

**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, January 22, 2014 in the West Annex Meeting Room at Torrance City Hall.

2. ROLL CALL:

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

Absent: None.

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

3. FLAG SALUTE

Commissioner See led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

MOTION: Commissioner See 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 OF SEPTEMBER 25, 2013 AND DECEMBER 18, 2013

Minutes were not available.

6. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM PUBLIC

The Commission welcomed guests Charles Deemer, Garrett Wright, and Jim McGee.

7. OLD BUSINESS

None.

8. NEW BUSINESS

**8A. STATUS REGARDING CONJUNCTIVE USE PROGRAMS IN BOTH THE
LOCAL CENTRAL AND WEST COAST GROUNDWATER BASINS**

Public Works Director Beste defined conjunction use as storage of surplus water into the local basin for later retrieval and use when there is a shortfall of normal supplies. He described benefits of conjunctive use and rules regarding extraction of water above adjudicated rights. He reported that Central and West Coast Basins have discussed

amending these rules for several years; however, a consensus-based conjunctive use agreement between the Basins was unsuccessful. He discussed the facilitated mediation process approximately 12 years ago and subsequent legal proceedings. He noted that broad consensus has now been reached by all pumpers in both Basins with the exception of Tesoro Oil Refinery and Hillside Mortuary. He explained reasons why these entities are opposed to the proposal. He also stated that they are considering changing the Department of Water Resources as Watermaster over both Basins in order to have more local control.

He reported that in November 2013 the Superior Court approved amending the Central Basin judgment to permit the implementation of conjunctive use. He noted that the West Coast Basin's program, closely paralleling the Central Basin's approved program, was scheduled to be heard the same day, however, Tesoro Oil Refinery filed a formal brief to the Court opposing the proposed amendment for the West Coast Basin and asked for a year extension and a designation as a complex case with a different judge. He stated that the West Basin Water Association (WBWA) is considering options that include refiling in six months or a year to give the Central Basin the opportunity to prove that conjunctive use is not negatively impacting the Basins.

Responding to Chairperson Nishinaga's inquiry, Public Works Director Beste stated that a five-member body of the WBWA would become the Watermaster and that Water Replenishment District (WRD) would be responsible for the accounting.

A brief discussion centered on the dewatering of the 105 Freeway and the difficulty for two State agencies to go against each other.

In response to MWD Director Lefevre's inquiry, Public Works Director Beste explained that several cities and private pumpers are paying for the attorney fees.

8B. REVIEW OF WATER CONSERVATION PROGRAMS, DROUGHT IMPACTS, AND STATUS OF MEETING 2020 WATER USAGE REDUCTION TARGETS

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich presented an overview regarding regional water conservation programs, progress in meeting 2020 water usage compliance targets, and the status of the current drought situation. He briefly described the 14 major Demand Management Measures incorporated in the current Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP). He noted that the most recent UWMP for 2010 provides a comprehensive assessment of TMW's capacity to ensure continued reliability of water resources. He discussed the Water Wasting Ordinance passed in 2009, residential water audits, and residential and commercial rebate programs.

He explained that 2020 goals were established in 2009 mandating that all urban water agencies reduce water usage by 20%. He stated that Torrance is using a 15-year baseline average and is well below the Southern California average, noting that per capita water use in the municipal service area has been reduced by over 25% in the last 15 years. He stated that Torrance has filed individually rather than regionally to meet its 2020 target as a sub agency and is close to meeting its mandated target. He stated that the City's 2020 target is 110 to 115 gallons per capita use and is currently at 155.

In response to Jim McGee's inquiry, staff stated that if Torrance does not meet its target goal it may lose State funding and eligibility for grants for water programs.

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich stated that most TMW conservation programs in the past were focused on indoor use but are now focusing on exterior water usage, noting that 40% of water use in the South Bay is for landscape. He noted that turf grass has become the #1 irrigated crop in the United States. He shared information about the new Public Agency Landscape Program that provides up-front enhanced incentives to public agencies with high potential for water savings. He stated that the program will benefit the City by retrofitting park sites with new smart controllers and sub-sprinkler modifications.

