

**THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

**MINUTES**

**COMMUNICATIONS AND LEGISLATION COMMITTEE**

**February 14, 2012**

Chair Ackerman called the meeting to order at 10:26 a.m. in Committee Room 2-456 at Metropolitan's Headquarters.

Members present: Chair Ackerman, Vice Chair Peterson, Directors Abdo, Barbre, Brick, Camacho, Fleming, Friedman, Gray, Griset, Heidel, Lewinger, Lowenthal, K. Murray, Morris, and Record.

Members absent: Directors Ballin and Montalvo.

Other Board Members present: Directors Blake, Brown, Dick, Edwards, Evans, Foley, Grandsen, Little, J. Murray, Wilson, and Wright.

Staff present: Acuña, J. Carrillo, Cole, Escuadro-Dailey, Daniels, Green, Hiltcher, Kightlinger, Man, Martinez, Patterson, Philp, Riss, Scully, Stites, Upadhyay, Waade, Wolfe, and Zinke.

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

None

**2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE COMMUNICATIONS AND LEGISLATION COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON JANUARY 10, 2012**

Approved

Moved: Peterson

Seconded: Gray

**3. COMMITTEE CHAIR'S REPORT**

On January 26, Director John Murray, Director Jesus Quiñonez, General Manager Jeff Kightlinger, and other staff attended the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce annual event. Nearly 1,500 elected officials and business leaders also attended and Governor Brown provided the keynote address.

On January 24, Director David Fleming was honored by the Los Angeles County Business Federation, also known as “BizFed”, at their annual event. Director Fleming was recognized for his leadership role in the organization. Jeff Kightlinger provided the keynote address, providing an overview of Metropolitan and an update on the water supply situation.

On January 11, staff coordinated a visit to Diamond Valley Lake for Director Randy Record and representatives from the U.S. Department of Interior and Bureau of Reclamation.

**4. CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS – ACTION**

None

**5. OTHER BOARD ITEMS – ACTION**

None

**6. BOARD INFORMATION ITEMS**

None

**7. COMMITTEE ITEMS**

a. Subject: Report on activities from Washington, D.C.

Presented by: Brad Hiltcher, Executive Legislative Representative

Mr. Hiltcher reported on the following activities in Washington, D.C.:

**House Committee Action**

**Energy and Commerce Committee**

On February 3, the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Environment and Economy held an Oversight Hearing on the Administration’s implementation of the Chemical Facilities Anti-Terrorism Standards Act, better-known as “CFATS.” Metropolitan is closely monitoring legislation related to the CFATS Act.

### **Natural Resources Committee**

On February 7, the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water and Power held an oversight hearing entitled: “Water for Our Future and Job Creation: Examining Regulatory and Bureaucratic Barriers to New Surface Storage Infrastructure.” The purpose of the hearing was to discuss the nature of impediments to the development of new dams and surface water storage throughout the western United States. Staff will continue to monitor hearings related to this issue and keep the Board apprised of any legislative developments.

### **Transportation and Infrastructure Committee**

The Senate Finance Committee began deliberation on surface transportation bills including an amendment by Senator Menendez (D-NJ) and Senator Crapo (R-ID) to include the Water Infrastructure Sustainability Act in the Highway bill. The amendment will allow states to issue water and wastewater tax-exempt Private Activity Bonds in excess of their cap for six years.

### **President’s FY 2013 Budget**

The President’s \$3.8 trillion 2013 budget request has been submitted to Congress.

The Bureau of Reclamation (Bureau) announced a number of grants and other items of interest to California including:

- \$1.75 million for the Bureau to re-do the biological opinions.
- \$36 million for the CALFED program which was reauthorized to 2014.
- Funding to complete storage studies for Shasta Reservoir.
- Funding for additional fish screens on the Sacramento River.

### **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**

The Army Corps of Engineers released its 2013 work plan. This work plan is the basis for the introduction of a Water Resource Development Act (WRDA) bill. This measure authorizes projects and programs that are carried out by the Army Corps of Engineers with respect to dams and flood control projects.

