

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE TORRANCE WATER COMMISSION**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Water Commission convened in a regular session at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 27, 2013 in the West Annex Meeting Room at Torrance City Hall. Due to the absence of Chairperson Lefevre, Vice-Chairperson McCabe led the meeting.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present: Commissioners Haddon, Marshall, McGee, Nishinaga, See, and Vice-Chairperson McCabe.

Absent: Chairperson Lefevre.

Also Present: Public Works Director Beste,
Deputy Public Works Director van der Linden,
Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich,
Engineering Manager Dettle, and
Metropolitan Water District Director Wright.

MOTION: Commissioner McGee moved to grant Chairperson Lefevre an excused absence for the March 27, 2013 Commission meeting. Commissioner See seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

3. FLAG SALUTE

Commissioner See led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

MOTION: Commissioner Nishinaga moved to accept and file the report of the City Clerk on the posting of the agenda for this meeting. Commissioner Haddon seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

5A. MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 21, 2013

MOTION: Commissioner McGee moved to approve the February 21, 2013 Water Commission meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Haddon seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Chairperson Lefevre).

6. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM PUBLIC

Commissioners and staff welcomed former Commissioner Deemer.

7. OLD BUSINESS - None.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8A. REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION REGARDING STAFF RECOMMENDATION FOR CONCEPTUAL APPROVAL FOR PROPOSED NEW VAN NESS WELL FIELD PROJECT

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich introduced the item with an overview of Torrance Municipal Water's (TMW) water resource program and New Local Water Supply Sources. He presented background information on TMW that serves approximately 80% of the City and has 26,500 accounts. He noted that currently TMW relies on imported water for nearly 85% of its potable supply. He showed a slide of TMW's Facility & Service Area Map as well as water sources for Torrance that include State Water Project, Colorado River Aqueduct, and Local Supplies. He showed a pie chart of Water Use by Customer Type, noting that the largest users are residential customers.

Responding to Commissioner Haddon's inquiry, he stated that MWD imports approximately two million acre feet (AF) per year, about half from State Water Project and half from the Colorado River.

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich discussed the Business Plan, 2011 Water Rate and Infrastructure Plan, and Supply Diversification Plan that includes developing four additional freshwater wells, expanding the Groundwater Desalter by drilling three additional brackish water wells, and maximizing use of recycled water.

At MWD Director Wright's suggestion, he explained what brackish water is, how seawater intrusion occurred in the past due to overpumping, the fresh water barrier to repel seawater, and how brackish water is extracted to keep the plume from migrating further.

He provided benefits of additional local water supply: enhance reliability, reduce dependence on imported water, lower long term water costs, and stabilize future water rates. He noted that TMW hopes to have a more balanced water source mix in the future and showed the economic benefits of new wells, with a 5:1 benefit to cost ratio.

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich reported that there is 600,000 AF of brackish groundwater in the West Basin. He stated that the Goldsworthy Desalter currently produces 1,500 AF per year and noted that the proposed groundwater Desalter expansion would increase production to 4,500 AF per year, or 20% of TMW drinking water. He showed slides of what additional wells would look like and the West Basin Recycling Plant in El Segundo that provides water for non-potable industrial and landscape uses. He briefly discussed indirect use of recycled water in the future and discussed the economic advantages of local supply sources that include using all the 5,640 AF per year adjudicated pumping rights and the possibility of leasing additional groundwater pumping rights. He noted that imported water from MWD costs approximately \$850 AF while local wells produces water for approximately \$400 AF.

Responding to Commissioner McGee's inquiry, Engineering Manager Dettle stated that it is not economically viable to have recycled water go to Sea Aire Golf Course and Seaside Elementary.

Engineering Manager Dettle provided a presentation on Proposed New Local Water Supply Facilities. He noted that North Torrance is the only area with good quality groundwater and discussed site constraints for locating new wells that include a minimum separation of 50 feet from sewer or storm drains, pump motor and well head above ground, vehicle access, and a flat area.

