

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Water Commission convened in a regular session at 7:01 p.m. on Thursday, March 17, 2005.

2. ROLL CALL:

Present: Commissioners Deemer, Gonzalez, Haddon, Hoffman, Lew, Warner, and Chairperson White.

Absent: None.

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

3. FLAG SALUTE

Metropolitan Water District Director Wright led the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

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

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

5A. MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 17, 2005

The following corrections were noted in the February 17, 2005 Water Commission meeting minutes:

Page 2, 7A, paragraph 1: "He described the nature of the West Basin and..."

Page 2, 7A, paragraph 2: "Deputy Public Works Director van der Linden noted that the West and Central Basins are governed by the Water Replenishment District and Senior Administrative Analyst Schaich explained that the West Basin barrier..."

Page 3, 7A, paragraph 1, should read: "He presented charts showing the West Basin hydrogeology and average inflow and outflow conditions. He stated that the average inflows was 55,800 acre feet per year and the average outflows was 53,090 acre feet per year, noting less than 2,000 acre feet was natural recharge. Other charts showed generalized cross section of aquifers prior to over-pumping, after over-pumping, if pumping was suspended for three years, and the quick response if pumping was resumed. He stated that available storage in Central and West Basins was calculated at

450,000 acre feet, and that conjunctive use could help restore both Basins in the long term.”

MOTION: Commissioner Gonzalez moved for the approval of the February 17, 2005 Water Commission meeting minutes as submitted. Commissioner Deemer seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

7A. INTRODUCTION OF NEW PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR

This item was considered out of order.

Public Works Director Beste was introduced and welcomed by Commissioners. He shared information about his background and a brief discussion centered on his work with the City of Beverly Hills on water issues, conservation, water usage, functions of the Public Works Department, and a desalter. He mentioned that he serves on the Public Works Commission of the City of Hermosa Beach.

MWD Director Wright discussed MWD’s efforts to promote ET controllers for lawns, front load washers, and low flow toilets and suggested that the Commission become involved with a public event at a location such as the Madrona Marsh Preserve to promote these products.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6A. SUBCOMMITTEE STATUS REPORT ON DEVELOPMENT OF WATER COMMISSION WORK PLAN

Chairperson White advised that the ad hoc subcommittee, consisting of Commissioners Haddon, Warner and herself, met on March 2, 2005 to formulate the Torrance Water Commission draft work plan included in the material of record. She read and distributed copies of the powers and duties of the Torrance Water Commission in the Torrance Municipal Code.

Commissioner Hoffman suggested that the document begin with the powers and duties of the Commission as stated in the Municipal Code. He initiated discussion on revising the wording in the Commission’s Role section of the draft, noting that he takes exception to bullet 3: “The Commission is not involved in operation and budget detail or decisions.” Commissioner Gonzales suggested referencing the Municipal Code under the Goal section of the draft.

Commissioners suggested several revisions to the Action Areas section of the draft. Commissioner Hoffman proposed that Communication of Customer Information be included under Community Education and Outreach. Following discussion, it was determined that Communication of Information to Customers and Residents be included under Community Education and Outreach.

Public Works Director Beste discussed outreach to community groups and schools, and the importance of Commissioner involvement at community events such as Earth Day.

Chairperson White suggested that the Commission appoint an ad hoc Conservation subcommittee.

Discussion centered on how and where to include the Community Resources Element of the Torrance General Plan.

Deputy Public Works Director van der Linden suggested that the subcommittee take Commissioners' input, then meet again for further discussion, and bring back the draft to the Commission for formal consideration. Commissioners suggested revisions to Review Areas and Deputy Public Works Director van der Linden offered to schedule the next subcommittee meeting.

6B. UPDATE ON CONJUNCTIVE USE PROGRAM

Deputy Public Works Director van der Linden reviewed the definition of conjunctive use and the work groups formed in 2003 to resolve issues. He reported that at the March 1, 2005 general meeting topics of discussion included the splitting of available storage space between regional and local projects, WRD's role in the approval of projects, the proportionality rule, and the composition of the Project Review Committee. He advised that at the March 1, 2005 meeting, pumpers raised 34 new issues and proposals, some of them contrary to previously agreed-upon items. He stated that the pumpers reissued a new draft agreement with counter proposals and, at the March 16, 2005 Water Replenishment District Board meeting, it was decided to prepare a response letter to the pumpers. He stated that WRD was getting support from some of the Metropolitan agencies to go ahead and move forward on interim rules and regulations on conjunctive use.

