



**SANTA MONICA BAY
RESTORATION COMMISSION**
MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE OF THE NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM

**SANTA MONICA BAY RESTORATION COMMISSION
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

Date: Thursday, September 17, 2020

Time: 11:30 am - 1:30 pm

Meeting Location: Remote Meeting Only

Charlie Caspary chaired the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission's (Commission) Executive Committee meeting and called the meeting to order at 11:32 am. Caspary provided an overview of the meeting protocols. Introductions followed. Caspary introduced James Stahl as the new representative of the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (Los Angeles Water Board) on the Commission's Governing Board.

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

Patricia McPherson commented on mineral rights of SoCal Gas, Proposition 65, the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve, and the Ballona Wetlands Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR). At Caspary's request, Patricia McPherson confirmed that her comments on the Ballona Wetlands Final EIR were submitted to California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW).

2) Executive Committee Business

a) Order of Agenda

There was no change to the order of the agenda. The order of the agenda was approved without objection.

b) Reports from the Chief Administrative Director and Santa Monica Bay National Estuary Program (NEP) Director

Guangyu Wang welcomed James Stahl and reported on Commission staff's work activities including discussion with Los Angeles County Safe Clean Water Program (SCWP) staff regarding the Commission's recommendations; participation in the virtual grand opening of the Pure Water Demonstration Facility; collaboration with The Bay Foundation on annual NEPORT reporting and the Semi-annual Report; preliminary review of the Memorandum of Agreement between the Commission and The Bay Foundation; and termination of the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Authority.

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Tom Ford reported on recent news regarding climate change, studies on ice caps and sea level rise, and Western United States' wildfire smoke.

i) Overview of Governing Board Input and Staff Recommendations for the Executive Committee's Next Steps Pertaining to the Establishment and Operation of Subcommittees

Guangyu Wang introduced this item and invited Caitlin Gray to summarize input received from Governing Board members and staff recommendations regarding the establishment and operation of subcommittees and potential next steps.

Members commented on staff's preparation of guidelines regarding the establishment and operation of subcommittees based on staff's recommendations. Members also commented on urgent issues a subcommittee could be formed to address, including the municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) permit and advancing local wetlands restoration; subcommittee members' active participation; ongoing opportunities to identify additional examples of issues a subcommittee could address; development of a statement of principles for the Commission; and scheduling of subcommittee meetings.

James Stahl informed members of the anticipated timeline for the MS4 permit and recommended working with Los Angeles Water Board staff for topics related to the MS4 permit.

Members commented on the public comment deadline and development of a comment letter regarding the MS4 permit for the Governing Board's consideration.

Member comments followed on a potential subcommittee to explore support for MS4 permit implementation and identification of the specific purpose and deliverables for consideration at the next Executive Committee meeting.

Member Comments

Leslie Purcell commented on the Los Angeles Water Board's triennial review of the Basin Plan. Jonathon Bishop provided general background on the purpose of the triennial review of the Basin Plan and how it relates to the Commission.

ii) Update on the Projected Agenda Items Calendar and Information Items List

Guangyu Wang introduced this item and discussed the updated Projected Agenda Items Calendar as a living document for planning essential and recurring Commission activities. Wang also discussed the updated Information Items List as a tool for scheduling potential information items, including topics a subcommittee could be formed to address.

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Members commented on prioritizing potential information items for the next six to 12 months for discussion at the next Executive Committee meeting.

iii) Update on August 20, 2020 Governing Board Meeting Informational Items regarding the Ballona Wetlands Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Public Access to Coastal Resources Highlighting Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve

Guangyu Wang introduced this item, noted attendance of CDFW staff to field questions, and reported on discussions with CDFW staff regarding information-sharing for the Ballona Wetlands Final EIR and public access at the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve. Wang also reported that staff received additional inquiries from Governing Board members and comments from the public since the August 20, 2020 Governing Board meeting.

Staff recommended to not schedule additional information items on the Ballona Wetlands Final EIR and public access at the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve and to encourage interested Governing Board members or members of the public to contact CDFW directly for any additional questions or comments regarding these issues.

Public Comment

Patricia McPherson commented on the formation of subcommittees and the Water Resources Development Act.

Cindy Hardin commented on public access in Area A of Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve.

Richard Harmel commented on mechanisms for stakeholder engagement regarding the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve.