He discussed the New Fitness Center Program that offers incentives to fitness centers to install high efficiency toilets, ultra low water use urinals, cooling towers, and landscape devices. He stated that the Turf Removal Program is being reintroduced for the residential sector that offers an incentive of \$1 per square foot to change out turf to approved California friendly landscaping. He briefly described other new devices in the regional program that include soil moisture sensors, plumbing flow control valves, and rain barrels. He stated that MWD is considering offering incentives for conserving recycled water as well as for a Water Savings Incentive Program.

Chairperson Nishinaga initiated a brief discussion about direct use and indirect reuse of recycled water. Staff pointed out that recycled water costs as much as potable water today.

Responding to Commissioner See's inquiry about further water rationing, Public Works Director Beste stated that TMW is following MWD's lead, based on the amount of water it has in storage. He stated that there is a serious problem in Central and Northern California but that MWD took steps to store water in Southern California. He indicated that reductions should be voluntary at this time and that rationing would be considered depending on conditions in March-April 2014.

In response to Jim McGee's inquiry regarding bonds issues in California, MWD Director Lefevre explained that bonds for a high speed train would come from taxes while most funding for digging the tunnels under the Delta would come from bonds put out by State water contractors such as MWD, with payment by water users. He discussed water bond measures presently scheduled for 2014 but noted that it is unlikely they will stay on the ballot and will probably be deferred to 2015.

9. METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

MWD Director Lefevre noted that his January report to the Mayor and Council Members regarding MWD activities was included in agenda packets. Referring to the charts of Water Supply Conditions as of January 12, he reported that snowfall in the State Water Project area is 16% of normal but that the Upper Colorado River Basin snowpack is close to normal. He stated that Southern California is not as badly affected as other parts of the state due to long range planning and actions by MWD to prepare for potential years of drought conditions. He discussed storage capacity and MWD's investment of \$650 million to build Diamond Valley Lake in 1998-99 and \$550 million for the inland feeder in 2006-07.

He expressed his support for digging tunnels under the Delta to ensure reliability and provide insurance against earthquakes and global warming. He stated that MWD has established a \$345 million capital investment, 25% of which will be used to reline PCCP pipe. He announced that MWD inducted a new Director, Paul Koretz, representing Los Angeles. He discussed court proceedings between San Diego County

Water Authority and MWD and reasons why San Diego is still a member agency. He announced that he would be giving an informational presentation to City Council in February regarding the Bay Delta Conservation Plan.

10. WEST BASIN WATER ASSOCIATION REPORT

Public Works Director Beste reported that the conjunctive use lawsuit was the major topic of discussion at the January 7, 2014 West Basin Water Association meeting.

Commissioners congratulated Public Works Director Beste on his appointment as Vice-President of West Basin Water Association.

11. MONTHLY DEPARTMENT REPORT

Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich noted that the Monthly Department Report for December 2013 was included in agenda packets. He stated that there were 11 water main breaks in December and, on a cumulative basis, 65 breaks have occurred year to date in 2013 compared to 58 in 2012. He noted that approximately 40 of these breaks have occurred in North Torrance due to deterioration of cast iron pipeline material from corrosive soil conditions and electrolysis.

Public Works Director Beste noted that there would probably be an increase in main breaks over the next few years because TMW is focusing financial resources more on the supply side more than the distribution side. He pointed out that repairing breaks is much cheaper than replacing pipes.

Responding to Commissioner Leone's inquiry, staff stated that they do not track the number of main breaks in other water districts but offered to inquire.

Administrative Analyst Schaich described the change over to new automatic meter reading registers that will allow meters to be read remotely, noting that the last 4,000 to 5,000 meters will be completed in the next two months. He stated that the total cost of the project is approximately \$2.8 million.

12. ORALS

12A. MWD Director Lefevre announced an inspection tour of State Water Project on May 31-June 1, 2014.

13. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: At 9:20 p.m., Commissioner McGee moved to adjourn the meeting to Wednesday, February 26, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex Commission meeting room. Commissioner See 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
