

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

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Torrance Water Commission convened in a regular session at 7:07 p.m. on Thursday, June 21, 2007 in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

**2. ROLL CALL:**

Present: Commissioners Deemer, Rizzardi, See, Warner, and Chairperson Hoffman.

Absent: Commissioners Lew and White.

Also Present: Public Works Director Beste,  
Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich, and  
Metropolitan Water District Director Wright.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Warner, seconded by Commissioner Rizzardi, moved to grant excused absences to Commissioners Lew and White for the June 21, 2007 Water Commission meeting; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**3. FLAG SALUTE**

Commissioner See led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING**

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

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**5A. MINUTES FROM MAY 17, 2007**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Warner moved for the approval of the May 17, 2007 Water Commission meeting minutes as submitted. Commissioner See seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioners Lew and White).

**7A. PRESENTATION BY CHAIRPERSON OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND ENERGY COMMISSION**

This item was taken out of order.

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich introduced the item and welcomed Paul McCabe, Chairperson of the Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission.

Chairperson McCabe provided a presentation on cooperative opportunities available to the Water Commission and the Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission for the joint promotion of energy and water conservation efforts. He stated that he recently provided a similar presentation before the Planning Commission and that his purpose was to encourage the sharing of information and to open lines of communication between Commissions to better benefit the City. He distributed the Green Building Guidelines adopted by City Council in November 2006, discussed the Cool Cities program adopted by City Council in April 2007, and invited Commissioners to attend "Global Warming," the showing of the film "An Inconvenient Truth," on June 27, 2007 at the Katy Geissert Civic Center Library.

Referring to the "Living Wise" program, he stated that his Commission was also trying to bridge the gap between the City and Torrance Unified School District. Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich offered to forward him additional information about the program.

Commissioner Warner requested that staff provide copies of minutes from the Planning Commission as well as the Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission meetings. He suggested that the three Commissions have annual joint meetings to share information about topics such as tiered water rates.

Chairperson Hoffman related his observation that the Commissions have overlap in several areas, suggested that Commissions determine common ground, and requested that staff notify the Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission of items of interest when they come up.

A brief discussion centered on the possibility of sponsoring an environmental fair, an Earth Day celebration, or taking part in the Disaster Fair.

Responding to Commissioner Deemer's inquiry, Chairperson McCabe explained that the Green Building Guidelines were for information only, for new construction and remodeling of residences, and that the City was not presently offering any financial incentives. He noted that adoption of the green building program and signing on to the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement were enormous steps for the City to undertake and that now they will be able to concentrate on the implementation.

In response to Commissioner Rizzardi's inquiry, Chairperson McCabe provided information about the Green Pride in MWD service territories award program.

MWD Director Wright stated that MWD has directed staff to look for opportunities in Torrance to implement solar power and suggested that staff look for private or City situations where rebates might be available.

## **6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Chairperson Hoffman provided background to Chairperson McCabe and a status report regarding the proposal to expand the purview of the Water Commission to a

Public Services Commission. He reported that the ad hoc committee, consisting of Commissioners Lew, Rizzardi, and himself, as well as Public Works Director Beste, met with Mayor Scotto on June 15, 2007. He stated that the Mayor was receptive to the idea and requested Public Works Director Beste speak with the City Manager and City Attorney regarding regulatory jurisdictional issues. He noted that the proposal is on the City website.

Commissioner Rizzardi commented that Mayor Scotto is very open to new ideas.

## **7. NEW BUSINESS**

### **7B. REVIEW OF STAFF DRAFT REPORT REGARDING WATER SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich distributed a draft Summary Report, which addresses the rationale and benefits for implementing the proposed Water System Infrastructure Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for the five-year period 2007-08 through 2011-12. He reported that the first part of the report lists major goals that include development of new local water resources, to expand existing local water resources, to improve existing water facilities, to meet all water quality standards on a continuous basis, and to reduce long-term costs and reliance of imported water. He noted that the development of local water resources would involve the construction of four new groundwater wells and storage in North Torrance to maximize the use of Torrance Municipal Water's (TMW) annual groundwater pumping rights. He explained the Waltheria and Ben Haggott Reservoir Nitrification Reduction Project in Appendix B that would enable TMW to use it to its full capacity.

