and much of the infrastructure is near end-of-life. Significant and costly improvements are needed. These improvements need to be staged and managed in a manner that addresses District infrastructure issues, is cost effective, simplifies operations and reduces operational costs over time.

Policies:

- (a) FVAWD will maintain a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). This CIP will include an overview of the District's current assets and operations, descriptions of improvements needed, and a list of projects with budget estimates and priorities assigned for each project.
- (b) Capital Improvement plans provided by engineers are not considered to be the District's official CIP, unless the Board specifically states otherwise. The District's CIP may cite one or more engineering report and adopt these reports, or components thereof, as part of the District's CIP.
- (c) The CIP will be reviewed no less than every four years, with revisions in projects being reflected in the next annual budget.

10. Engineering

Goal: To obtain engineering expertise and recommendations that will provide good, cost-effective solutions to improving, modifying or replacing the District's infrastructure, will provide good return-on-investment and will help the District plan for eventual build-out and changing requirements.

Background: The District has found that there are advantages to using engineers who have detailed knowledge of the District, and also that expertise, quality and costs vary across engineering firms. Different engineers may also disagree on recommendations and technical solutions. Cost is a major factor, but low cost does not mean best value for District. Engineers do not always agree; therefore, Board retains responsibility for determining which recommendations best meet the needs of the District. .

Policies:

- (a) The Board is responsible for evaluating engineering recommendations and determining how they should best be implemented within the District.
- (b) The Board will select engineering firms and projects based on a variety of factors intended to provide the best long-term value to the District. These factors may vary by project and include items such as cost, engineers expertise, robustness of solutions, ease of operations, and anticipated operating costs.
- (c) All engineering projects will have scope of work, deliverables, due dates, and costs documented prior to project initiation.

11. Construction Standards

Goal: To promote quality and consistency in construction materials and methods. To reduce unnecessary variety in the District's spare parts inventory.

Background: Historically, the District's infrastructure has been built piecemeal, with a variety of materials and varying quality in installation and construction practices. As the infrastructure has aged and needed repair, the needed spare parts inventory has reflected this variety of materials. Construction standards establish a minimum quality, and are to be managed so that they are consistently verified and have appropriate updates in response to new approaches and technologies.

Policies:

- (a) The District will maintain construction standards for use in replacing components of the District's distribution system, including District-owned facilities and customer-owned facilities.
- (b) As part of all construction projects, design engineers will review District construction specifications. The design engineer will affirm that i) project specifications meet or exceed District standards and ii) that the project specifications represent the engineers best recommendations for the District, regardless of the existence of the construction standards. Any points of disagreement and/or recommendations for changes to the District's standards will be documented and presented to the board for discussion and decision.

12. Project Management

Goal: To ensure that capital improvements are implemented in a timely, cost-effective and quality manner.

Background: FVAWD has a significant number of capital improvements that need to be made. The corresponding capital projects need consistent management, monitoring and oversight.

Policies:

- (a) Capital improvement projects will have oversight from the designing engineer or, if no designing engineer was used, by another assigned FVAWD representative.
- (b) The District will independently track progress against contracted due dates and invoices against progress.

IV. VENDORS

13. Use of Vendors

Goal: To establish the use of contractors to perform key functions within the District.

Background: FVAWD is a small water district. The District has chosen to use contractors to perform ongoing functions of managing and operating the District; these functions are performed by a Management Company and an Operations Company. Additional vendors are used by the District, but do not have ongoing contracts. The use of contractors meets District needs, and also means Board Member time and District resources are not spent on overhead items associated with hiring employees.

Policies:

- (a) The District will not hire employees.
- (b) On an annual basis, the District will contract with a Management Company to perform District management, administration, bookkeeping and billing functions.
- (c) On an annual basis, the District will contract with an Operations Company to perform plant and system operations and repairs.
- (d) As needed, the District will obtain services from additional vendors. A list of vendors will be incorporated into the District's Emergency Response Plan (ERP) and reviewed in conjunction with review of the ERP.

14. Bids, Contracts & Vendor Selection

Goal: To obtain the best quality and cost-effective services for the District. To ensure that contracts are clear and protect the interests of the District. To obtain services from vendors who are reliable and provide consistent, quality services. To establish a "stable" of vendors that the District can use to handle recurring or predictable work.

Background: In vendor selection, the District focuses on value, cost-effectiveness and the ability to deliver. For large projects, multiple bids are required. The State of Colorado defines the dollar threshold over which construction projects must be competitively bid. The District has found that obtaining at least three bids from qualified vendors provides sufficient variety in level of understanding, expertise and range of costs.

