

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

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Torrance Water Commission convened in a regular session at 7:03 p.m. on Wednesday, September 24, 2014 in the West Annex Meeting Room at Torrance City Hall.

**2. ROLL CALL:**

Present: Commissioners Craft, Leone, Kawai, Marshall,  
McGee, See, and Chairperson Nishinaga.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Public Works Director Beste, Senior Administrative Analyst  
Schaich, Senior Water Services Supervisor Berndt, and  
Metropolitan Water District Director Lefevre.

**3. FLAG SALUTE**

Commissioner Marshall led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING**

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

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes were not available.

**6. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM PUBLIC**

The Commission welcomed former Water Commissioner Charles Deemer.

**7. OLD BUSINESS**

None.

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

**8A. REVIEW AND CONSIDERATION OF DROUGHT IMPACTS AND TORRANCE MUNICIPAL WATER'S CONSERVATION INITIATIVES AND PUBLIC OUTREACH PROGRAM**

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich provided a PowerPoint presentation on the drought situation, Torrance Municipal Water's (TMW) conservation programs, and new public outreach efforts. He reported that the three-year drought is one of the most

severe experienced in California, noting that 2013 was the driest calendar year on record and 2014 may surpass that. He stated that in 2013 MWD had 2.4 million acre-feet of storage reserves and it is expected that this amount will be reduced by half in 2014. He noted that, if storage reserves are drawn down to one million acre-feet, MWD and other agencies will likely establish a form of rationing known as Water Supply Allocation Program in mid 2015. He reported that TMW's service area per capita usage is 128 gallons per day, one of the lowest in Southern California. He announced that TMW, serving 78% of the City, has almost reached the 20/20 goal of 127 gallons per day.

He discussed the State Water Resources Control Board's (SWRCB) recent drought regulations that primarily focus on avoidance of water wasting practices and outdoor water use. He stated that Torrance's Water Conservation Ordinance, implemented in spring 2009, complies with all SWRCB's mandates. He reminded Commissioners that the Ordinance was re-activated in March 2014 to a "Level 1" stage. He noted that TMW now reports monthly to SWRCB regarding its potable water use.

Responding to Chairperson Nishinaga's inquiry, MWD Director Lefevre noted that the Southern California demand is 2 million acre-feet per year. He stated that this year the Colorado aqueduct is supplying 1.2 million, the State Water Project 100,000, and the rest is coming from storage.

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich discussed advisory and enforcement activities that include sending advisory notices and warning letters to violators of the Ordinance, field investigations for repeated violations, and field audits to provide customer assistance in reducing water demands. He mentioned that the City of Los Angeles is issuing fines for flagrant violators but that TMW has not done this yet.

He reported that TMW currently derives 80% of its potable water supplies from imported purchases from Metropolitan Water District (MWD) and that, even with its water diversification program, TMW will continue to have a large reliance on MWD. He provided information about efforts to "drought proof" Torrance that include expansion of the Goldsworthy Desalter, drilling of four new groundwater wells to increase local supply, active conservation outreach programs, and rebate and incentive programs. He stated that in three to five years they hope to decrease MWD imported water to 40%, and to increase Desalter water to 25% and groundwater wells to 35%. He added that they intend to lease additional groundwater pumping rights when they reach this level.

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich stated that approximately 50% of residential water usage is for landscapes and discussed efforts and incentives to replace lawns with California friendly plants, synthetic turf, or permeable hardscape. He discussed the requirements for eligibility for the Turf Removal program that is offering an incentive of \$2 per square foot. He provided information about additional outdoor programs and rebates that include weather based irrigation controllers, moisture sensor systems, and rotating sprinkler nozzles. He encouraged Commissioners to visit [bewaterwise.com](http://bewaterwise.com) that provides information about conservation programs, rebates, and incentives.

Chairperson Nishinaga initiated a brief discussion regarding advantages and disadvantages of using artificial turf.

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich described the Recycled Water Internal Hook Up Program that provides most of the funding for internal hook ups.

In response to Commissioner McGee's inquiry, he explained that most of the City's recycled water main lines were funded through grants; however, funding is no longer available.

Public Work Director Beste pointed out that most likely there will not be an expansion of the recycled water system because recycled water costs the same as imported water. He stated that there is no pay back period and that recycled water makes sense for large industrial users such as refineries.

