

**THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

**MINUTES**

**COMMUNICATIONS AND LEGISLATION COMMITTEE**

**April 10, 2012**

Chair Ackerman called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m. in Committee Room 2-456 at Metropolitan's Headquarters.

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

Members absent: Directors Friedman, Lowenthal, Montalvo, and K. Murray.

Other Board Members present: Directors Blake, Brown, Edwards, Foley, Grandsen, Little, J. Murray, Steiner, Wilson, and Wunderlich.

Staff present: Acuña, Arakawa, Bennion, Breaux, Burman, J. Carrillo, Coffey, Cole (via video), Gabelich, Green, Hiltcher (via video), Kightlinger, Man, Martinez, Muir, Patterson, Philp, Scully, Stites, Waade, Wolfe, E. Wong, T. Wong, 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 MARCH 13, 2012**

Approved

Moved: Record

Seconded: Heidel

**3. COMMITTEE CHAIR'S REPORT**

Chair Ackerman reported that on March 16, Directors Camacho, De Jesus, Edwards and Hawkins joined staff at a Regional Chamber of Commerce San Gabriel Valley event featuring Senate Minority Leader Bob Huff. The Senator reported on the state's economy, business regulations and resource needs. The event was attended by numerous business, community and civic leaders.

Chair Ackerman also reported that Metropolitan staff assisted in planning and organizing the Water Policy 21 Conference convened in March by the Public Officials for Water and Environmental Reform. Staff helped organize a panel on seismic risks to state water supplies. The panel featured key speakers, including: Dr. Lucy Jones, an expert in geophysics and seismology with the US Geological Survey and Visiting Research Associate at the Seismological Laboratory of Caltech. Other speakers were Mike Mierzwa, Flood Policy Advisor for California's Department of Water Resources; Rich Atwater, Southern California Water Committee, and Randall Neudeck, Special Projects Manager at Metropolitan. Steve Arakawa, Bay Delta Initiatives Manager, participated in another panel of experts that addressed Delta issues including the Bay Delta Conservation Plan.

**4. CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS – ACTION**

None

**5. OTHER BOARD ITEMS – ACTION**

**8-5** Subject: Express support and seek amendments for H.R. 2538 (Calvert, R-CA) – Reducing Environmental Barriers to Unified Infrastructure and Land Development (REBUILD) Act of 2011

Presented by: Cathy Stites, Senior Deputy General Counsel

Motion: Adopt the CEQA determination and express support and seek amendments to H.R. 2538.

Motion Carried: Record                      Seconded: Morris

**8-6** Subject: Express support for SB 1387 (Emmerson, R-Riverside) - Metal Theft; and for AB 1508 (Carter, D-Rialto) – Junk Dealers and Recyclers: Nonferrous Materials

Presented by: Christopher Gabelich, Environmental Specialist

Motion: Adopt the CEQA determination and authorize the General Manager to express Metropolitan's support for SB 1387 and AB 1508.

Motion Carried                      Moved: Morris                      Seconded: Gray

- 8-7** Subject: Express opposition to SB 1495 (Wolk, D-Davis) – Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Reform Act of 2009, unless amended
- Presented by: Steve Arakawa, Bay-Delta Initiatives Manager
- Motion: Adopt the CEQA determination and authorize the General Manager to express Metropolitan’s opposition to SB 1495 unless it is amended.
- Motion Carried Moved: Morris Seconded: Record  
Abstained: Heidel and Gray

**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 a number of federal updates and matters including:

- The House and Senate are adjourned for a two-week period from April 2-13.

**FY2013 Budget Passed by House**

- On March 29, the House approved a Continuing Resolution 112, the fiscal year 2013 budget resolution by a party-line vote of 228-191.
- The resolution, offered by Budget Committee Chairman Paul Ryan (R-WI), sets a goal of reducing federal spending by \$5 trillion over the next 10 years and would cap discretionary spending in fiscal 2013, at a level of \$19 billion below last fall’s debt-ceiling agreement. The plan instructs House policy committees to identify \$116 billion in specific deficit reductions over the next five years.