- b. Subject: Report on activities from Sacramento
- Presented by: Kathy Cole, Executive Legislative Representative

Ms. Cole reported on activities in Sacramento:

**Legislative Deadlines**

- February 24: Bill introduction deadline.  
April 27: Last day for policy committees to report out fiscal bills.  
May 11: Last day for policy committees to report out non-fiscal bills.

Recent bill introductions include:

- SB 964 Senator Rod Wright (D-Los Angeles) – requires state and regional boards to apply the Administrative Procedure Act (APA) to statewide, region-wide or industry-wide regulations or requirements. The APA requires an economic assessment of potential regulations.
- SB 965 Senator Rod Wright (D-Los Angeles) – provides that statewide, region-wide or industry-wide regulations and requirements are not adjudicatory.
- AB 1532 Speaker John Pérez, D-Los Angeles – a placeholder bill for the allocation of emission credit auction revenues raised through California’s AB 32 “Cap & Trade” program.

**2012 Metropolitan Water District’s Legislative Priorities**

Last December, Metropolitan Board adopted state legislative platform. Updates on board priorities:

- WateReuse will move forward with a bill to consolidate, streamline and recodify water recycling statutes all within the Water Code.
- On March 20, the Assembly Water Parks & Wildlife Committee will hold an informational hearing to explore untapped potential for water reuse in California.
- Metropolitan, is working through the California Council for Environmental and Economic Balance (CCEEB), to provide clarity and consistency in Certified Unified Program Agency reporting requirements.
- CalDesal will sponsor a bill to establish state agency/stakeholder task force to evaluate the current challenges associated with permitting seawater desalination plants, while still maintaining environmental protections.

### Water Bond

- Senator Daryl Steinberg, present Pro Tem of the Senate, and Assembly Speaker John Perez, gathered stakeholders together last Thursday to discuss 2012 water bond. Kathy Cole was invited to represent Metropolitan and attended the meeting.
- Stakeholders will reconvene on February 23 to assess the progress.

### Pension Reform

- “California Pension Reform” suspended its campaign to put public employee pension reform measure on November ballot.
- The Governor released statutory and constitutional language necessary to implement his 12-point pension reform plan he presented to the Legislature last fall. If the Legislature fails to put reform measure on ballot, he would have to take his plan directly to voters.

### State Budget

- The budget subcommittees will commence hearings to focus on specific proposals within the Governor’s budget.
- Metropolitan is working with other California Colorado River water agencies on the Governor’s proposal to transfer Colorado River Board to the Resources Agency.

### Informational Hearing

- Pending approval, the Assembly Select Committee on Regional Approaches to Addressing the State’s Water Crisis, chaired by Assembly Member Jose Solorio (D-Santa Ana), will convene an informational hearing on March 14 to explore progress to date on meeting the 20 percent X 2020 goals.

### ACWA Legislative Symposium

- Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) will hold an annual legislative symposium on March 7 in Sacramento. This is a one-day program that will provide updates on water bond, transparency in groundwater management, and pension reform.

c. Subject: Biennial 2012/13 and 2013/14 External Affairs Budget

Presented by: Linda Waade, Deputy General Manager, External Affairs

Ms. Waade provided a report on the 2012/14 Biennial Budget for External Affairs group. She reported on the following:

- The External Affairs Group's organization includes the Sacramento and Washington, D.C. offices along with the Legislative Services Section, Media & Communications Section, Conservation and Community Services Section, and the Customer Service Unit with Dee Zinke as the Group Manager.
- A key priority for External Affairs is to ensure that Metropolitan's messages are accurate, consistent, and timely.
- External Affairs is also responsible for working with state and federal elected officials and their staff to advance Metropolitan's legislative strategy that is approved by the Board every year.
- External Affairs also works closely with the member agencies, conducts outreach with the general public, business and environmental communities, schools, and other stakeholders to help provide a better understanding about Metropolitan and our mission.

## **8. MANAGEMENT REPORT**

None

## **9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

None

Next meeting will be held on March 13, 2012.

Meeting adjourned at 11:18 a.m.

Linda Ackerman  
Chair