Public Works Director Beste reported on proposed costs listed in Table 1. He stated that many of the items are ongoing maintenance, noting that TMW has realized after review that it cannot scale back on water main replacement based on the system.

When Chairperson Hoffman suggested including operational consequences and demonstrating economic benefit of capital projects in the report, Public Works Director Beste stated that the next step is to redo the Business Plan that will include purpose and need, options for paying, rate implications, and payback. He noted that TMW and MWD have kept water rates artificially low for some time now.

Commissioner Warner pointed out the importance of a good education program for the public to understand the need for water rate increases.

MWD Director Wright stated that the report should emphasize the need for a conjunctive use program in order to have a back-up supply in the event the drought continues.

A brief discussion centered on the history of TMW's rate structure, MWD's rate stabilization fund, and the importance of having a reserve policy.

Chairperson Hoffman stated that the Commission would like to support the goals in the report and suggested that staff look at all funding sources to accomplish them.

Public Works Director Beste stated that staff needs to make a good case and talk about reliability when conducting a public relations campaign.

When Commissioner Deemer inquired about the minimum distance that wells need to be from each other, Public Works Director Beste stated that it depends on the strata but in general approximately 1,000 feet apart. He noted that the proposed wells would be underground facilities with a vault in the ground.

In response to Commissioner Warner's inquiry, he noted that pilot wells are built to determine water quality and blends, and that it take one to one and a half years to develop a well.

Responding to Chairperson Hoffman's inquiry, Public Works Director Beste stated that TMW has talked with Edison about properties for possible well sites but that they have not been receptive about the idea.

Commissioner See received clarification from staff that the storage tank at McMaster Park would be demolished.

#### **8. WEST BASIN WATER ASSOCIATION REPORT**

Public Works Director Beste reported on the status of legislative bill AB640 that would set different groundwater pumping charges for Central and West Basins. He stated that the bill is going to the Senate floor on July 10 or 11, 2007 but that it is no longer a viable bill because it did not address the big picture. He noted that, if the bill is pulled, it could be reintroduced next year, in which case staff needs to remain wary and are working with Golden State to see what can be done to prevent this from coming up again. He stated that AB640 opened up a lot of discussion about how the Basin is operating.

Chairperson Hoffman initiated a brief discussion regarding consequences if West Basin seceded from the Water Replenishment District.

Public Works Director Beste provided information about a possible project that would direct water from sumps to the Chandler landfill for natural infiltration instead of going into storm drains.

Chairperson Hoffman commended staff for their efforts in defeating the bill.

#### **9. MONTHLY DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich reported that water main breaks continue to decrease, with a total of nine pipeline ruptures over the past four months.

#### **10. METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

MWD Director Wright distributed his June 20, 2007 letter to City Council and the June 6, 2007 testimony provided on the impacts of climate change by the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Water and Power.

He provided a report about a 130-acre pile of uranium tailings in southern Utah along the banks of the Colorado River. He stated that there is concern about gamma radiation and radon gas getting into the river. He noted that the Department of Energy owns it and is planning to move it by 2028.

He reported that on May 31, 2007 the Bay Delta shut down pumps for 10-12 days because of smelt fish. He stated that they began ramping back up but have been told they may have to shut down again until the end of July 2007, noting there would be a hearing on June 22, 2007 for a judgment. He discussed the possibility of an isolated facility to bring water around the Delta and stated that MWD is also looking into wind turbines.

Public Works Director Beste stated that a bypass canal is necessary to ensure water supply.

MWD Director Wright stated that MWD is looking for new supplies of water all the time and mentioned that MWD voted for SB59 to build new reservoirs in northern California.

## **11. ORALS**

**11A.** Commissioner Rizzardi commented that it was good idea to invite another Commission to a Water Commission meeting to integrate programs.

**11B.** Commissioner See thanked Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich for educating him about water issues.

**11C.** Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich stated that next month there would be an item on the agenda about voluntary conservation programs.

## **12. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** At 9:25 p.m., Commissioner Rizzardi moved to adjourn the meeting to July 19, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex Commission meeting room. Commissioner Warner seconded the motion and, hearing no objection, Chairperson Hoffman so ordered.

Approved as Amended July 19, 2007 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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