Commissioner Marshall inquired about the fountain in front of City Hall and was informed that the water is not recycled water but that it re-circulates.

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich described additional programs that include the Public Agency Landscape Program, Common Area Landscape Audits, and Fitness Center Program. He discussed new initiatives being implemented in Torrance that include enhanced outreach through a new Micro website, social media, print and digital campaign in the Daily Breeze, conservation brochures, environmental newsletters, bill inserts, and CitiCABLE announcements. He stated that Commissioner Craft has offered to produce a series of cable programs and topics will include the drought and water conservation, water reliability for Torrance, Statewide water issues, and the Bay Delta Conservation Plan.

He concluded his presentation with overall goals and strategy that include broader outreach to target various customer segments, flexibility to customize messaging, multiple use of production in all media channels, increased public awareness and participation in conservation efforts, and sustainable and cost effective programs.

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

MWD Director Lefevre distributed his September report regarding MWD activities to City Council. He provided an update on the Water Bond that will be Proposition 1 on the November ballot. He noted that the Senate approved the bond unanimously and that there were only two "No" votes in the Assembly. He called attention to the pie chart on Page 2 that shows where the proposed \$7.545 billion would be allocated. He stated that \$2.7 billion is allocated for storage, noting that one proposal is to build an off stream one billion acre foot reservoir called Sites Reservoir and a second possibility is a dam on the San Joaquin River. He noted that none of the categories are project specific, adding that the \$2.7 billion is not enough to build these projects that will require additional funding.

In response to Chairperson Nishinaga's inquiry about the Environmental Protection Agency, he stated that they came out against building the tunnels but this is unrelated to the Water Bond. He added that the new Environmental Impact Report is coming out and will have a response addressing the EPA's concerns.

Referring to the \$1.495 billion allotted for Watershed Protection, Ecosystem Restoration, and State Settlements, Commissioner Marshall asked how much of this would go to repair the levees in the Delta.

MWD Director Lefevre explained that this category is not allocated for Bay Delta Conservation Plan activities and approximately \$400 million is for levee repairs.

He reported that right now the Bay Delta Conservation Plan is a \$25 billion project, \$16 billion for the tunnels and \$9 billion for eco restoration. He stated that State Water Project will pay 60% of the tunnel project, with MWD paying half of that, and the Central Valley will pay the remaining 40%. He explained that there have been more engineering studies and that the project will be re-priced.

Director Lefevre invited Commissioners to participate in a water trip on November 7 - 9 to the Colorado River. He mentioned that he is also planning a day trip to the Jensen Treatment Plant and a pumping plant.

He announced that he has been named co-chair of the Agriculture and Business Outreach committee and will have the opportunity to go on a trip to learn how farmers are conserving water. He informed Commissioners that MWD is voting to increase the subsidy for the Goldsworth Desalter. He described his tour of Space X in Hawthorne and announced a Connect to Met event for small businesses on November 6.

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

Public Works Director Beste reported that the Association voted to approve a \$5 assessment increase to pay for litigation fees for conjunctive use. He stated that Tesoro is still opposing the conjunctive use agreement but that it is close to final signing.

#### **11. MONTHLY DEPARTMENT REPORT**

Senior Water Services Supervisor Berndt noted that the Monthly Department Report for August 2014 was included in agenda packets. He reported that production of potable water for the month was 1,805.9 acre-feet, a decrease of approximately 10% compared to August 2013. He stated that there were five water main breaks in August compared to nine for the same period last year. He noted that field crews are in the process of installing new mains in North Torrance.

At Chairperson Nishinaga request, he explained how water main breaks are repaired. He noted that cast iron pipes are replaced with ductile iron pipes in bags.

Commissioner McGee inquired about the sinkhole on Hawthorne Boulevard and Supervisor Berndt stated that they are replacing 120 feet of main tonight.

Staff briefly discussed plans for brine disposal from the Goldsworthy Desalter.

#### **12. ORALS**

**12A.** Commissioner Kawai offered his observation that the water in Grant Lake is extremely low.

13. **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** At 9:13 p.m., Commissioner See moved to adjourn the meeting to Wednesday, October 22, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex Commission meeting room. Commissioner Craft seconded the motion and, hearing no objection, Chairperson Nishinaga so ordered.

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Approved as amended October 22, 2014 s/ Rebecca Poirier, City Clerk
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