

**THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

**MINUTES**

**ENGINEERING AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE**

**August 15, 2011**

Chair Evans called the meeting to order at 12:10 p.m. in Committee Room 2-145 at Metropolitan's Headquarters.

Members present: Chair Evans, Vice Chair Brown, Directors Barbre, Blake, Camacho, De Jesus, Grunfeld, Little, Montalvo, Peterson, Record, Steiner, and Wright.

Members absent: Directors Bowersox, Lowenthal, Morris, and Sanchez.

Other Board members present: Board Chairman Foley, Directors Ackerman, Brick, Dick, Griset, Edwards, and J. Murray.

Staff present: Arita, L. Carrillo, J. Green, G. Johnson, Kightlinger, W. Lieu, Man, Mead, Neal, M. Parsons, Riss, Scully, Shraibati, M. Stewart, Chamieh, Ruffner, Arakawa, Morel, Pecs, Lambeck, Waade, Coffey, Yates, Koch, Burch, Poon, Lai-Bluml, Ovalle, and L. Skinner.

**1. OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COMMITTEE ON MATTERS WITHIN THE COMMITTEE'S JURISDICTION**

No members responded.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE ENGINEERING AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD JULY 11, 2011**

Approved

Motion: Director Blake

Seconded: Director Wright

**3. CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS – ACTION**

**7-1** Subject: Appropriate \$1.82 million; and authorize final design of seismic upgrades for the Weymouth Filter Buildings (Approp. 15369)

Presented by: No presentation was requested.

Motion: Adopt the CEQA determinations and  
a. Appropriate \$1.82 million; and  
b. Authorize final design of seismic upgrades for the Weymouth Filter Buildings.

Motion Carried Moved: Director Blake Seconded: Director Record

**7-2** Subject: Appropriate \$1.92 million; and authorize four improvement projects at the Robert B. Diemer Water Treatment Plant (Approp. 15436)

Presented by: No presentation was requested.

Motion: Adopt the CEQA determination and  
a. Appropriate \$1.92 million;  
b. Authorize final design of the water sampling system improvements at the Diemer plant;  
c. Authorize installation of new filter process control instruments;  
d. Authorize installation of overflow monitoring for residual solids and wastewater; and  
e. Authorize supernatant pump station improvements.

Motion Carried Moved: Director Blake Seconded: Director Record

**7-3** Subject: Authorize a one-year extension of the existing 5-year reimbursable agreement with the California Department of Water Resources to provide services for State Water Project operations and maintenance activities for an additional amount not to exceed \$5 million (including expenditures for subcontracts not to exceed \$1.5 million)

Presented by: No presentation was requested.

Motion: Adopt the CEQA determination and authorize  
a. A one-year extension to the existing 5-year reimbursable agreement with the California

Department of Water Resources to provide services for State Water Project operations and maintenance activities in an amount not to exceed \$5 million;

- b. Entering into subcontracts greater than \$250,000 to complete work under the agreement; and
- c. Entering into subcontracts as needed, not to exceed \$1.5 million cumulatively under the agreement.

Motion Carried    Moved: Director Blake    Seconded: Director Record

#### **4. OTHER BOARD ITEMS – ACTION**

**8-6**            Subject:            Appropriate \$7.7 million; and award \$4,818,000 contract to Southern Contracting Company for replacement of 230 kV disconnect switches on the Colorado River Aqueduct (Approp. 15438)

Presented by:    Engineering Services Group Senior Engineer Cristian Ovalle

Motion:            Adopt the CEQA determination and

- a. Appropriate \$7.7 million; and
- b. Award \$4,818,000 contract to Southern Contracting Company for replacement of 230 kV disconnect switches on the CRA.

Motion Carried    Moved: Director Wright    Seconded: Director Record

Engineering Services Group Senior Engineer Cristian Ovalle presented this action item.

Director Steiner asked for a clarification regarding the difference between the appropriation amount of \$7.7 million and the contract bid amount of \$4.8 million. Engineering Services Group Manager Gordon Johnson replied that in addition to the contract amount, the \$7.7 million includes Metropolitan force construction costs, staff inspection costs, and remaining budget, which is a contingency fund.