Policies:

- (a) All requests for bids or quotes will be documented in writing.
- (b) On a case-by-case basis, the District will determine when projects need to be competitively bid. This decision will be in addition to State requirements.
- (c) The District will use a variety of factors in selecting vendors. These will include vendor understanding of the work and scope, vendor qualifications and ability to deliver, cost, reasonableness of bids, and vendor references.
- (d) Awarded contracts will include any wording necessary to enforce delivery of quality work, including payment hold-back provisions and bonding or insurance requirements.

15. Vendor Management & Oversight

Goal: To promote ongoing, positive working relationships with key vendors. To ensure that District direction is followed and concerns are addressed.

Background: Managing the water district is a complex function and requires support from several vendors, including a Management Company, an Operations Company, engineers, surveyors, attorneys and other specialists. District needs are best met when there is consistent, ongoing communication between these vendors and the Board. It is the Board's responsibility to ensure that vendors are meeting the District's needs and that quality is enforced.

Policies:

- (a) Annually, the Board will meet with major vendors to review performance, anticipated work and changes in work with the management of key vendors. This specifically includes the Management Company and Operations Company. Reviews may be conducted outside of a board meeting and by a subset of Board Members.
- (b) Periodically and as relevant to the District, the Board will review key deliverables, work products and areas of vendor operations.
- (c) The Board will establish mechanisms to ensure that vendors are in compliance with District policy, contracts, and or other mandate.
- (d) The District will establish standard reporting requirements for key vendors.

V. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

16. Elections

Goal: To promote the election of knowledgeable and service-oriented members of the community to serve on the Board. To promote easy leadership transitions and shared responsibility among Board Members.

Background: FVAWD Board Member elections are conducted in accordance with Colorado statute. Board Members serve four year terms and are term-limited to two four-year, consecutive terms. FVAWD's Board consists of five Board Members. Board Member elections are held in May of even numbered years, and terms are staggered so that no more than three Board Member positions are eligible for election at each election cycle. If a vacancy occurs on the Board, the remaining Board members shall fill the vacancy by appointment; the newly appointed Director will serve until the next regular election, at which time the vacancy shall be filled by election for the remainder of the originally vacated term. The Board is required

to fill three positions to manage the Board and District actions. Of these, the President and Treasurer must be Board Members while the Secretary may be a Board Member or a member of staff.

Policies:

- (a) The Board will establish and implement procedures for notifying the public and District residents about upcoming elections and out-of cycle vacancies.
- (b) Elections will be administered by an election official acting independently of Board Members.
- (c) The District will establish a mechanism for providing voters with information about candidates.
- (d) The President and Treasurer of the Board will be elected annually at the May Board meeting. The Management Company will provide the Secretary to the Board.

17. Board Member Education

Goal: To assist new Directors on the Board in becoming knowledgeable about the District, and thereby accelerate the ability to make good decisions soon after they join the board. To help existing Directors gain knowledge in areas that may benefit the District.

Background: Managing any water district requires knowledge in a variety of subjects and an understanding of the district's current status, requirements, resources, and customer base. New Directors may not know where to focus attention first. Directors are best able to make good decisions when they are knowledgeable and know what resources are available to them.

Policies:

- (a) New board members will be welcomed to the Board and provided with key reading and reference materials, and will be offered a tour of District facilities. FVAWD will maintain a standard list of these materials.
- (b) With Board agreement, Board Members may attend training classes or conferences that will help improve the ability to serve effectively.

18. Board Member Compensation

Goal: To provide Board Members with a small compensation that will cover minor expenses and token compensation to Board Members for serving on the Board of Directors.

Background: Serving on the Board of Directors is a voluntary position and requires Board Members to spend significant time outside of board meetings as reviewing materials, conducting research and/or working on projects. Most Board Members also incur a series of minor costs, including travel to and from meetings and using personal computers and printers. The State of Colorado allows Board Members of Special Districts to be compensated \$100 per meeting, not to exceed \$1,600 per year.

Policies:

- (a) Each Board Member will be compensated \$100 per meeting attended, up to a maximum established by the State of Colorado.

VI. ASSETS

19. Water

Goal: To ensure that FVAWD can deliver water to its customers and that it effectively manages its water rights and can effectively manage FVAWD's water rights and physical water sources.

Background: In Colorado, the ability to acquire water is driven by two factors: the legal right to use water and the physical ability to access water. FVAWD needs to manage its portfolio of water rights, as well as ensure that water is available and protected.

Policies:

- (a) The District will maintain an inventory of its water rights.
- (b) FVAWD will review its Source Water Protection Plan (SWPP) no less than once every four years. As well as updates to the SWPP, this review will identify changes that may be needed to other documents or procedures (e.g., Capital Improvement Plan, Emergency Response Plan).