He presented the proposed Van Ness Avenue Well Fields that involves drilling two pilot test wells at Hamilton School and La Carretera Park. He stated that, if successful, full-scale wells would be developed and water from them would be pumped 3.5 miles down Van Ness Avenue to the existing Border Avenue Distribution and Treatment site. He reported that the pilot wells would be funded by the Water Enterprise Fund and would be drilled in early summer 2013. He showed photographs of the proposed well sites, a conceptual of a 13' by 16' well house building surrounded by pavers, and the Border Avenue Treatment facility.

8B. REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION REGARDING STAFF RECOMMENDATION FOR CONCEPTUAL APPROVAL FOR PROPOSED EXPANSION OF GOLDSWORTHY DESALTER PROJECT

Engineering Manager Dettle presented information regarding the proposed Goldsworthy Desalter Expansion. He noted that the Desalter located at the City Yard was designed to be expanded and could increase production to approximately 4,000 to 4,500 AF per year. He stated that expansion involves drilling three new pilot wells into the saline water plume at the City Yard, Civic Center behind the Police Storage Unit, and Delthorne Park. He noted that, if successful, full-scale wells would be developed in early 2014. He stated that the estimated cost of the expansion is \$17 million and funded by multiple sources that include grants, Water Replenishment District, and MWD. He showed photographs of the proposed well site and conceptual of the well house building.

Responding to Commissioner Nishinaga's inquiry, he stated that cost of the Desalter's cartridges and filters have gone done considerably as the design improves. He explained that the total operational cost for the water produced is approximately \$625 AF and that one of the largest costs is getting rid of the brine.

8C. REVIEW AND PRESENTATION REGARDING THE STATUS OF THE NORTH TORRANCE (YUKON AVENUE) GROUNDWATER FACILITIES PROJECT

Engineering Manager Dettle provided an overview presentation regarding the North Torrance Groundwater Facilities Project. He reported that the project involves development of a new groundwater production site behind Yukon Elementary School and consists of three wells, construction of water treatment, 3 million gallon reservoir, pumping equipment, and pipelines to connect the wells to the production site. He noted that one of the three wells, Well #9, is located at McMaster Park and was completed in 2011. He noted that City Council recently approved \$2 million funding for construction of the remainder of Phase I that includes pipelines, access road, and improvements to the school parking lot. He stated that Phase I would be completed this summer, and the balance of the project, approximately \$12-13 million, would need to be funded by long-term financing. He showed a location map of the North Torrance Well Field and the well house building at McMaster Park.

He presented next steps: Secure Parks and Recreation Commission approval for well site at Delthorne and La Carretera Parks; Drill pilot wells for Van Ness Avenue Well Field Project and Desalter Expansion; Construct North Torrance Well Field Project, Phase I; Complete engineering and develop funding plan for Van Ness Avenue and North Torrance Well Field Projects; and Work with Water Replenishment District to secure funding for Desalter Expansion.

Public Works Director Beste presented staff recommendations and pointed out that the Desalter expansion would help clean up the saline plume and groundwater basin for future years and that grant funding would reduce the cost of the water. He stated that the new groundwater wells would enhance water supply reliability and mitigate future rate increases, with need to buy little imported water in the future. He noted that TMW is developing new wells now because of higher costs of imported water.

Responding to Vice-Chairperson McCabe's inquiry about potential risk, Public Works Director Beste stated that the wells would not go dry but there is risk if the saline plume moves toward the wells or if treatment standards change.

Commissioner Marshall inquired about a timeline and staff advised that the new wells could be online in two years.

Commissioner See received clarification from staff that there would be public outreach meetings before moving forward with drilling of pilot test wells.

MOTION: Commissioner McGee moved to concur with staff recommendation for conceptual approval for proposed new Van Ness Well Field Project. Commissioner Haddon seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Chairperson Lefevre).

Commissioner Marshall inquired about a notice he received about a WRD parcel tax, and Public Works Director Beste explained the uniform pumping assessment, pending lawsuits, and the Proposition 218 process.

