

August 11, 2020

Kim Hughes  
5423 Santa Rita Rd  
Lompoc, CA 93436

Re: Water Service

We have received recent communication from your tenant, Jason Hillenbrand, regarding a proposed project for an “*outdoor cannabis cultivation operation*” with a service address at your property, 5423 Rancho Santa Rita Road in Lompoc. One presumes he represents you in this matter and that our reply is properly directed to you as owner at that address.

In answer to his request, let me affirm that you do own 15 shares in the water company and are entitled to service at that address – as defined within our governing documents. The “*Proposed Project located at 5436 Santa Rita Road*” is not familiar to us and is not listed in our documents. Perhaps you can clarify this point. It would be helpful.

Moreover, some language within Jason’s request was not entirely acceptable to us. It is beyond our experience, for example, to determine if we have “*sufficient water supply available to serve the Proposed Project.*” Nor can we affirm in our limited role if “*the project parcel has adequate ‘water credit’ for the forecasted demand associated with the Proposed Project.*” We observe that your project description does not offer a forecasted demand. Again, it would be helpful.

Let me add that water delivery to your property is a variable quantity, an allotment determined annually and listed on your water bill. A decade of drought and other constraints compel us to maintain flexibility in the allotment we assign to each share of ownership. Beyond that, you share a common infrastructure with two dozen homes, and in the face of unforeseen problems, our focus must always remain on household and domestic use over agricultural interests.

So again, let me affirm that you are entitled to water service at your property consistent with our governing documents. We might hope your allotment at 15 shares is sufficient to the project you describe, but we cannot in good faith attest that it is. We simply don’t have the agricultural experience or savvy to make that call. Perhaps a more detailed survey would be useful to us all.

That said, you might consider that shareholders with agricultural interests can always drill their own ag well to additionally serve their property. And, of course, one can purchase additional shares to increase their allotment if they’re already close to meeting their goals. Just a thought.

Anyway, do keep us in the loop; we genuinely wish you all the best.



J. Edwin Fields (jedwinfields@gmail.com)  
President, Vista Hills Mutual Water Co.  
5423 Campbell Road, Lompoc, CA 93435

cc: Santa Barbara County Planning Department

RECEIVED  
AUG 14 2020  
S B COUNTY  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT