

SANTA MONICA BAY RESTORATION COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

February 19, 2015

Del Rey Yacht Club

Welcome and Introductions

At 9:38 a.m. Micheal O'Leary called the meeting to order.

1) Comments From Members of the Public on Items Not on the Agenda and Public Testimony on All Agenda Items

Public Comment:

Walter Lamb from the Ballona Wetlands Land Trust (BWLTL) asked the SMBRC Governing Board to engage in projects like Ballona and to get basic information about Ballona. Patricia McPherson from the Grassroots Coalition and the Sierra Club Airport Marina Group said public comment at this meeting does not adhere to rules, applauded the BWLTL and Walter Lamb's actions in relation to the Commission, commented about Watershed Advisory Council (WAC) meeting input and denial of a request by BWLTL to form a committee. McPherson also criticized the Oxford Lagoon project and deemed it a tragedy. Kathy Knight from Sierra Club Airport Marina Group distributed photos of species and information related to the Oxford Lagoon. Knight commented about the cutting of trees at the Oxford Lagoon during rain when Monarch butterflies couldn't fly, asked for help to save remaining trees, and encouraged GB members to comment to Fish and Wildlife by March 2nd to encourage listing Monarch butterflies as an endangered species. Knight also spoke about the WAC meeting needing more public input and an improved format.

2) Informational Items

a) Order of Agenda

The order of agenda was not changed.

b) Reports from the Chair and Executive Committee (EC)

Scott Valor gave the January EC meeting report. Valor noted EC documents are online at the SMBRC website. Valor gave a recap of the meeting, which included public comment by Charles Caspary from the Las Virgenes MWD JPA about their entity looking at a comprehensive water management structure. Valor also reported about Tom Ford's report at the EC that included the MPA baseline closing after two years of implementation with reports and analysis now being developed, kelp restoration efforts being a success, meetings regarding Hermosa Beach's oil issue, a National Estuary Program (NEP) trip to DC, and an EIR for the Malibu waste water treatment plant approved by the Malibu City Council. Valor also reported about the EC's discussion of a Proposition 84 Request For Proposals and said it was postponed after the EC sent it back to staff for revisions. Valor said the EC also discussed and approved for the present agenda the Proposition 50 Arroyo Sequit project budget augmentation. Finally, Valor reported on a suggestion by EC member Gloria Gray to have a standing item on the agenda for Commission projects progress, and that Ford replied that twice-a-year a progress report is provided to the US EPA and that this same report could also be circulated at the GB meetings.

c) Reports from the Technical Advisory Committee

No TAC report was given.

d) Reports from the Executive Director (ED) and Staff

Tom Ford gave the ED report. Ford announced the publishing of the 2014 Annual Report and said it is available on the SMBRC and The Bay Foundation (TBF) websites. Paper copies were distributed to board members. Ford highlighted the collaborative effort of projects in the report, encouraged members to look at the report, and noted great progress was made in 2014 thanks to all. Ford announced the WAC meeting on March 10th and said an online survey will be available from March 2nd to March 20th for WAC members and the public to submit comments. Ford also announced the publication of a study by Karina Johnston and colleagues from the Center for Santa Monica Bay Studies regarding stratification of bacteria in the influent and effluent segment of remaining wetlands, showing a reduction of bacteria coming out of the wetlands. The study is titled "Stratification and Loading of Fecal Indicator Bacteria (FIB) in a Tidally Muted Urban Salt Marsh". Ford reported on staff Ariadne Reynolds presenting at the Citizen's Science 2015 conference regarding human use

patterns in relation to Marine Protected Areas. Ford also announced the Southern California Academy of Sciences 124th annual meeting scheduled for May 15th- 16th at LMU and mentioned that TBF will be sponsoring a session on coastal resilience. Ford also reported that TBF was awarded a grant from LADWP and is producing public service announcements about water and energy conservation; the second of three announcements was played for the GB. Also, Ford thanked Susan Nissman for her great work and service for many years. Nissman will be retiring April 30th and Timothy Lippman will assume her role. Ford announced that he will be traveling with Dr. Guangyu Wang and a kelp project partner named Terry Herzik Washington to DC to discuss how to address climate change and integrate it into the Bay Restoration Plan.

3) Governing Board Business

a) Consideration of Approval of December 18, 2014 Meeting Minutes

Public Comment:

Walter Lamb commented that Ms. McChesney was not listed as an attendee at the last meeting.

This agenda item was approved with this correction (as amended). (M: Diamond, S: Spivy-Weber).

b) Consideration of Recommendation to Augment Proposition 50 Grant Fund for the Arroyo Sequit Creek Restoration Project

Ford introduced this agenda item. Ford said in the past the Commission recommended 17 projects with a total of over \$14 million dollars, with the remaining funds of Prop 50 for consideration of recommendation totaling \$3,727,769. Ford said the essence of the Arroyo Sequit project is to remove barriers to steelhead trout that move up and down the creek. Arroyo Sequit is one of three locations that support steelhead trout. Ford said that in August 2014 one of three barriers was removed, and that State Parks supported the project, and that this removal of barriers also presented recreational opportunities. Ford referenced this project in Goal 7, Objective 7.3 in the Bay Restoration Plan to open 20 miles of habitat to migrating steelhead trout. Milestone 7.3c is to complete removal of Arroyo Sequit barriers by 2014. This project will open an additional 4.4 miles of habitat and complete 22.5% of our Bay Restoration Plan goal. Ford stated that the project went out to bid and bids received were higher than available funds and that the lowest bid pulled out. He said that the State Department of Parks and Recreation found other funding but it may not be enough. The Governing Board was asked to recommend funding for this project up to \$500,000 from the State Water Resources Control Board to complete this project as needed.

Dennis Washburn emphasized the criticality of this project and noted a population of only approximately 500 southern steelhead trout that faces extinction. Washburn recommended to do whatever it takes to save the trout environment.

This agenda item was approved. (M: Skei, S: Nissman, A: Spivy-Weber)

c) Presentation on Coastal Intercept Sewer

Enrique Zaldivar introduced this agenda item and spoke about the Venice Dual Force Main project as an urgent necessity. Fernando Gonzalez from the City of LA Public Works, presented an overview on the Venice Dual Force Main Project Coastal Intercept Sewer. Gonzalez provided statistics of the department such as having 6,700 miles of sewers and carrying and treating 350 million gallons of wastewater every day. Gonzalez emphasized the Venice pump is over 50 years old and has been operating continuously since it was installed for more than 50 years, which is its useful life, and said currently there is no system redundancy to capture wastewater flow into the rest of the system neither it is cost effective for planned repairs or unanticipated failure. Gonzalez said the Venice system is isolated from the collection system, and has not been out of service, drained or inspected. Gonzalez said when it rains it can only convey 60% of the wet-weather flows. Gonzalez spoke about dire environmental and other consequences in the event of failure by putting it in context and comparing it with the pipe broken on Sunset Blvd near UCLA, with much worse elements: a wider, bigger pipe with dirtier water and no turn off valve. Gonzalez then spoke about the objectives with the creation of a new force main: protect health and environment, create redundancy, ensure conveyance capacity, and be able to perform inspections, maintenance and repairs. Abid Chowdry of the City of LA presented EIR studied alignment alternatives, the selected Via Marina / Pacific Alignment, a tentative project schedule and duration. This presentation is available at www.SMBRC.ca.gov or upon request. Gonzalez said it has taken ten years to get to this point on the project.

Dayna Bocho asked whether the new system will have a shut off valve. Gonzalez said the coastal interceptor system is critical in capturing runoff. Zaldivar added that valves were added to the system, redundancy and seismic resilience, and that while the new system will not have a shut off, it will allow flow diversion. O'Leary underscored the gravity of a potential failure. Gray asked that given the time-frame of the project, what would be the back-up plan? Zaldivar said the contingency plan being worked with the City of LA and Beaches and Harbors is essentially an overflow into the marina and channel. Gonzalez said different potential failures are being studied.

Nissman asked if there was any development of water recapture, recycle and re-use Zaldivar said the plan for Hyperion is to be a 100% recycling plant and that it will be a water purification plant as well. Pestrella added that the sewer system is not closed and when it rains no pressure is needed in a gravity system like a dual force main. Pestrella mentioned this project as a critical piece of the infrastructure and emphasized the importance of getting the job done. Pestrella said that when it rains the infiltration into the sewer system is enormous and mentioned the system is now a closed system, and systems like the dual force main need to be under-pressure because of the lack of gravity, and so when projects like these are presented it is obvious to get it in spite of potential complications, like impact on residents.

Joan Cardellino expressed interest in getting a presentation about LA County's Stormwater Capture Master Plan, and its impact on this plan. Cardellino also underscored the need for infrastructure upgrades and asked how green infrastructure and current technology is being incorporated. Also Cardellino wanted member agencies to know that a tool from the Coastal Conservancy and USGS would be available, as a robust modeling system for sea level rise, looking at erosion, storm surge, etc. that affect sea level rise, which may be useful for planning future infrastructure needs along the coast. Zaldivar spoke about the City investing heavily in green infrastructure as part of TMDL compliance and MS4 permits, and spoke about two collection systems, stormwater and wastewater. Pestrella said the County is working to create more diversions into the sanitary sewer of low flow. Pestrella said the County Sanitation Districts and Public Works are sponsoring ground-breaking legislation to amend the current charter act to allow the Sanitation Districts to treat storm water. Pestrella also mentioned reservoirs and starting to think about reconfiguration to incorporate environmental and social values, and stressed the importance of acting in a proactively and timely manner with these old systems.

Phil Friess noted that the Sanitation District have done two things with regards to runoff: historically taking dry-weather runoff into the sanitary sewer system only at coastal sewers tributaries to the joint water pollution control plants to address bacteria pollution on beaches and expanding to take dry-weather runoff into sanitary sewer tributaries to any of the plants, which will increase flows into plants and create a supply of recycle water to make available to water agency partners, helping cities address dry-weather flows into their MS4 systems to address in their MS4 permit. Friess also said that legislation currently being considered would give the authority to manage wet-weather runoff.

Governing Board member discussion continued regarding future planning, needing more information on potential legislation, groundwater storage, etc.

d) **Member Comment—Governing Board members may wish to comment on issues not otherwise on the agenda**

Washburn asked for a presentation by the two main SMBRC Governing Board agencies to include graphics on how the watershed would look like, the critical junctions, and what collaborations are needed to get something done. Susan Goode discussed the 1000-foot tall Ridge Dam removal project with the US Army Corps of Engineers which would open 15 miles of habitat to steelhead trout, and the need to fund \$524,000 for the EIR/EIS due to a change in scope on the study to address beach nourishment shoreline protection of the project. Liz Crosson announced LA Waterkeeper's Go Dirty for the Drought pledge which has reached over 10,000 participants including Malibu, Long Beach and Burbank. LA Waterkeeper is having a party to celebrate. Odysseus Bostick noted newly-elected Assembly Woman Autumn Burke will be sworn in at the Hyperion Environmental Learning Center on Saturday. Pestrella commented that the Oxford project has more information online for the public who commented about it and is on target to start in the spring and welcomed more input from the public. Bob Godfrey gave a short report on fish and said that with the warm water there have been lots of yellowtail, but not as many white sea bass.