20. Deeds & Easements

Goal: To maintain an inventory of existing and needed real property and easements.

Background: The District owns real estate and has a number of easements. In addition, water lines built in the past that are not located within recorded easements can be maintained as though an easement had been granted.

Policies:

- (a) Wherever available, water pipes will be installed in roadside utility easements established by El Paso County.
- (b) The District will maintain an inventory of its real estate and easements.

21. District Records

Goal: To establish data retention standards and maintenance requirements, to ensure that existing key records are readily available to management and the Board of Directors.

Background: Running the District creates a large amount of paperwork and records. Many of these are critical while others lose relevance within a relatively short period of time. Board Members, attorneys, and management need to have ready access to selected records in the process of managing the District, negotiating contracts, and protecting the District's assets.

Policies:

- (a) All District records will have copies maintained in electronic format. These records are the property of FVAWD.
- (b) The District will establish retention criteria for its records.
- (c) The District will meet the Colorado "Sunshine Act" requirements for disclosing records to the public and will also identify those records that are not publicly available (e.g., for customer privacy or security reasons).

22. Facilities & Infrastructure

Goal: To ensure that the District's facilities and infrastructure are maintained and improved as needed.

Background: Most of the work related to the District's infrastructure is managed during capital improvement planning (for upgrades and improvements) and through operations (for maintenance). However, the maintenance of buildings and other infrastructure not related to water production and delivery fall outside this scope.

Policies:

- (a) The District will conduct inspections of District-owned buildings on a scheduled basis, and will perform maintenance identified as a result of these inspections. These inspections will cover aspects of the buildings not related to water treatment, transmission or delivery (e.g., electrical, roofs, foundations, etc.).
- (b) The District will maintain a multi-year schedule of inspection and maintenance items and when they should next be performed.

23. Claims from Other Parties

Goal: To meet District obligations while avoiding commitments that the District has not made.

Background: Periodically, individuals come to the District claiming that they have been promised something by the District or on behalf of the District (e.g., water, water taps, or free water). Sometimes these claims are valid, but often the District has no knowledge of the “obligation” or reason to believe that the District has made any such commitment.

Policies:

- (a) All claims shall be made in writing, with supporting documentation showing the District’s concurrence with the obligation.
- (b) If a party having an agreement with the District in any way transfers all or some portion of that agreement to another party, documentation will include legally supportable statements showing that the obligation has been transferred. Unless otherwise precluded by law or contract, such transfers will only be done with the District’s concurrence.

VII. OPERATIONS

24. Operations & Maintenance

Goal: To ensure that District’s facilities, water production, and water delivery capabilities and run in a manner that meets State requirements, promotes high operating standards, promotes redundancy and fail-safes and minimizes outages.

Background: The State of Colorado regulates Operator licenses and many aspects of the District’s operations. In addition to meeting State requirements, FVAWD wishes to continuously improve operational capabilities while standardizing and simplifying operational requirements. Accomplishing this requires both a focus on the District’s operations and analysis to determine where capital improvements can improve operations and operating capabilities.

Policies:

- (a) The District will only contract with Operators (or Operations Companies) that meet State requirements, have the experience and qualifications to run District operations, and can provide redundancy in staff knowledgeable of the District’s operations.
- (b) FVAWD will have standard operating procedures (SOPs) for equipment, facilities, and operating sequences.
- (c) FVAWD will perform preventive maintenance on all equipment, and will have preventive maintenance schedules.
- (d) Periodically and upon request from the Board, Operations staff will provide a list of items proposed for consideration in the District’s capital improvement planning and annual budget process.

25. Water Audits

Goal: To track the relative amount of water that the District loses, to identify potential causes of water loss and to determine if capital improvements (especially the replacement of pipe) results in improved water loss ratios.

Background: Most water distribution systems lose some water due to leakage; most often approximately 15%. Over the past several years, the District's leak rate has risen from being in the 20-25% range to being in the 30-50% range. This high rate requires that the District produce higher amounts of treated water in order to deliver sufficient water to customers.

Policies:

- (a) The Board will review water loss data no less than once a quarter. Water production and usage data will be collected on a monthly basis and analyzed using standard calculations.

26. District Maps

Goal: To provide Operators and District representatives with accurate maps that can be used to locate, troubleshoot and manage transmission and distribution systems.

