

THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

MINUTES

COMMUNICATIONS AND LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

June 12, 2012

Chair Ackerman called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. in Committee Room 2-456 at Metropolitan's Headquarters.

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

Members absent: Directors Barbre and Brick.

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

Staff present: Acuña, Bennion, Breaux, J. Carrillo, Cole (via teleconference), Escuadro-Dailey, Donnelly, Gabelich, Green, Hiltcher (via video conference), Kightlinger, Lee, Man, Martinez, J. Miller, Patterson, Philp, Scully, Stites, Waade, 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 MAY 8, 2012

Approved

Moved: Ballin

Seconded: Morris

3. COMMITTEE CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Ackerman reported that several directors and staff attended the Association of California Water Agencies' (ACWA) Annual Spring Conference, "A Strong Foundation for Rebuilding California" which was held May 8-11 in Monterey, CA.

Chair Ackerman also reported that on May 18 directors and staff attended the annual Orange County Water Summit, convened and co-hosted by the Municipal Water District of Orange County and the Orange County Water District.

4. CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS – ACTION

None

5. OTHER BOARD ITEMS – ACTION

8-9 Subject: Express opposition to S. 2264 (Hoeven, R-ND) and H.R. 4345 (Shimkus, R-IL) — Domestic Fuels Protection Acts of 2012, unless amended

Presented by: Chris Gabelich, Environmental Specialist

Motion: Adopt the CEQA determination and express opposition to S. 2264 and H.R. 4345, as introduced on March 29 and 30, 2012, respectively, unless amended.

Motion Carried: Moved: Morris Seconded: Griset

6. BOARD INFORMATION ITEMS

None

7. COMMITTEE ITEMS

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

Presented by: Brad Hiltcher, Executive Legislative Representative

Ms. Waade provided the Washington D.C. report for Brad Hiltcher due to video conference technical difficulties.

Ms. Waade reported on recent discussion in the House on the Energy and Water Appropriations bill, including a veto threat by the Administration due to:

- Proposed cuts to clean energy priorities and policy riders that would reopen the Yucca Mountain nuclear waste depository, undo federal building efficiency requirements, and block guidance on the Clean Water Act.
- The bill provides funding for several of the District's federal legislative priorities including:
 - Department of Interior's Bay-Delta Restoration Program.
 - Funding for certain agencies that are party to the Bay-Delta Conservation planning process.
 - Bureau of Reclamation's Title XVI Program, WaterSMART grant funding.
 - Department of Energy's ongoing uranium mine tailings cleanup effort in Moab, Utah.
 - Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum, and its mission to protect the upstream and downstream water quality of the Colorado River.

Ms. Waade also reported on the following legislation:

Clean Water Act Revisions

- The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee voted to support a substitute amendment to H.R. 4965 (Mica, R-FL), that would prohibit the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency or the Army Corps of Engineers from finalizing Clean Water Act regulatory guidance proposed by the Obama administration that would widen federal Clean Water Act jurisdiction over isolated streams and wetlands.

Farm Bill

- On June 7, the Senate agreed to advance S.3240 (Stabenow, D-MI), which establishes the nation's nutrition and agriculture policy for the next five years.
- The bill includes continued authorization of the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), which provides much of the funding for on-farm watershed protection and Salinity Control activities on the Colorado River.

Federal Regulation of Power

- On Monday, June 4, the Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water and Power held an oversight hearing in Phoenix, Arizona on the impact of recent Department of Energy's actions on water and power rates in the service area of the Navajo Generating Plant located on the Navajo Indian Reservation, near Page, Arizona.

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:

Water Bond:

- Staff is working with the Legislature to encourage delay of the 2012 water bond to November 2014. Legislation will be necessary to implement the change.

State Legislation:

- *AB 2595 (Hall, D-Los Angeles)*: Creates task force for reviewing existing regulatory processes for permitting seawater desalination projects. The bill passed the Assembly and awaits assignment to the Senate policy committee.
- *AB 2398 (Hueso, D-San Diego)*: Creates new system for regulating and permitting recycled water based upon objective scientific review for maximizing recycled water use while protecting public health and the environment. AB 2398 passed the Assembly; however, in light of further refinements still necessary to the bill, Senator Fran Pavley (D-Santa Monica), Chair of the Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee, urged proponents to consider holding the bill in her committee to allow stakeholders, including state agencies, to craft a more fully developed bill over the fall legislative recess for introduction next session. The author and WaterReuse representatives agreed to do so.
- *SB 1535 (Padilla, D-Sylmar)*: Metropolitan's sponsored measure to address the inequitable treatment of Metropolitan under the Cap and Trade regulation was heard on May 14 in the Senate Environmental Quality Committee. General Manager Jeff Kightlinger testified on behalf of Metropolitan. Rather than bringing SB 1535 to a vote, Committee Chair Joe Simitian (D-Palo Alto) urged Senator Padilla, Metropolitan and the California Air Resources Board to renew and explore options for compliance.
- *Delta Legislation*: AB 2421 and 2422 by Assembly Member Bill Berryhill (R-Stockton) were retained by the Assembly Appropriations Committee and both measures are dead for the session.
- Metropolitan, Westlands Water District, and the Association of California Water Agencies negotiated further amendments to SB 1495 by Senator Lois Wolk (D-Davis), to narrow the "covered action" exemption for routine dredging activities

by the Ports of West Sacramento and Stockton to ensure protection of Delta objectives.

- After late opposition surfaced on SB 250, Senator Michael Rubio (D-Fresno) pulled his bill from the June 12 hearing agenda of the Assembly Water, Parks and Wildlife Committee. SB 250 was designed to ensure timely and decisive action on the Bay Delta Conservation Plan.

June 6 Primary Election:

- Voters overwhelmingly supported (65 percent to 35 percent) Proposition 28, which alters the state's term limits law by allowing lawmakers to serve as many as 12 years in either Senate or Assembly while reducing lawmakers' overall service in both houses from 14 years.
- The June 6 primary election marked the inception of California's open primary system, in which the top two vote-getting candidates, regardless of party, qualify for November's general election. Fourteen Assembly and two Senate races will feature candidates from the same party.
- The June primary was also the first for California's newly drawn state and congressional districts.

8. MANAGEMENT REPORT

Ms. Dee Zinke, Group Manager, External Affairs reported that May marked the 10th Anniversary of Metropolitan's signature Solar Cup education event, which was held at Lake Skinner. Thirty-nine teams participated, representing schools from each of the six counties within Metropolitan's service area.

In addition to the solar boat races, the students were responsible for writing technical papers and developing public service announcements (PSAs) on the importance of water conservation. Ms. Zinke stated that several of the PSAs were running on the *bewaterwise.com* website. She showed the committee one of the PSAs and the news coverage on the event.

9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Next meeting will be held on July 10, 2012.

Meeting adjourned at 10:42 a.m.

Linda Ackerman
Chair