**STONES BENGARD COMMUNITY SERVICE DISTRICT**

**509-695 STONE ROAD**

**SUSANVILLE, CA 96130**

**Phone: 530-825-3350 Email:** **stonesb@frontiernet.net**

Date: March 15, 2021

RE: Proposed Residential Wastewater Service Fee Increase

Dear SBCSD Member of Record,

This letter is intended to inform you that the Stones Bengard Community Service District (the “District”) Board of Directors will be holding a public hearing in accordance with the District By-Laws and applicable State Laws in regards to a proposed increase for wastewater (sewer) fees.

Over the past 10 years, our District has received bills from the State Water Resource Control Board with an increase of 47%, also, an increase of 23% in our Annual Audit expense plus higher cost for workers compensation, liability and property insurance. Federal and State laws have increased minimum wage and mandated that districts employ certain personnel in its employ. The District has done all it can to cut costs where it could during this time. The current fees were established 20 years ago, July 1, 2001. The proposed increases to wastewater service fees are necessary to continue to provide reliable wastewater services to the members of the District. Currently, the District is operating at a loss, spending more than fees collected. New service connections have been added to our revenue, but are not enough to cover the mounting cost of the District. The District has been using reserve funds to cover the wastewater operational expenses for several years now. We can no longer responsibly afford to fiscally operate in this manner.

The following increase proposed by the Board is nominal to help offset operating losses until a more thorough rate study can be performed by the Board in 2022. A rate study is necessary to determine a more accurate rate for services in years following 2021-2022. The Board proposes to self-perform that rate study with possible no-cost consultation as opposed to hiring a third-party firm. Third-party firms can charge tens of thousands of dollars. The Board intends to explore a reduction in the Fire Assessment Tax to help offset any increases in wastewater service fees.

Cordially,

The Stones Bengard Community Service District Board of Directors

**Proposed Sewer Rate Increase:**

**Residential:** A rate increase of $4.00 per month for residential properties beginning fiscal year 2021-2022.

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

Public Hearing for the proposed increase to wastewater (sewer) fees will be held on:

 Date: Saturday, May 1, 2021

 Time 10:00 am

 Place: Fire Hall 509-695 Stone Road, Susanville, CA 96130

**Note: The Public Hearing will take place in the Fire Hall with 6 ft social distancing. Hand sanitizer and masks will be available at the door. Do not enter if you have a cough or fever. Do not shake hands or other physical contact.**

This notice has been sent to all property owners and/or customers of record that are directly responsible for payment of the District wastewater fees and charges. Pursuant to Proposition 218 you may express support of, or, opposition to the proposed wastewater fee increase. If you cannot attend the public hearing, written comments must be submitted to the District before April 17, 2021. Delivery of written support of, or opposition to, should be addressed to the District office: 509-695 Stone Road, Susanville, Ca 96130.

You may use the following form and return to the District prior to the public hearing.

**There is no need to respond or attend if you are satisfied with the proposal.**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  **□Yes** | I realize the District needs more revenue and I support the increase. |
|  |
|  **□No** | Due to the following reasons. |
|  |
|  **□Other** |  |