Background: Maps containing accurate locations of water lines, valves and hydrants are an essential tool in troubleshooting and maintaining the districts infrastructure. The District has had several sets of maps, made at different points in time. Each of these map sets was built with the best understanding at the time, but none are perfect. In 2009, FVAWD moved to maintaining maps in electronic format and having a single version that is the map of record. The map of record needs to be periodically updated as changes are made and errors are found. In addition to the previous district-wide maps, FVAWD has special purpose maps (e.g., for subdivisions, non-water utilities, or "as built" related to construction projects). These historic and special purpose maps are useful for research purposes.

Policies:

- (a) The District will maintain a single District "map of record" in electronic format. This map will be updated after construction projects are completed and "as-built" drawings are received. Maps will be validated and, if needed, updated no less than once every four years.
- (b) A copy of historic, special purpose and other maps that are not the "map of record" will be kept on file in the District's records in electronic format and a "hard copy" will be kept on-site within the District.
- (c) Significant improvements to the "maps of record" will be included in the capital improvement plan.

27. Emergency Response

Goal: To ensure that FVAWD can respond to emergencies quickly, with minimal downtime and with minimal time lost for coordination or searching for resources.

Background: In the past, there have been times when knowledgeable resources were not available to respond to actual and potential outages. As a consequence, FVAWD has developed and maintains an Emergency Response Plan (ERP). An ERP gives the Board and District personnel guidance in case of an emergency, reduces the need to "wing it," ensures that the response is one agreed upon by responsible parties, and identifies known resources that may be available to respond to an emergency. The District's ERP needs to be a living document, also containing information about communications, vendors, Board contacts and security; this will simplify maintenance of this type of information and also help prevent the ERP from simply being a paper exercise.

Policies:

- (a) FVAWD will review its Emergency Response Plan no less than once every two years and just after Board Member elections.

- (b) The ERP will define levels of “emergency” as those that can be handled by Operators, those that need Board assistance or intervention, and those that are beyond the capacity of the District to handle on its own.
- (c) In addition to information needed for emergency response, the ERP will contain relevant “baseline” information, including information about non-emergency communications, contact information, security information and vendor lists.
- (d) Policies adopted in the ERP will be considered part of District policy, without need for duplication in this policy document.
- (e) The FVAWD ERP will be updated every time Directors change, when there is a change in management or operations vendors, when security information changes (locks, combinations, etc.), and any other time there are changes warranting update.

28. Security

Goal: To establish parties having authorized access to District facilities.

Background: District facilities are kept locked and only authorized individuals should have the ability to have unsupervised access to these facilities.

Policies:

- (a) Operators, Management Company, and Board Members will have keys to all District buildings and combinations to all locks. Others will be granted this information only with District permission, or in cases of shared facilities or roads.
- (b) Board Members will return all keys to the District upon leaving the Board.

VIII. CUSTOMERS

29. Information Availability

Goal: To make information and educational materials available to customers, and to promote transparency in District activities.

Background: Most District documents are available to the public under Colorado’s Sunshine Act. The Board has chosen to promote access to the most relevant District records. While relatively few customers request these records, the District has found that routinely publishing them on the District’s website is more cost-effective and provides a more timely response than providing them on a request-by-request basis. The Board has identified a few areas where customer education may be useful.

Policies:

- (a) FVAWD will maintain a website with information of potential interest to customers, including Board meeting schedules, contact information and informational documents.
- (b) FVAWD will publish a customer informational brochure on a periodic basis and whenever rates change.
- (c) FVAWD may publish additional educational information and brochures that may be useful or of interest to District residents.

30. Customer Notifications

Goal: To provide dependable and standard mechanisms of providing customers with information and for notifying them of key events.

Background: The State of Colorado has notification requirements for some regulated activities (e.g., elections, budget hearings, and board meetings); these notification requirements are managed in the

administrative resolution. The District is also interested in promoting transparency and providing information to customers, without incurring the overhead of an excessive number of communication channels.

Policies:

- (a) The District will use the following notification methods: website, email, mailings, notices on customer bills, and official posting sites.
- (b) For water outages and conservation orders, signs will also be posted throughout the District at defined locations.

31. Payments & Accounts

Goal: To manage customer payments and accounts fairly and consistently. To provide customers with convenient methods of paying their water bills.

Background: Historically, FVAWD has only accepted checks as a payment method. Many customers would like automated methods of paying water bills. FVAWD will provide this service, but also wants to avoid risks to customer data that could come from fraud or hacking.

Policies:

- (a) The following forms of payment will be accepted: check, credit card, electronic transfer.
- (b) FVAWD will use a credit card processing service and will not retain any credit card information.
- (c) Customer late fees will be waived no more often than once every twelve months.
- (d) Non-paying customers will have outstanding balances sent to the El Paso County Assessor's office for inclusion in property tax bills.