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CITY OF VALLEJO ACHIEVES VICTORY AGAINST LAWSUIT BROUGHT BY GVLA

VALLEJO, CA – The City of Vallejo achieved victory yesterday against the multimillion-dollar lawsuit brought by Green Valley customers to lower their water bills. Superior Court Judge Arvid Johnson dismissed the suit, rejecting each of its 12 legal theories. Green Valley Landowners Association (GVLA) sought nearly \$13 million in damages, arguing that Vallejo customers should have shared in the cost of upgrades to a water treatment facility that serves only Green Valley.

In January, when the lawsuit was filed, Vallejo City Attorney Claudia Quintana commented, “California tightened its water standards years ago and this resulted in higher costs for water in the Lakes Water System area. This was due in part to a \$7.25 million debt to pay for statutorily required improvements to the water treatment plant that provides water to customers specifically located in the Green Valley area. In prior years, customers residing in less-affluent Vallejo subsidized customers in the Green Valley system, but legally, that subsidy had to stop.”

Today, Quintana added, “Judge Johnson’s ruling is a significant victory for Vallejo as it continues to implement changes – such as halting this type of subsidy – which allow the City to better manage its resources and ensure its financial stability.”

Judge Johnson agreed with the City’s argument that Proposition 218, a statewide initiative passed by voters in 1996, requires Vallejo customers to pay only their fair share. He rejected GVLA’s argument that because Vallejo customers had subsidized Green Valley in past decades, they committed to help Green Valley customers in the future. Judge Johnson, who retired five years ago, was brought in to decide this particular case after multiple recusals by Solano County judges due to their ties to Green Valley.

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