

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE COMMISSION OF
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA COASTAL WATER RESEARCH PROJECT AUTHORITY**

**HELD AT THE OFFICES OF THE AUTHORITY
7171 Fenwick Lane, Westminster, California**

**September 8, 2006
9:30 a.m.**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Jonathan Bishop - *Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region*
Arthur Coe - *Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region*
Mas Dojiri - *City of Los Angeles*
Janet Hashimoto - *US Environmental Protection Agency, Region IX*
Robert Horvath - *Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts*
Gerhardt Hubner - *Ventura County Watershed Protection Division*
Larry McKenney - *Orange County Public Facilities and Resources Department*
Darrin Polhemus - *State Water Resources Control Board*
Cid Tesoro - *San Diego County Department of Public Works*
Gerard Thibeault - *Regional Water Quality Control Board, Santa Ana Region*

STAFF PRESENT

Stephen Weisberg - *Executive Director*
B. Richard Marsh - *Legal Counsel*
Ken Schiff - *Deputy Director*
Bryan Nece - *Administrative Officer*
Jim Allen - *Principal Investigator*
Art Barnett - *Principal Investigator*
Steve Bay - *Principal Investigator*
Eric Stein - *Principal Investigator*
Karlene Miller - *Administrative Analyst*

OTHERS PRESENT

Kathleen Flannery - *San Diego County Department of Public Works*
Michael Lyons - *Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region*
Dave Montagne - *Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts*
Bruce Posthumus - *Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region*
John Robertus - *Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region*

Commission Chair Thibeault called the meeting to order at 9:35 AM. Roll call was taken and Commissioners present were Polhemus, Thibeault, Coe, Bishop, Hashimoto, Horvath, Dojiri, Flannery, and McKenney.

The Commission welcomed the County of San Diego as a new member agency. Cid Tesoro has been designated to serve as the Commissioner for the County of San Diego, with Kathleen Flannery serving as the Alternate Commissioner.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD JUNE 9, 2006**
2. **QUARTERLY FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE PERIOD ENDED JUNE 30, 2006**
3. **QUARTERLY STATEMENT OF INVESTMENTS AT JUNE 30, 2006**
4. **MINUTES OF CTAG MEETING OF MAY 18, 2006**

Commissioner Horvath motioned for approval of the consent agenda. Commissioner Dojiri seconded the motion and the consent agenda was unanimously approved.

Commissioners Hubner and Tesoro arrived at 9:44 am.

REGULAR AGENDA

5. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Executive Director's Administrative Report began with welcoming the County of San Diego to the Agency as an Associate Member. Dr. Weisberg also announced that Los Angeles County had recently signed an agreement to extend their Associate Membership three years, to match the term of the present Joint Powers Agreement. He next indicated that SCCWRP is doing well financially, but that he would be implementing careful cash-flow management over the next several quarters to guard against unanticipated expenses associated with the facility relocation.

The Executive Director's Technical Report began with Dr. Weisberg indicating pleasure that the Agency was meeting its goal of conducting research that is relevant to its member agencies. Dr. Weisberg cited several examples of this, the first of which is the Agency's participation in the development of statewide Sediment Quality Objectives (SQOs). The Agency is assisting the State by developing the technical foundation of SQOs, and the technical approach recommended by SCCWRP had been strongly endorsed by the State's Scientific Steering Committee, an advisory panel of national experts. The SWRCB accepted this technical foundation as the basis for its recently released SQO Planning Document.

Dr. Weisberg offered SCCWRP's epidemiology work as a second example of Agency relevance. The Agency had previously conducted an epidemiology study in Mission Bay that found a lack of correlation between traditional fecal indicator bacteria measurements and swimmer health risk at a nonpoint source contaminated beach. SCCWRP has received funding for two new epidemiology studies that will determine if this lack of relationship is isolated to Mission Bay or occurs at other nonpoint source contaminated beaches. In addition, a large number of new fecal indicators will be measured to see if alternative measurements provide a better relationship to health risk of swimmers. To that end, a large number of organizations interested in new technology development have expressed interest in participating and augmenting the study. In particular, Dr. Weisberg indicated that the Cooperative Institute for Coastal and Estuarine Environmental Technology is going to issue a request for proposals, which they would be funding with \$750K, to attract additional researchers who are developing new indicators to participate in the study. Ultimately, this study could lead to revised water quality standards for nonpoint source impacted beaches.

As another example of increased relevance, Dr. Weisberg indicated that Ephraim King, Director of the US EPA's Office of Science and Technology, visited SCCWRP in August to assess how our research activities might be used to help set national guidance. Dr. King was impressed at two levels. The first was the Agency's technical ability and applicability to environmental management. In particular, Dr. King discussed the epidemiology studies, nutrient criteria development, and SQO development projects with staff. His second positive impression was his interaction with the Beach Water Quality Work Group (BWQWG). The BWQWG was formed in 1998 to help the State formulate policy regarding beach management issues. Dr. King provided this group an update, and received feedback, on EPA Headquarters directions on beach-related regulation. Dr. King was impressed with the BWQWG's diversity of participants that includes County Health Departments, regulators, regulated (i.e., POTWs and stormwater permittees), and environmental advocacy organizations, and the BWQWG's ability to reach consensus on difficult issues facing EPA.

The final example of the Agency's increased relevance was the frequency at which other agencies were requesting SCCWRP personnel for presentations and conferences. In addition to the plethora of talks SCCWRP is asked to give nationally, Keith Maruya, Head of the Agency's Chemistry Department, has been invited to give talks on Agency accomplishments in both Norway and China (with travel funds paid by the inviting groups). Additionally, Dr. Weisberg indicated that he was asked to chair the Research Application Task Force (RATF) to support the Presidential mandate to develop a national Ocean Research Priority Plan. Finally, Dr. Weisberg displayed a new feature on the SCCWRP website showcasing abstracts for conference presentations by the Agency's scientists (http://www.sccwrp.org/whatsnew/new_presentations.html). More than 25 presentations are currently highlighted.

The Executive Director next reported on LACSDs Workshop on Sewage Spills and Beach Sand, which the Commission had requested when the meeting was announced at the previous Commission meeting. Staff had provided assistance to LACSD in planning and moderating the Workshop, which addressed three main questions. The first and second questions were "How should agencies plan for contingencies related to beach spills?" and "Is this contingency plan transferable?". Dr. Weisberg indicated that the workshop had been successful, in that the workshop participants helped LACSD plan what is considered the state-of-the-art spill contingency plan, that was readily transferable to other sandy beach locations. The third question was "What are the high priority research needs required to improve the plan?". The research community, which had not previously considered this topic, was now energized and undertaking important new projects as a result of the workshop. Examples included a statewide study of background concentrations in beach sand, a national intercalibration of methods to measure bacteria in beach sand, and the creation a Plenary Session on bacteria in beach sand at this year's National Beach Conference in October.

Dr. Weisberg next provided an update on the Bight '03 Regional Monitoring Program. The Sediment Chemistry report, including data and metadata, was released and posted to the SCCWRP website ahead of schedule in June (available at <http://www.sccwrp.org/regional/03bight/03docs.html>). The Trawl Report is on schedule for final review later this month. The Infauna Report was a bit behind schedule due to the untimely passing of an important collaborator, but Agency staff has recovered and were making significant progress. The delay, however, provided an opportunity to incorporate the SWRCBs new SQO assessment tools into the B'03 assessment. The Infauna Report and subsequent Synthesis Report are anticipated to be about three months behind schedule.

Dr. Weisberg next described a new project that the Agency was undertaking with the Ocean Conservation Society, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and the Centro de Investigacion Cientifica y de Educacion Superior de Ensenada (CICESE) to assess condition of marine mammals. The effort will initially focus on movement patterns of Bottlenose dolphins, with SCCWRP's role focused on chemical analysis of tissue samples for contaminant concentrations and the presence of endocrine disrupting compounds.

At the request of the Commission Chair, agenda item #8 was addressed next.

8. APPOINTMENT OF COMMISSION CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

SCCWRP's Joint Powers Agreement requires annual election of Commission Chair and Vice-Chair. Commissioner Thibeault motioned for election of Commissioner Polhemus from the State Water Resources Control Board as the chair. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Coe and approved unanimously. Commissioner Horvath motioned for election of Commissioner Dojiri as the Vice-Chair. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Thibeault and approved unanimously.

Commissioner Thibeault left at 10:40 am.

6. NEW FACILITY

Bryan Nece provided an update on the Agency's relocation to a new facility. He indicated that the Agency has been in the current facility for 15 years and had outgrown it. He provided a historical timeline that included a three-year search for the new facility and culminated in the signature of a 12-year lease in May 2006. He described the advantages of the new facility, which includes more offices, improved meeting facilities, additional parking, and more bathrooms, with an overall increase in space of about 70%. The building is largely a shell that is being built out to our specifications and he had hired a Project Manager to help him stay within budget and remain on schedule. Construction began in August and his project team has met all interim milestones to date. A project completion date of approximately December 31, 2006, is anticipated.

7. CTAG REPORT

Michael Lyons, Chair of CTAG, reported on CTAG's August 9th meeting. The principal topics addressed by CTAG were presentations on the natural loading study and a review of SCCWRP's wetlands research agenda. He indicated that CTAG had much interest in both topics.

9. FUTURE MEETING DATES

The Commission selected the following meeting dates and a meeting time of 9:30 am for calendar year 2007:

March 9th
June 8th
September 14th
December 14th

Commissioner Bishop motioned to approve the Commission meeting dates. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Dojiri and approved unanimously.

