

CSDA Conference Report

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I attended the annual CSDA Conference August 28-31 2023, representing the Gold Mountain CSD. There were approximately 975 other attendees at the conference. The “General” and “Breakout” sessions all provided a wealth of information and served to provoke interesting ideas and discussion with other attendees. Below are my key learnings. Please reach out if any clarification or further discussion would be helpful!

RATES & REVENUES

- Cost of Service Study should be done every 3-5 years. That means, we need to be planning on updating our cost study and reviewing rates via a rate case again in 2026.
- Special Taxes can be used to create additional revenues, e.g. hotel tax. They usually take 2-3 years of communication to get approved. We may be able to argue for Nakoma-collected hotel tax to be wholly distributed to GM CSD in order to support water and wastewater infrastructure. California State Department of Finance web site has good examples of taxes that passed and failed and provide ideas of what others have tried.

BOARD INFO

- Boards:
 - Set policy
 - Establish the budget
 - Hire, supervise, and fire the Superintendent/GM
 - Oversee the legal conduct of the District
 - Boards act as a body
 - By a majority of the entire Board
- According to CA Government Code 61040, the CSD Boards are responsible for Policies. The GM is responsible for execution. Most liability for Board Members exists when they try to execute in place of the GM.
- Board Members should never give direction to staff – there should be an escalation policy for staff to redirect board members to GM if the line is crossed.
- Minutes should reflect FACTS and be a RECORD of ACTIONS TAKEN. They must never become a “commentary”.
- There are only two types of Committees:
 - Standing: must agendaize and post minutes – like a board meeting
 - Ad Hoc: not required to agendaize or post minutes but must be short term and focused on specific work with a beginning and end



Board Liability Presentation -2023 Conf zip.zip

MORE MISC STUFF TO PONDER –

- Zero Emission Vehicles Mandate requires that 50% of medium and heavy-duty vehicles purchased by public agency in 2024 be all-electric and that 100% be in 2027 and beyond.
- CSDA Finance Corporation provides low interest loans – may be something we need to look at for large scale projects.
- We should try to establish relationships with RCDs (Regional Conservation District) working in Plumas County. They are heavily involved in forest management and open land use and are funded through Federal government grants. Their board members are USDA government authorities and have the power to decide on funds distribution for projects. See attached presentation by El Dorado County.
- Here’s a fun scenario what if all, or some, of the homes burned in our District? Revenues would drop to all “standby fees”. Usage would drop but infrastructure would need to be maintained. Would we have reserves to last for a while? Maybe a “risk management” scenario to consider as input to Reserve Policy?
- It is essential the water districts are part of the County Hazard Mitigation Plan and activity participate in process. Are we involved in any County activities?
- The Ferguson Group (a CSDA affiliate) will review grants for member Districts before filing to provide feedback and will also point you to available funding sources. How might we use?
- There was an information presentation on the role of LAFCOs – see attached.



LAFCO Presentation -2023 Conf zip.zip

- Another very interesting session was on Public Agencies Role in Forest Management – presentations attached (I thought the section presented by El Dorado County Resource Conservations Districts was particularly applicable to us)



Forest Mgmt Presentation -2023 Conf zip.zip