

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Water Commission convened in a regular session at 7:05 p.m. on Thursday, June 18, 2009 in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present: Commissioners Deemer, Freeman*, Haddon, McGee, See, and Chairperson Lew.

Absent: None.

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

*Commissioner Freeman arrived at 7:10 p.m.

3. FLAG SALUTE

Commissioner McGee led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

MOTION: Commissioner Haddon 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 voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

5A. MINUTES FROM APRIL 16, 2009

MWD Director Wright offered the following corrections to the minutes:

Page 4, Item 9, line 1: "MWD Director Wright reported that, in order to increase its financial reserve levels, ..."

Page 4, Item 10, line 2-4: "...West Basin Water Association (WBWA) meeting the West Basin Municipal Water District announced that they have received approval for a pilot desalination facility in Redondo Beach and a joint board meeting with Water Replenishment District..."

MOTION: Commissioner McGee moved for the approval of the April 16, 2009 meeting minutes as amended. Commissioner Haddon seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

6. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM PUBLIC

Chairperson Lew welcomed guest Dr. Russell LeFevre who stated that he was at this meeting to learn about water issues in preparation for a water sustainability conference in Cincinnati.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8A. REPORT ON THE WATER REPLENISHMENT DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

This item was taken out of order.

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich introduced the item and welcomed Ted Johnson, Chief Hydrogeologist, Water Replenishment District (WRD) of Southern California.

Chief Hydrogeologist Johnson provided a power point presentation “The Importance of Groundwater in South Los Angeles County” on WRD’s history, managerial responsibilities and stewardship of the basins, current groundwater programs, and future challenges. He explained what groundwater is, where Torrance gets its water, and benefits of groundwater that include local reliable supply, drought protection, and being one-third the price of imported water. He provided a brief history of WRD, its service area of 420 square miles and 43 cities, and its role as groundwater manager of the Central and West Coast groundwater basins. He noted that the main mission of WRD is to replace the annual overdraft through artificial replenishment and to protect groundwater quality from seawater intrusion.

Responding to Commissioner Haddon’s inquiry, he stated that the City uses 22,000 acre-feet per year that consists of 90% imported water and 10% groundwater.

He described the Rio Hondo and San Gabriel spreading grounds located near Pico Rivera that are owned and operated by Los Angeles County. He advised that WRD is considering expanding the spreading grounds to increase capacity as well as connecting the two spreading grounds with a pipeline. He stated that sources of spreading water are storm water, highly treated recycled water, and imported water; however, due to a lack of surplus water, they have been cut off from MWD for the past two years and groundwater levels have dropped to their lowest level in 30 years.

In response to Chairperson Lew’s inquiry, he stated that WRD does not have the right to shut down pumps if the groundwater levels get too low because cities have the right to pump their groundwater rights.

Chief Hydrogeologist Johnson stated that another way to replenish water is through sea water injection wells. He explained how sea water intrusion occurred due to overpumping and how a series of intrusion barrier wells has built up pressure to overcome intrusion and how they are also replenishing aquifers by injecting mostly recycled water. He described WRD’s Goldsworthy Brackish Groundwater Desalination Plant, how it extracts salty water, runs it through reverse osmosis filters, and sells it to the City for drinking water.

Public Works Director Beste discussed hopes to expand the Desalter, noting that the water it produces costs \$450 per acre-foot which is becoming a lot less expensive than imported water from MWD. He stated that they have found a new well site in the middle of the highest concentration of salty water and that using this would help contract the salt plume and produce water that is very reliable and highly treated.

MWD Director Wright briefly discussed problems with salinity in Colorado River water.

Chief Hydrogeologist Johnson showed a 2008 sea water intrusion map and advised that more test wells are needed for better plume understanding. He stated that

there is a monitoring well at Columbia Park to define the northern extent of the salt water "hot spot" and that a Madrona Marsh parking lot monitoring well is planned for July or August 2009 to define the southern extent of the salt water "hot spot."

He concluded his presentation by described WRD's water conservation projects, education and public awareness, groundwater modeling, treatment programs, and goal to eliminate the need for imported water to replenish groundwater through a collection of projects called Water Independence Now (WIN).

Responding to Commissioner Deemer's inquiry, he explained how water gets from the spreading grounds and Whittier Narrows to the West Coast basin.

The Commission was in recess from 8:13 p.m. to 8:18 p.m.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7A. UPDATE ON WATER CONSERVATION ORDINANCE IMPLEMENTATION

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich provided an update on the implementation of the Water Conservation Ordinance adopted by City Council on March 24, 2009. He stated that staff would like to meet next week with the Water Conservation subcommittee and Patrick Sullivan from the City Attorney's office to discuss the Allocation Plan and implementation of the Water Conservation Ordinance. He advised that implementation so far has been advisory but that a greater campaign needs to be launched. He distributed magnets that are being used to promote the Ordinance and stated that they plan to broadcast public service announcements on CitiCABLE, adding that Torrance Municipal Water District (TMWD) will serve in an advisory capacity, focusing more on education than enforcement.

Public Works Director Beste stated that TMWD is finishing up a rate study, noting that there will be MWD rate increases as well as an internal rate increase.

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich provided a legislative update and the Governor's plan to cut back water usage 20% by 2020.

9. METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

MWD Director Wright distributed his June 15, 2009 report to the Mayor and Councilmembers and provided an update on MWD's Conservation Program in Southern California. He reported that since 1990 MWD has spent \$250 million on conservation incentives and saving 125,000 acre-feet per year. He stated that there has been a recent increase in interest in conservation devices and that the funds allocated for this has run out before the end of the fiscal year resulting in some individuals not receiving rebates they expected. He advised that in July 2009 MWD would decide what to do about the rebate programs and that there will probably be adjustments to the public sector program and rebates for low flush toilets.

10. WEST BASIN WATER ASSOCIATION REPORT

Deputy Public Works Director van der Linden provided a summary of the June 2, 2009 West Basin Water Association (WBWA) meeting. He stated that the Water Master is being impacted by the State budget, is increasing its fees, and distributed a Cumulative Production report comparing West Coast basin and Central basin. He reported that Water Replenishment District (WRD) will hold a scoping session on their Basin Optimization study, that their pump assessment is increasing, and that the

Technical Advisory Committee decided not to purchase water that was being offered because it was too expensive. He stated that the West Coast and Central basin judgments have been opened, conjunctive use is moving forward, and announced a joint barbeque on August 20, 2009 in Norwalk.

11. MONTHLY DEPARTMENT REPORT

Deputy Public Works Director van der Linden reported that in May 2009 there was a reduction in requests for meter rereads as well as in the number of requests to locate and identify underground water facilities. He stated that there was an increase in late notifications and non-payment turn offs. He reported six water main breaks and a decrease in overall water production.

Referring to the Capital Improvement Program Update, he reported that Walteria Reservoir Rehabilitation is complete, that the engineering design is being finalized for Well Number 9, and that a pilot test well has been drilled for Well Number 10.

MOTION: Commissioner See moved to accept and file the Monthly Department Report as presented. Commissioner Deemer seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

12. ORALS

Commissioner Deemer initiated a brief discussion regarding Southern California's water conservation compared to other parts of the country.

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich encouraged Commissioners to attend the presentation of "Are We Running Dry?" on June 27, 2009.

13. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At 9:05 p.m., Commissioner Haddon moved to adjourn the meeting to July 16, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex Commission meeting room and, hearing no objection, Chairperson Lew so ordered.

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| Approved as Submitted July 16, 2009 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk |
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