



ROSS VALLEY SANITARY DISTRICT

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Marin I.J. Fails to Check Facts Before Editorializing . . . Again!

The January 3, 2012 Marin I.J. Editorial, *Sewer board should detail 'emergency' Plan*, irresponsibly suggests that the Ross Valley Sanitary District “may be taking a shortcut in good-government procedures that is difficult to justify.”

The editorial is not only based on erroneous information, but given the public record of the meeting it would be impossible to suggest that the District was planning to make repairs to 12 sites where pipes are badly damaged without going through a standard open-bid process.

The editorial incorrectly states that the board voted 4-1 to declare the repair work as “emergency status,” setting the stage for possibly subverting the state’s open public bid requirements.

The actual motion (recorded on video and audio) that was made by Board Members Pat Guasco and seconded by Peter Sullivan was to “Direct staff to bid out each individual site for repair.”

The IJ editorial staff might have at least taken a look at their own reporting of the meeting (12/26/11) where the lead paragraph reports that the “the board has given the agency manager the green light “to solicit bids” for the repairs. Furthermore, the article quotes Board Member Peter Sullivan responding to fellow Board Member Frank Egger’s concerns about the repair process. He stated that the board agreed to use a “standard process for doing repairs.”

This elaborate editorial that lectures the board about doing “the job the way it is supposed to be done” unfortunately is not the first time that misinformed opinions by the IJ have unjustly attempted to cast the District as poorly managed. The facts about the District’s performance are a matter of public record and any fact-based criticisms or suggestions are always welcome.

With the community facing what is likely to be a \$300 million infrastructure challenge that is unquestionably the result of decades of deferred pipe repair, Marin IJ readers deserve more. It’s time for more in-depth and better-researched reporting and opinions on this critical issue so progress to solve the problem is not irresponsibly impeded.

The District requested that the Marin IJ correct its editorial on January 4, 2012. It has not received a response. The written request to the Marin IJ may be viewed at <http://www.rvsd.org/>.