



CITY OF FILLMORE

CENTRAL PARK PLAZA

250 Central Avenue

Fillmore, California 93015-1907

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March 25, 2020

Mr. Jason Gonsalves
Joë A. Gonsalves & Son
925 L Street Suite 250
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: FORGIVING UTILITY FEES (WATER AND SEWER)

Mr. Gonsalves:

Last night the City of Fillmore approved a resolution affirming that the City will not impose late fees on sewer and water fees or disconnect water service during the COVID-19 pandemic. The City has also started discussions regarding the possibility of forgiving utility fees (water and sewer) incurred by low income persons during the stay at home order. Fillmore is 79% Hispanic, 19% Caucasian and a hard to count region for the US Census.

The per capita income in Fillmore is \$23,046, with a median household income of \$67,636. Fillmore has approximately 15,800 residents. The City was ordered to build a new wastewater treatment facility in the mid-2000's and spent approximately \$70M on the project. The Fillmore Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) was completed in 2009 and is a zero-discharge water recycling facility.

The minimum monthly utility bill per household in 2007, was \$91.18 (water \$25.18 and sewer \$66) currently, the minimum monthly bill is \$144.86 (water \$41.51 and sewer \$103.36). A majority of the City's residential utility customers pay their bills in cash. We averaged 40 shutoffs per month prior to SB 998 and 11 since SB 998 went into effect earlier this year. In addition, we average 837 accounts per month with late fees. Not surprisingly, our City Council members have received several requests to forgive utility bills during the COVID-19 crisis. Unfortunately, Fillmore is a City that receives relatively little sales tax, which means it has minimal reserves, from which is could subsidize utility fees for residents.

As a result, we would like to ask the Governor and/or the legislature to consider providing funding to reimburse Fillmore and other cities who forgive utility bills for our residents who are most in need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David W. Rowlands". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'D'.

David W. Rowlands
City Manager

cc: File