

**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, April 22, 2015 in the West Annex Meeting Room at Torrance City Hall.

2. ROLL CALL:

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

Absent: None.

Also Present: Public Works Director Beste, Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich,
Administrative Analyst Ko, Metropolitan Water District (MWD)
Director Lefevre, Community Services Director Jones, Park
Services Manager Carson, and Assistant to City Manager
Chaparyan.

3. FLAG SALUTE

Commissioner Kawai led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

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

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

5A. MINUTES OF MARCH 25, 2015

Chairperson Nishinaga offered clarifications on page 5 as follows: Paragraph 3: "Chairperson Nishinaga questioned why California Water Service Company's first water rate change volume is 10 ccf..." and Item 12J: "Chairperson Nishinaga asked staff to provide TMW's water contingency and emergency response plan in the event of a disaster that includes major earthquakes and wildfires."

MOTION: Commissioner McGee moved to approve the Water Commission meeting minutes of March 25, 2015 as amended. Commissioner Marshall seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval (Commissioner Craft abstaining).

6. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM PUBLIC – None.

7. OLD BUSINESS – None.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8A. CONSIDERATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE WATER COMMISSION TO RECOMMEND THAT CITY COUNCIL APPROVE AND ADOPT THE UPDATED WATER CONSERVATION AND WATER SUPPLY SHORTAGE ORDINANCE

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich provided a PowerPoint presentation “Torrance Water Conservation Ordinance” that was presented to City Council on April 7. He reported that 80% of potable water in the South Bay is imported, from the Colorado River and State Water Project. He stated that the Goldsworthy Desalter currently provides 6% of potable water in Torrance, adding that production would increase to 20% with the Desalter Expansion Project. He briefly reviewed Water Supply Conditions as of April 1, noting that snowpacks in key northern California watersheds are less than 5% of normal.

He reported that on April 1 Governor Brown issued an Executive Order requiring mandatory statewide reductions of 25% in potable water usage, using 2013 as a baseline. He provided background on the City’s Conservation Ordinance adopted in March 2009 as recommended by the Water Commission. He noted that the Ordinance focuses on prohibiting wasteful uses of water. He stated that the Ordinance has four levels that are implemented by resolution depending on the severity of water supply conditions.

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich reported that in March 2014 City Council approved enacting the Ordinance’s Level 1 requirements, noting that they are still in effect today. He stated that Level 1 requirements apply only to potable water and call for a reduction of up to 15% of water use. He explained that requirements include watering limited to three days per week and 15 minutes maximum per area, no watering between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., and all leaks must be fixed within seven days.

He stated that on April 14, 2015 Public Works Director Beste recommended to City Council that the Ordinance be elevated to Level 2. He noted that Level 2 calls for up to 30% water use reduction; no watering from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., watering limited to two days per week with 10 minutes maximum per area, fix all leaks within four days, and restrictions on ornamental ponds, pools, and spas. He noted the requirements that remain in both Levels 1 and 2: no excessive runoff; no washing of exterior surfaces; no washing of vehicles with an open hose; all water features must have a re-circulating system; drinking water provided only upon request at restaurants; restaurants to use water-conserving spray valves; and lodging businesses to provide option not to launder linens daily.

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich noted that Torrance is the first South Bay city to propose enacting requirements that comply with the Governor’s mandate. He stated that Level 2 measures would address most of the Governor’s requirements and State Water Resources Control Board regulations. He noted that there would be significant public outreach and that the City’s water usage at parks, medians, and parkways would be reduced.

He reported that a Resolution enacting Level 2 would be considered at the May 5 City Council meeting. He stated that several concerns have been raised regarding watering requirements needed to maintain the integrity of building foundations in the expansive soil area in central Torrance known as WALTERIA Lake. He called attention to supplemental material listing additional proposed changes to the Ordinance that include

an equivalency principle, watering duration provision, offset for recycled water use, administrative rules, and rain event issue. He recommended that the Commission receive public input and take a position supporting the updating of the Ordinance to incorporate, in principle, language changes to accommodate concerns. He noted that the exact wording would be crafted in consultation with the City Attorney's Office.

Richard Ultate, Kathryn Avenue, asked if there was any way to see water consumption based on real time. Staff informed him that this information is not electronically transmittable at this time and the only way would be to look at the meter. He received clarification that evaporation and wind are the reasons for restricted hours.

In response to Commissioner Craft's observation that some people have sprinklers going when it is raining, Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich provided information about weather based or "smart" controllers that save 10-20% of water usage.

Russ Varhara, Ladeene Avenue, expressed concern about the expansive soil condition issue. Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich advised him that strict compliance with watering days and duration of time would be exempt upon receipt of a technical study.

Public Works Director Beste pointed out that, even though the City may not issue citations, there may be significant penalties from MWD or the State. He indicated that the Commission should consider the financial ramifications if there is excessive water use because of this exemption. He stated that the penalty on top of the water Torrance Municipal Water (TMW) buys from MWD would be \$1,500 per acre-foot if it does not meet the goal that MWD, not the State, sets.

Mike Moran, Los Codona Avenue, related his understanding that expansive soil requires that moisture around foundations be kept constant.

Justin Grewal, Fonthill Avenue, raised the possibility of Walteria Lake residents using drip irrigation rather than sprinklers.

Community Services Director Jones stated that staff needs to use the hours of 10 p.m. when parks close to 6 a.m. when they open in order to water the entire park system. He stated that Park Services would be reducing water use like everyone else but their primary focus is to provide active recreational space that is still usable.