MOTION: Commissioner Marshall moved to concur with staff recommendation for conceptual approval for proposed expansion of Goldsworthy Desalter Project. Commissioner Nishinaga seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Lefevre).

9. METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

MWD Director Wright distributed copies of his March 18 letter to Mayor and Council Members regarding MWD activities, a draft of "The 2014 Water Bond," and MWD Water Supply Conditions as of March 10. He reported that Colorado River Aqueduct pumps are back in operation and local reservoirs are being refilled. Referring to the State Water Project, he reported that the killing of 232 endangered Delta Smelt caused their allotment to be cut back from 40% to 30%. He stated that the allotment was raised to 40% again, but was cut to 35% last week due to lack of water. He noted that, as a result, MWD will have to pull 300,000 AF out of storage.

He discussed the importance of developing local supply. He pointed out that last year was the driest year on record on the Colorado River and that the State Water

Project could be entering an extended dry period. He discussed the State Water Bond issue coming forward in 2014 to fix the Bay Delta environmental habitat. He stated that water purveyors would pay for the \$14 billion proposed twin-tunnel project under the Bay Delta. He stated that the tunnels would provide reliability and expressed concern about collapse of levees in the event of a major earthquake. He discussed MWD board item 9-1 that would provide \$250 AF for new innovative ideas to develop new water supplies.

Responding to Commissioner Nishinaga's inquiry, staff advised that the bond is for habitat restoration but not for reinforcement of levees.

Commissioner Marshall received clarification from staff that they would not be able to move forward with the tunnels if the bond fails.

Public Works Director Beste noted that the goal of the tunnels is not to get a bigger allocation of water but to ensure they get the allocation they are entitled to.

Commissioner See congratulated Director Wright on his reappointment to the Board of Directors representing the City.

10. WEST BASIN WATER ASSOCIATION REPORT

Deputy Public Works Director van der Linden reported on the March 5 West Basin Water Association meeting. He stated that the Watermaster reported that pumping from the West Coast Basin in January 2013 decreased 23% compared to January 2012. He noted that the cumulative total for this water year is 25,200 AF, a 7.3% decrease in total groundwater production as compared to the same time period last year.

Referring to the West Basin Municipal Report, he stated that the Edward C. Little Water Recycling Facility is proceeding with Phase 5 expansion construction. He noted that their staff is preparing an EIR on the Water Desalination Pilot Facility in Redondo Beach in preparation of a grant submittal for operational expansion.

Deputy Public Works Director van der Linden stated that MWD reported that a small coalition of conservancy groups and farmers, along with San Diego County Water Authority, are proposing an alternative to the proposed underground, two-pipe Bay Delta fix. They also reported on the 2014 State Water Bond issue.

He reported that Water Replenishment District announced their 6th Annual Groundwater Festival in Lakewood on March 16 and that their staff is reviewing well site alternatives for potential grant funding for the Goldsworthy Desalter Expansion. He stated that construction expansion of the Van Der Lans Water Recycling Facility in Long Beach has begun.

11. MONTHLY DEPARTMENT REPORT

Deputy Public Works Director van der Linden noted that the Monthly Department Report for February 2013 was included in agenda packets. He reported that total water production for January and February was approximately 1% lower compared to the same period last year. He reported that there were five water main breaks and that the Goldsworthy facility has returned to full operational status.

MOTION: Commissioner Haddon moved to accept and file the Monthly Department Report for February 2013. Commissioner Nishinaga seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Chairperson Lefevre).

12. ORALS

12A. Commissioner Nishinaga expressed his concern that the levees in Northern California are not being addressed in the bond issue.

12B. Deputy Public Works Director van der Linden stated that invitations have gone out for the April 26-27, 2013 inspection tour to the Colorado River and Hoover Dam.

13. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At 8:44 p.m., Commissioner See moved to adjourn the meeting to Wednesday, April 24, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex Commission meeting room. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion and, hearing no objection, Vice-Chairperson McCabe so ordered.

Approved as Submitted April 24, 2013 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