Director Barbre inquired about the disposition of remaining funds when a project is completed, and asked if a tracking report is generated. Mr. Johnson responded that remaining funds are held until the end of the appropriation. Unused funds are returned to be used for another project. Chief Operating Officer Debra Man stated that a quarterly report on the capital programs is provided which identifies budgets, expenditures, and variances. Program status reports are also provided throughout the year. Ms. Man offered to go over the reports with Director Barbre.

Director Grunfeld asked if we will be relying on Edison to provide temporary

switches at Eagle Mountain during the construction. He also inquired about the cost difference between temporary and permanent switches. Mr. Johnson replied that temporary switches will not be necessary, since we will be relying on existing switches during construction.

Chair Evans asked for an explanation of the significant price difference in the bids of the two contractors. Mr. Johnson replied that the work is highly specialized, and the variation in bids is attributed to the limited pool of qualified contractors. Metropolitan has past work experience with the low bid contractor and believes the company to be well qualified.

## 5. BOARD INFORMATION ITEMS

None

## 6. COMMITTEE ITEMS

- a. Subject: Oral report on a new strategy to control water treatment chemical
- Presented by: Water System Operations Team Manager Rich Yates

Following a presentation by Mr. Yates, Ms. Man commented that the new bromate control strategy resulted from Metropolitan's applied research and development program to optimize water treatment and reduce operating costs. Water System Operations Group Manager Jim Green added that next month staff will return to the Board to request authorization for preliminary design to implement the new strategy at all five water treatment plants.

Director Brick stated that the presentation highlighted the importance of Metropolitan's applied research program. He suggested recognizing employees whose work significantly reduces costs. Director Brick asked if the new bromate control strategy has any application to desalination. Ms. Man replied that staff would review whether the findings of this work applied to seawater desalination.

Director Montalvo inquired if this new strategy would affect human health. Mr. Green responded that staff partnered with outside experts, as well as the California Department of Public Health, to determine that this is a safe process to reduce the formation of a regulated disinfection by-product.

Director Peterson asked if staff plans to share the new strategy with other agencies, and stated that Metropolitan should apply for awards. Mr. Green answered that staff has worked with an expert panel, and that other agencies are looking into implementing the process. Ms. Man added that staff will present the results at

technical forums.

b. Subject: Update on Jensen Solids Handling Project

Presented by: Water System Operations Assistant Group Manager Brad Coffey

Mr. Coffey provided an update on the project and discussed alternatives for treating and disposing of the solids at Jensen, including both the relocation of recreation facilities on Metropolitan's property and a 50-year lease with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power that would facilitate the construction of new lagoons and/or the rehabilitation of existing lagoons.

Mr. Kightlinger commented that the ongoing discussions with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks, and Los Angeles City Council members have been cooperative and have identified potential alternative sites for a recreation facility.

Director Grunfeld agreed with the statements made by Mr. Kightlinger with respect to the ongoing discussions. Director Peterson identified an alternative site for the recreation facilities and indicated that he would like to have options brought to the Board. Chair Evans commented that staff should continue working towards a timely resolution. Mr. Kightlinger indicated that alternatives would be brought back by the end of the year.

## 7. MANAGEMENT REPORTS

a. Subject: Water System Operations Manager's report

Presented by: Water System Operations Group Manager Jim Green

Mr. Green provided an update on current operations. He reviewed the water blends at the treatment plants and reported on a minor leak on the Upper Feeder which was successfully repaired.

b. Subject: Engineering Services Manager's report

Presented by: Engineering Services Group Manager Gordon Johnson

Mr. Johnson followed up on Director Barbre's suggestion that air filters could be installed at Diemer's control room to filter out smoke in case of a fire. Mr. Johnson described the studies conducted, which concluded that it would be more cost-effective to have any modifications made concurrently with the upcoming seismic upgrades rather than proceed independently with the upgrades.

With respect to the intern program, Director Steiner asked if Metropolitan has two contracts with California Polytechnic State University. Mr. Johnson replied that Water System Operations and Engineering Services Group each have a contract for the student interns. All charges are for the interns' labor.

**8. FOLLOW-UP ITEMS**

None

**9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

None

Next meeting will be held on September 12, 2011.

Meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

Tom Evans  
Chair