A brief discussion centered on rebates for turf removal, artificial turf, and drought resistant landscaping.

Responding to Mr. Varhara's inquiry, Public Works Director Beste explained that West Basin Municipal Water District operates the recycled water system, and it is not practical to connect individual residences to recycled water lines. He added that adapting existing water lines to use gray water would not be considered for health reasons.

Julie Dojiri, Nadine Circle, was informed by staff that Wilson Park is not using recycled water at this time but may in the future.

Keith Montoya inquired about the equivalency provision and staff explained that 10 minutes two times a week could be broken up into different segments, or it could be 20 minutes one time per week.

Commissioner McGee expressed concern that Level 2 restrictions may not be successful. Public Works Director Beste advised him that reductions are based on 2013 usage, they will see how residents respond, and usage will be closely monitored.

Chairperson Nishinaga asked if Torrance would be given credit for its water conservation over the past few years. Public Works Director Beste explained that, according to the State and 2013 water usage, the City needs to achieve a 24% reduction.

Responding to Commissioner Marshall's inquiry regarding Administrative Rules, Public Works Director Beste stated that they would consider flexibility in enforcement to allow time for people to react and comply.

In response to Commissioners' inquiries, staff provided clarification that the Commission is not being asked to recommend implementing a Level 2 reduction at this time, only to support the updating of the Water Conservation Ordinance in principle. It was noted that the City Attorney's Office would add and place language incorporating changes and revisions into the Ordinance, and that MWD's Water Supply Allocation Plan (WSAP) would be discussed at future meetings.

MOTION: Commissioner Marshall moved to recommend that City Council approve and adopt the updated Water Conservation and Water Supply Shortage Ordinance to incorporate, in principle, language changes and revisions as recommended by staff. Commissioner Kawai seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected 5-1 approval (Commissioner Craft voting no).

9. METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

MWD Director Lefevre stated that he enjoyed speaking at a Beach Cities Republican Club last week at Commissioner Marshall's invitation. As Deputy Chair of the Bay Delta Conservation Plan Committee, he reported that discussions are going on at the State level regarding the meeting of environmental requirements over 50 years, but he noted that these concerns do not affect the conveyance part. He stated that MWD provides a monthly presentation on hydrologic and current water supply conditions, noting that the water content of the west side of the Northern Sierra snowpack is only 1.8 inches, when normally it is over 20 inches. He reported that the State Water Project allocation is still 20%.

In response to Commissioner Marshall's inquiry, he explained that each level of WSAP represents a 5% reduction in water, or 100,000 acre feet.

Public Works Director Beste explained that MWD's WSAP is based on its water supply scenarios, storage, and predictions, and has nothing to do with State guidelines or the Governor's Executive Order. He stated that MWD wants to make sure that it has enough water in storage in case there is another year of drought. He noted that TMW would not be charged any penalty until July 2016.

10. WEST BASIN WATER ASSOCIATION REPORT

Public Works Director Beste reported that the Conjunctive Use Water Storage Panel is working on rules to allow for groundwater storage. In response to Commissioner Marshall's inquiry, he stated that it looks like Water Replenishment District has decided to settle the Proposition 218 lawsuit with pumpers based on attorney fees.

11. MONTHLY DEPARTMENT REPORT

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich noted that the Monthly Department Report for March 2015 was included in agenda packets. He reported that production of potable water for the month was 1,435.5 AF, a decrease of approximately 5.7% compared to March 2014. He noted that total potable water production on a year to date basis is nearly 9.3% below last year. He attributed the decline to ExxonMobil, noting that they are using only 50-60% of their normal amount of water. He added that full production is expected six months from February 2015 when the explosion happened.

In response to Chairperson Nishinaga's inquiry, he explained that well production is so low due to a minor well rehabilitation and problems with the tank. He expressed hope that the facility will be back to full operation in early May.

Commissioner Marshall asked if there was any way to speed up the construction of the new well field. Public Works Director Beste explained that there are many environmental reviews to go through, that they are about to go out to bid on Phase 2 for the new tank at the Yukon site, and that construction would take approximately one year.

12. ORALS

12A. In response to an inquiry by Charles Deemer, Public Works Director Beste explained that ExxonMobil purchases would not change what Level of the Ordinance is determined but it may affect the overall purchases from MWD

12B. Commissioner Marshall raised the possibility of the Commission meeting twice a month and was advised that it could have a special meeting if necessary.

12C. Chairperson Nishinaga relayed a resident's complaint that Gardena's water department allows water to pour into the street when flushing the pipes and staff explained that it is not practical to try to capture that volume of water.

12D. In response to Commissioner Marshall's inquiry, staff stated that Governor Brown is able to declare an Executive Order due to emergency powers.

12E. Commissioner McGee observed that sprinklers are being installed on Hawthorne Boulevard by Del Amo Mall, and Public Works Director Beste informed him that all plants will be drought tolerant.

12F. Administrative Analyst Ko reminded Commissioners to sign up for the Wyland Foundation Mayor's Challenge!

13. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At 9:20 p.m., Commissioner See moved to adjourn the meeting to Wednesday, May 27, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex Commission meeting room. Commissioner Kawai seconded the motion and, hearing no objection, Chairperson Nishinaga so ordered.

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| Approved as amended June 24, 2015 s/ Rebecca Poirier, City Clerk |
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