SWEETWATER SPRINGS WATER DISTRICT

TO: Board of Directors **AGENDA NO. V-C**

FROM: Steve Mack, General Manager

MEETING DATE: July 10, 2013

Subject: DISCUSSION/ACTION RE PROPOSED AT&T CELL TOWER AT HIGHLAND TREATMENT FACILITY

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Receive a report on the progress with arriving at acceptable lease agreement for leasing a portion of the Highland Treatment Facility parcel for use as a cell tower and provide direction to staff.

FISCAL IMPACT: none

DISCUSSION:

As of the writing of this report I have not received any new information from AT&T regarding the cell tower lease agreement. I have been promised a response soon and will share it with the Board if it arrives prior to the meeting.

Last week the permit for the cell tower at the Highland Treatment Facility was conditionally (I think) approved by the County of Sonoma Planning Commission. The public hearing was continued until August 8th where the Planning Commission wants to see more coverage maps.

The staff report recommended rejection of the permit because of AT&T ability to use another site on Siri Road which would be preferable according to County guidelines. If the Planning Commission continues to have a favorable opinion, this decision can be appealed to the Board of Supervisors.

I have heard from one neighbor of the Highland site who is opposed to the location because of health concerns. The local agency permitting process is not allowed to include health concerns in its decision-making process by federal law. I have looked up the health-related issues on the Internet and it appears that the major health related organizations, including the American Cancer Society, agree that health concerns are not an issue with cell towers. We may be receiving other information from concerned residents at the meeting.

A link to frequently asked questions about cell towers prepared by an engineering company that works in the field is: http://h-e.com/faq.

A link to a differing viewpoint is:
http://www.mountshastaecology.org/Archive/Health_Effects_from_Cell_Phone_Tower_Radiation.html.