John Sibert mentioned that the California Wildlife Center has seen an increasing number of starving seal pups along the Malibu coast, likely due to increased water temperatures. Ford noted that this year is the fifth year that brown pelicans did not breed in our region because of their inability to find fish to nest and feed their youth. Caspary thanked stakeholder members for attending their water workshops to review their long-term comprehensive water management options. He also announced the 3rd workshop on March 18th from 4-8pm. Washburn announced that the Santa Monica Mountain Conservancy's publication *Outdoors* is now available and reminded all to renew their subscriptions annually (<http://www.nps.gov/samo>). Dan Murphy noted there have been 114,000 contact rescues on the surfline with the warmer waters and said the LA County Fire Lifeguard Division has not had a break and has been staffed like it's the summer. He also noted that a beaches & harbors parking lot, earlier mis-categorized as wetland in public comment, sits on an existing parking lot, and that their department would be happy to park their spare vehicles under this lot and not leave them in the exposed areas. Sarah Sikich reminded members about the Hermosa Beach oil issue vote on March 3rd.

The next meeting date of April 16, 2015 was announced and the meeting adjourned at 11:27 without objection. (M: Pestrella, S: Murphy)

Attendance***Voting Members of the Governing Board:***

Dayna Bochco, California Coastal Commission
Joan Cardellino, California State Coastal Conservancy
Charles Caspary, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District
Liz Crosson, Public Member/Environmental, Angeles Waterkeeper
Fran Diamond, California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles
Philip Friess, LA County Sanitation District
Gloria Gray, At-Large Member (West Basin MWD)
Robert Godfrey, At-Large Member (Marina Del Rey Anglers)
Suzanne Goode, California Department of Parks and Recreation
Jim Knight, South Bay Cities (City of Rancho Palos Verdes)
Dan Murphy, LA County Fire Department, Lifeguard Division
Susan Nissman, LA County Board of Supervisors, 3rd District, Sheila Kuehl
Micheal O'Leary, SMBRC Chair, Ballona Creek Watershed Cities (Culver City)
Mark Pestrella, LA County Department of Public Works
Matt Petersen, Office of the Mayor, City of Los Angeles
John Sibert, Malibu Watershed Cities (City of Malibu)
Sarah Sikich, Public Member/Environmental, Heal the Bay
Rorie Skei, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
Fran Spivy-Weber, California Environmental Protection Agency
Frederick Sutton, Councilmember, LA City Council District 11
Michael Tripp, LA County Department of Beaches & Harbors
Dennis Washburg, At-Large Member BWC (SM Mtns RCD)
Enrique Zaldivar, Los Angeles City Public Works, Bureau of Sanitation

Non-Voting Members of the Governing Board:

Odysseus Bostick, Assembly Member Autumn Burke, 62nd District
Autumn Burke, State Assembly Member, 62nd District
Samantha David, State Senator Ben Allen, 26th District
Laurie Newman, The Bay Foundation
Timothy Pershing, Assembly Member Richard Bloom, 50th District
Kara Seward, State Senator Fran Pavley, 27th District

SMB National Estuary Program and SWRCB Staff:

Heather Burdick
Julie Du Brow
Tom Ford
Victoria Gambale
Ariadne Reynolds
Jack Topel
Scott Valor
Marcelo Villagomez
Guangyu Wang
Frances McChesney, SWRCB Legal Counsel

Other Attendees, including other Watershed Advisory Council Members:

Abid Chowdbry, City of Los Angeles
Tonga Durrell, LA Sanitation
Laura Emberson, BWLT
Andy Flores, Public Works City of LA
Eriyah Flynn, Vegan Shift
Fernando Gonzalez, Los Angeles Sanitation
Kathy Knight, Airport Marina Group of Sierra Club
Walter Lamb, BWLT
Timothy Lippman, LA County Board of Supervisors, 3rd District Sheila Kuehl
TJ Moon, LA County Public Works
Patricia McPherson, Grass Roots Coalition, SC
David Pederson
Ellen Perkins, South Bay Cities COG (alt.), Palos Verdes Estates Mayor
LW Plauzoles, SM Bay Audubon; Damian Skinner, Culver City; Wing Tam, LA City Dept of Public Works