

3 September 2020

TO: NBWA Board

FROM: Judy Kelly, Executive Director

RE: Repayment of Conference Dues After Cancellation of Conference, Agenda Item 5

This memo provides background on the North Bay Watershed Association's request to MMWD to refund, upon request, people who had paid the registration fee for the now-cancelled 2020 NBWA Conference that was scheduled for April.

As was the process for in 2018, we used a third-party web host, Brown Paper Tickets (BPT), to collect the conference fees and communicate with registered attendees. When Covid-19 hit and we had to cancel the conference, NBWA asked BPT to refund payments to all attendees. Many months went by with NBWA trying to communicate with BPT on this issue, and hearing from a large number of registered attendees that their refunds – which had originally been promised by BPT to arrive within 3 weeks – had never come. NBWA eventually concluded that BPT had ceased to respond to client emails and had essentially shut down.

We made the decision at that point to refund the conference attendee payments directly from NBWA funds. Our conference consultant, Frances Knapczyk of Napa RCD, contacted the registered attendees and asked each one to reply if they 1) wished to receive a refund, or alternatively 2) wished us to hold their registration fees for the next [not as yet scheduled] NBWA conference.

Cheryl received the information from Frances and processed those repayments using NBWA funds.

NBWA appreciates MMWD's help with this difficult issue. It should also be noted for future budget considerations that since we do not anticipate any funds being recovered from BPT, NBWA will need to cover the cost of all the 2020 registrations who asked us to "hold" funds for a future conference.

As a final note, a decision may also need to be made in the near future regarding possible repayment of the sponsorship funds NBWA is also holding related to the 2020 conference.

As shown in the Treasure's Report, a total amount of \$1,328.64 was refunded.