

THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

MINUTES

BAY-DELTA COMMITTEE

November 23, 2021

Committee Vice Chair Faessel called the teleconference meeting to order at 12:33 p.m.

Members present: Chair Ackerman, Vice Chair Faessel, Directors Apodaca, Atwater, Blois, Kurtz, Lefevre, McCoy, Morris, Peterson, Pressman, and Sutley.

Members absent: Directors Cordero and Repenning.

Other Board Members present: Chairwoman Gray, Directors Abdo, De Jesus, Erdman, Fellow, Fong-Sakai, Goldberg, Jung, Luna, Miller, Quinn, Ramos, Record, Smith, Tamaribuchi, and Williams.

Committee Staff present: Arakawa, Hagekhalil, Horton, Upadhyay, Winn, and Zinke.

1. OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COMMITTEE ON MATTERS WITHIN THE COMMITTEE'S JURISDICTION

1. Chuck Gibson, President, Santa Margarita Water District, spoke regarding the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act subtitle J., and suggested the extension of WIIN Act and other acts to continue to provide water reliability for his area.
2. Doug Obegi, The Natural Resources Defense Council, spoke in opposition to Sites Reservoir, Item 6a on the agenda, and in opposition to the Voluntary Agreements being discussed in Item 6c; supports local regional projects.

CONSENT CALENDAR OTHER ITEMS – ACTION

2. CONSENT CALENDAR OTHER ITEMS -- ACTION

- A. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Bay-Delta Committee held on October 26, 2021

3. CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS – ACTION

None

Director Morris made a motion, seconded by Director Peterson to approve the consent calendar consisting of item 2A:

The vote was:

Ayes: Directors Ackerman, Apodaca, Atwater, Blois, Faessel, Kurtz, Lefevre, McCoy, Morris, Peterson, and Pressman.

Noes: None

Abstentions: Sutley

Absent: Directors Cordero and Repenning.

The motion passed by a vote of 11 ayes, 0 noes, 1 abstention, 2 absent.

END OF CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS

4. OTHER BOARD ITEMS – ACTION

None

5. BOARD INFORMATION ITEMS

None

6. COMMITTEE ITEMS

- a. Subject: Presentation regarding Sites Reservoir Project: Jerry Brown, Sites Reservoir Authority Executive Director

Presented by: Steve Arakawa, Bay-Delta Initiatives Manager

Mr. Arakawa introduced our guest speaker and presented information about his background in water management.

Mr. Brown presented information on the progress and the path forward for achieving the goal of completing the Sites Reservoir Project. He noted the broad bipartisan support, project cost effectiveness, key environmental benefits, and the importance of the storage in meeting future climate change challenges.

The following Directors provided comments or asked questions.

1. Peterson
2. Sutley
3. Record

The speaker responded to the Directors' questions.

Committee Vice Chair Faessel thanked our guest speaker for his presentation.

- b. Subject: Process for Review of Bay-Delta Board Policies

Presented by: Nina Hawk, Bay-Delta Initiatives Policy Manager

Ms. Hawk provided background information on the importance to Metropolitan's service area of the Bay-Delta and the State Water Project, and she gave an overview of Metropolitan's current Board Bay-Delta Policies. She discussed the process for the upcoming Board policies review and update, and the proposed schedule.

The following Director provided comments or asked a question.

1. Smith

Staff responded to the Director's question.

- c. Subject: Recent Communication Regarding State and Federal Water Project Management

Presented by: Steve Arakawa, Bay-Delta Initiatives Manager

Mr. Arakawa spoke about recent communications by elected officials and resource managers regarding state and federal water project management. He noted the information is posted on the Committee's agenda. He provided background information on Bay-Delta flow and water quality regulations and processes, including: interim drought operations for year 2022; federal Endangered Species Act reinitiation of consultation; and the Voluntary Agreement discussions with the state.

The following Directors provided comments or asked questions.

1. Peterson
2. Sutley
3. Lefevre

Staff responded to the Directors' questions.

7. MANAGEMENT REPORTS

- a. Subject: Bay-Delta Management Report

Presented by: Steve Arakawa, Bay-Delta Initiatives Manager

Mr. Arakawa noted the US Army Corp of Engineers (Corp) is the lead agency for the federal government in preparing the federal environmental review document for the Delta Conveyance Project, and that the state of California Department of Water Resources sent a letter to the Corp indicating that the eastern alignment with Bethany Forebay connection alternative will be the state's proposed project as it develops the state's Environmental Impact Report.

He also mentioned that the Delta Stewardship Council report that was deferred as an agenda item in last month's committee meeting will be rescheduled for early 2022.

8. FOLLOW-UP ITEMS

None

9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None

Next meeting will be held on January 25, 2022.

Meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Stephen Faessel
Vice Chair