

Message from the Shasta Forest Village Water Board President
May 6, 2024

It has been too long since we last updated this letter to Village residents. I will not try and cover everything that has occurred since 2021 – quite a lot - but will hit highlights to bring us up to date.

Our previous President, Talmadge Smith, has left the Board and Guy Whitmer has replaced him. We all owe Talmadge a big thanks for his service to the community. Of most significance since then, our Office Manager, Marilyn Evers, and our Water Master Dirk Estey, have both retired. They served us faithfully for many years. Board members honestly had no idea how many hours they dedicated to the job (both often not charging us for all their work), or the sheer complexity of the jobs they performed. They have each served us extraordinarily during their many years of service. Our long serving Board member, Dennis Bebensee, has also retired. You may know him from his many roles in our community, including Fire Wise and the Property Owners Association. He is already greatly missed, but he is well deserving of having more free time for himself and his wife June. And our long-serving Treasurer, Karen Fenicle, also retired. We can all thank Karen for her significant role in keeping the Water Company in the solid financial condition we find ourselves in today.

We have also had other office and Board members come and go Including Board Members Bob Scott, Ken Fordyce and Ray Gerhard, Treasurer Phil Carson and Office Manager Becky Gillespie. I want to thank them all for the service they provided, but must particularly thank Phil. He revamped our investment portfolio and put us into solid, long term, FDIC insured investments. Because of Phil we are making good use of currently high CD interest rates.

We could not continue to safely manage the water system with only one Water Distribution Operator, nor does the State and County allow it. We were fortunate to have found two excellent people to manage/operate our water Infrastructure. Anthony Hinchliffe came to us with previous experience, including at the Anderson Water Company. He is our Supervisory Water Distribution Operator, assisted by Don Gendreau as Water Distribution Assistant.

Replacing our Office Manager has been difficult, and we've kept the office (barely) afloat through the work of volunteer board members. Particular thanks go to Ray Gerhard and Peggy Nichols for volunteering countless hours. We are pleased to have finally hired our new Office Manager, Carol Steele. She has extensive experience managing offices and nonprofits. Many know her as a Shingletown Library volunteer. Have patience as Carol untangles the many messes we have created since Marilyn left. You will also continue to see Debra Jennings working as Office Assistant as they keep the office open for you on Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

I also want to welcome, and everyone should thank, our newest Board Members, Carrie Hudson and John Miranda. Their volunteering brings excellent backgrounds to the board. A Board vacancy remains as well as our Treasurer position. Although Ray Gerhard has left the Board, he has agreed to continue managing our investment portfolios and assist with the budget until we can fill the Treasurer position. He cannot continue for long however, so we need someone to step up to be our Treasurer. Thanks to the work of Phil and Ray, it is no longer a position that requires a lot of time.

We are undertaking some major projects upgrading some of the larger and more expensive well, pump and storage aspects of our water system. You will find details of some of this work in our Consumer Confidence Report sent out with April water bills. Thankfully we have more than sufficient financial resources to undertake these projects and still hold adequate reserves for the future. This is an old water system which has pretty much never had major upgrades. We hope to be able to make those needed upgrades in an orderly, non-emergency fashion over time.

I want to thank everyone in the community for your support and understanding as we staffed the office until we hired Carol. Remember, this is our water company. As a non-profit, it belongs to all of us who live in Shasta Forest Village.

For 2024 our company Board and Staff is as follows:

Board Directors and Officers: Guy Whitmer, President, Larry Lauser, Vice President, John Miranda, Carrie Hudson and one VACANCY. Peggy Nichols is the Secretary. The Treasurer position is VACANT.

Company staff: Carol Steele, Office Manager. Debra Jennings Office Assistant, Tony Hinchliffe, Chief of Plant Operations and Don Gendreau, Water Distribution Assistant.

Please contact the Water Office or any Board Member if you have any interest in helping fill our vacancies.

Thank you for supporting your water company.

Guy Whitmer
Board President
Shasta Forest Village Mutual Water Company