### **Transportation Bill Update**

- On March 29, the House passed H.R. 4281, the Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2012, a stop-gap measure that provides a 90-day extension of the federal surface transportation highway bill. The Senate passed the same measure and the bill will now go to the President's desk for approval.
- Senators Mike Crapo (R-ID) and Robert Menendez (D-NJ) put together an amendment to H.R. 4281 that would provide language for activity bonds for water and wastewater infrastructure development. We anticipate further action on this bill when the Senate and House return on April 16.

### **National Research Council (NRC) Report: Sustainable Water and Environmental Management in the California Bay-Delta**

- At the Water Planning and Stewardship Committee meeting on April 9, Assistant General Manager, Strategic Water Initiatives, Roger Patterson noted that the National Research Council published a report "Sustainable Water and Environmental Management in the California Bay-Delta." The NRC is a subset of the National Academy for Science and the report is available on the National-Academies.org. website. The report was initiated by Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA).

b. Subject: Report on activities from Sacramento

Presented by: Kathy Cole, Executive Legislative Representative

Ms. Cole reported on activities in Sacramento including legislative deadlines and updates on:

### **Delta-Related Legislation:**

- Several bills adverse to Metropolitan's Delta objectives were amended, including: AB 1813 (Buchanan, D-San Ramon), AB 1884 (Buchanan, D-San Ramon), AB 2000 (Huber, D-El Dorado Hills), AB 2421 (Berryhill, R-Stockton), AB 2422 (Berryhill, R-Stockton) and SB 1495 (Wolk, D-Davis).

### **MWD 2012 Legislative Priorities:**

- AB 2595 (Hall, D-Los Angeles) seeks to establish a task force led by the Ocean Protection Council to assess opportunities for more efficient seawater desalination permitting.

- AB 2398 (Hueso, D-San Diego) would organize and consolidate existing statutory and regulatory law in a new division of the Water Code entitled Water Recycling Act of 2012.

**State Budget:**

- Update on the state budget including proposed Colorado River Board transfer to Resources Agency and the Department of Water Resources' budget.

**Governor's Reorganization Plan:**

- The Governor sent a reorganization plan to the Little Hoover Commission to consolidate entities with similar roles and functions. Among the proposals are the transfer of the Department of Boating and Waterways to the Department of Parks and Recreation and the transfer of the Delta Stewardship Council to the Natural Resources Agency.

**Redistricting and Upcoming Election Procedures:**

- The candidate filing deadline has closed. A new primary system is in effect, where voters will vote for candidates from any party, and the top two vote getters, regardless of party, will compete in the November general election.

c. Subject: Legislative Update on Cap and Trade Regulations

Presented by: Kathy Cole, Executive Legislative Representative

Ms. Cole gave an update on Cap and Trade.

- On March 27, the Senate Select Committee on the Environment, Economy and Climate Change, chaired by Senator Fran Pavley (D-Agoura Hills), held informational hearing on implementation of the cap-and-trade program and the allocation of the auction revenues.
- The Administration has released a budget trailer bill that outlines proposed uses for the auction revenues, and Assembly Speaker Perez (D-Los Angeles), Assembly Member Fuentes (D-Los Angeles), Senator Pavley and Senator De Leon (D-Los Angeles) have all introduced legislation to direct the use of auction funds.
- Senator Alex Padilla (D-Pacoima), who chairs the Senate Energy Utilities and Communications Committee, has agreed to carry a bill for Metropolitan to address Metropolitan's specific Cap and Trade concerns, SB 1535.

d. Subject: Water Bond Update

Presented by: Kathy Cole, Executive Legislative Representative

**2012 Water Bond:**

- Latest survey data showed significant fundamental support for improving state's water systems. The public is also concerned over the state of economy, extent of debt incurred by state and general mistrust of government. General Manager Kightlinger stated that Metropolitan will be supportive of the Administration and the leadership in pushing the Water Bond to 2014.

**8. MANAGEMENT REPORT**

None

**9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Director Brick requested that the Board's position to "watch" H.R. 1837 be brought back to the committee in May.

Next meeting will be held on May 8, 2012.

Meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Linda Ackerman  
Chair