Walter Lamb commented on the timeline of the Ballona Wetlands Final EIR, public access at the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve, stakeholder input on the formation of subcommittees, and climate change.

Leslie Purcell commented in support of Patricia McPherson's comment regarding SoCal Gas mineral rights and commented on the order that public comment was held, public access and community restoration at the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve, and the Ballona Wetlands Final EIR.

Richard Brody encouraged members of the Commission and members of the public to contact CDFW for questions regarding the informational items on the Ballona Wetlands Final EIR and public access at the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve.

Caspary inquired about applications for public access at the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve, including outstanding and denied applications, and updates on the timeline for the Final EIR. Richard Brody responded to

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Casparly, requested specific questions be submitted to CDFW in writing, and reported that there are no updates on the timeline for the Final EIR.

Member comments followed on historical and current public access at the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve and expressed appreciation of the public members' community restoration and engagement work.

c) Consideration of Approval of July 16, 2020 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes were approved as published by roll-call vote. Moved: Jonathon Bishop. Seconded: Kelly Clark.

d) Establish the Governing Board Agenda for the October 15, 2020 Governing Board Meeting

i) Presentation on the Santa Monica Bay NEP Comprehensive Monitoring Program (CMP) Update

Wang introduced this item, reported on the anticipated timeline to complete the CMP update, and recommended to schedule a presentation informing the Governing Board and members of the public of the purpose of the CMP and the scope of the CMP update.

ii) Consideration of Approval of Proposition 50 Grant Program Award Process and Request for Proposals (RFP)

Wang introduced this item and reported on Proposition 50 grant encumbrance dates and anticipated timeline for grant program award process. Staff recommended to not schedule this item for the October 15, 2020 Governing Board meeting and to postpone this item for the Governing Board's consideration until after the completion of the CMP update.

Staff then recommended to schedule a presentation on highlights from Santa Monica Bay NEP reporting, including NEPORT reporting and the Semi-annual Report, as an information item for the October 15, 2020 Governing Board meeting.

Member comments followed on NEPORT reporting and focusing the presentation on Santa Monica Bay NEP accomplishments. Members suggestions included updates from members of the Governing Board and the public regarding plastic trash pollution during the pandemic and clean-up efforts.

Casparly invited Eric Gillman to provide an update on ongoing litigation. Eric Gillman reported on an upcoming mediation meeting scheduled for October 2020.

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The following recommended items were added to the October 15, 2020 Governing Board meeting agenda by roll-call vote: consideration of approval of resolution regarding the MS4 Permit within the Santa Monica Bay watershed, including a potential comment letter; presentation on highlights from Santa Monica Bay NEP reporting; and Item 2.d.i, presentation on the Santa Monica Bay NEP Comprehensive Monitoring Program (CMP) update. Moved: Kelly Clark. Seconded: Martha Tremblay.

e) Closed Session

No closed session was held.

3) Member Comments and Announcements Regarding Matters not on the Agenda

Martha Tremblay provided updates on the Joint Water Pollution Control Plant (JWPCP) including initiation of testing and an upcoming virtual tour.

Erica Yelensky reported on the upcoming Restore America's Estuaries Annual Conference.

Claire Waggoner announced the reconvening of the science advisory panel on constituents of emerging concern.

The meeting adjourned at 2:06 pm.

Attendance:

Voting Members and Alternates of the Executive Committee:

Jonathan Bishop, State Water Resources Control Board
Charlie Caspary, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District
Kelly Clark, Public Member (Environmental/Public Interest), Los Angeles Waterkeeper
Shelley Luce, Public Member (Environmental/Public Interest), Heal the Bay
Martha Tremblay, Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts
Claire Waggoner, State Water Resources Control Board

Non-Voting Members and Alternates of the Executive Committee:

Tom Ford, Santa Monica Bay NEP Director
Erica Yelensky, US EPA Region 9

Commission and State Water Board Staff:

Eric Gillman, State Water Board
Caitlin Gray, Commission
Guangyu Wang, Commission

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Other Attendees:

Richard Brody, California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Rich Burg

Miriam Faugno

Cindy Harin

Richard Harmel

Walter Lamb, Ballona Wetlands Land Trust

Patricia McPherson, Sierra Club Airport Marina Group and Grassroots Coalition

Leslie Purcell

Randy Rodriguez, California Department of Fish and Wildlife

James Stahl, Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board

Jeanette Vosburg