MWD Director Wright advised that on March 14, 2005 West and Central Basins signed the conjunction use agreement among the Metropolitan member agencies, and that they indicated that Torrance was the only agency that had not signed the agreement. When he asked how much space Torrance gets in the groundwater basin, Deputy Public Works Director van der Linden indicated that WRD's interim rules and regulations would have to define that.

Discussion centered on the benefits of conjunctive use, issues of controversy regarding conjunctive use, and the natural recharge of the Basin.

7. NEW BUSINESS

7B. QUARTERLY BUDGET REVIEW

Administrative Analyst Lewis presented the material of record regarding the 2004-05 Mid-Year Budget Review on March 8, 2005. She briefly discussed the Executive Summary, focusing mainly on the Water Utility sector of the Public Works Department. She described the five programs for Expenditures: Water Supply, Water Operations, Water Resources, Water Administration, and Financial.

Responding to Chairperson White's inquiry, staff explained that the six vacancies listed under Water Operations were Water Service Technician I positions and outlined their duties. Public Works Director Beste advised that the Department was currently assessing the need for filling the vacancies.

Referring to Revenue, Administrative Analyst Lewis stated that the total budget projection for all operating and non-operating revenues for fiscal year 2004-05 was approximately \$21.689 million. She advised that major revenue sources include standard rate metered water sales, recycled water, wholesale potable sales to California Water Services Co., potable sales to Exxon-Mobil, various service fees, and investment earning on the Water Fund balance.

7C. INFORMATIONAL ITEM: NEW SERVICE CONTRACT FOR UTILITY BILLING SERVICE

Deputy Public Works Director van der Linden reported that on March 8, 2005 City Council approved a new agreement for the provision of utility billing services with American States Utility Services, Inc. (AWR) for a three-year period, with three two-year options. He advised that the new contract includes a Consumer Price Index and that the California Public Utilities Commission was requiring them to pay back a portion of revenues derived from billing service contracts with outside agencies. He stated that they provide good service and have a 24-hour customer service center.

Commissioner Warner mentioned that he has had problems with AWR regarding electronic billing.

Responding to Commissioner Hoffman's inquiry, Deputy Public Works Director van der Linden stated that the City advertised for proposals and sent out Request for Proposals, but that American States Utility Services, Inc. was the only service provider that submitted a proposal.

8. WEST BASIN WATER ASSOCIATION REPORT

Commissioner Haddon reported that the major topic of discussion at the last meeting was conjunctive use. He further stated that the Goldsworthy desalter plant has been shut down for at least two weeks due to a decrease in water volume and salt content.

Commissioner Lew initiated a brief discussion on multi-screened wells and cross contamination.

9. MONTHLY DEPARTMENT REPORT

9A. DEPUTY PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Deputy Public Works Director van der Linden requested that the Commission accept and file the report.

MOTION: Commissioner Warner moved to accept and file the Deputy Public Works Director's Report as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Hoffman and passed by unanimous voice vote approval.

9B. MWD DIRECTOR'S REPORT

MWD Director Wright reported that the MWD Board adopted an alternative water rate proposal that calls for a \$10 per acre-foot increase in the treatment surcharge as opposed to the \$20 per acre-foot increase previously considered. He advised that MWD

would be asking managers of member agencies to look at a treatment surcharge that says that the lower average amount of water that Torrance buys, the less they have to pay. He stressed the importance of Torrance increasing its local reservoir supply in order to live off its own supply during peak hours.

He announced that he was appointed by the Chairman of the Board this month to represent MWD at the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) as well as to a new Colorado River Subcommittee.

10. ORALS

10A. Deputy Public Works Director van der Linden reminded Commissioners to sign up for the inspection tour to the Colorado River.

10B MWD Director Wright informed Commissioners that MWD has tremendous resources and would send someone out to speak about water conservation at community or homeowner meetings.

10C. Commissioner Hoffman distributed a National Resources Defense Council article entitled "The Hidden Costs of California's Water Supply" dated August 2004.

10D. Commissioner Hoffman asked staff to direct him who he could talk to at the City level regarding who is looking out for water customers' interests.

10E. Chairperson White recommended the formation of an ad hoc subcommittee on conservation.

11. ADJOURNMENT

At 9:12 p.m., Commissioner Haddon, with a second by Commissioner Hoffman, moved to adjourn the meeting to Thursday, April 21, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex Commission Meeting Room.

Approved as Written April 21, 2005 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