10. CONTRACT APPROVAL

The Executive Director requested that the Commission approve resolutions regarding the following contracts that would be offered to the Authority.

- 1) State Coastal Conservancy (\$500,000)
Wetlands Recovery Project
- 2) UC Berkeley (\$764,031)
Epidemiology Study

Upon the motion of Commissioner Horvath, seconded by Commissioner Dojiri, the contracts were unanimously approved by Resolution, with Commissioner Hashimoto abstaining.

As an informational item, Dr. Weisberg described contracts with value of \$250,000 or less that the Authority has accepted or indicated a willingness to accept. While the governing agreement of SCCWRP requires no Commission action on these, the contracts were described to inform and ensure that the direction of the Authority's work is consistent with the desires of the Commission.

- 3) EPA (\$225,000)
Fate and Transport of Trace Metals in the Restored Bolsa Chica Estuary
- 4) California Department of Health Services (\$100,000)
Beach Watch
- 5) California Department of Pesticide Regulation (\$60,000)
Analyzing Water Samples For Their Copper In Marinas Study.
- 6) Brock Bernstein (\$30,000)
Workplan for Santa Monica Bay Comprehensive Monitoring Program
- 7) The County of Los Angeles (\$59,112)
Ventura County Watershed Protection District (\$45,649)
City of Thousand Oaks (\$18,699)
City of Agoura Hills (\$15,388)
City of Calabasas (\$12,716)
City of Westlake Village (\$10,520)
City of Malibu (\$1,594)
Caltrans (\$1,010)
City of Hidden Hills (\$312)
Conduct a Bacteria Reference Watershed Study
- 8) City of Los Angeles (\$73,430)
City of San Diego (\$73,430)
OCSD (\$137,610)
LACSD (\$170,685)
Endocrine Disruption Study Phase II

There were no objections to any of these contracts.

11. NAME AND LOGO FOR THE AGENCY

The Commission considered whether the agency should modify its name or its logo coincident with the Agency's move to the new facility. SCCWRP's legal counsel, Dick Marsh, identified several concerns with a name change during the course of a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) and recommended that any name change be delayed until it could be incorporated into a subsequent JPA. The consensus of the Commission was to re-examine a name modification when the current JPA expires. However, it was also the consensus of the Commission to consider revising SCCWRP's logo at the present time. Dr. Weisberg indicated that he would develop options, obtain consensus among the SCCWRP staff, consult with CTAG and bring forward the results to the Commission at its next meeting.

At the request of the Commission Chair, agenda item #13 was addressed next.

13. RAPID MEASUREMENT METHODS FOR MICROBIOLOGICAL INDICATORS

The Executive Director began by providing a brief summary of the results from the Agency's previously completed studies to evaluate the readiness of six new rapid methods for quantifying fecal indicator bacteria. The previous studies found that several of the new methods were working well, but that the Beach Water Quality Workgroup (BWQWG) felt that additional testing was necessary before the methods should be adopted for general application. In particular, the BWQWG suggested that additional testing should focus on measuring ambient samples with local laboratories employing the new methods, rather than testing being performed by the method developers. Dr. Weisberg then described the most recent study, which involved testing the two methods that had performed best in the previous studies, quantitative polymerase chain reaction and transcription mediated amplification, with testing being done by two local laboratories, the Orange County Sanitation District and the Orange County Public Health Laboratory. He indicated that there were only minor problems in transferring the new technology to the local laboratories, though there was considerable opportunity to automate the methods further to make them easier to apply, and he was working with the method developers toward that end. He further indicated that the methods generally performed well, but amplification inhibition was apparent in some samples, which led to underestimates compared to present methods. The next steps are to refine the methods to decrease the rate of false negatives by creating better internal controls and correcting for interferences. Further evaluation studies are anticipated next year.

12. CONTAMINANT LOADINGS FROM NATURAL WATERSHEDS

Eric Stein presented findings from the Agency's project to assess contaminant concentrations and loadings at reference watersheds in southern California. The goal of this study was to address reference conditions in freshwater streams. Eric identified that 21 sites, stratified by geology and land cover, were sampled on 31 wet-weather and 53 dry-weather site-events between 2004 and 2006. Some of the most pertinent findings included: 1) concentrations in runoff from natural areas were generally one to two orders of magnitude lower than in urban areas; 2) concentrations in dry weather runoff from natural areas were generally below water quality standards for all constituents; 3) concentrations in wet weather runoff from natural areas generally exceeded water quality standards for bacteria; and 4) concentrations in wet weather runoff from natural areas generally did not exceed water quality standards for trace metals or nutrients. The next steps are to finalize the Draft Report in consultation with the project technical advisory committee. The Commission asked that the Executive Director distribute the presentation. The topic also engendered a conversation about nutrient criteria development and the Commission asked that this be a future agenda item. Finally, the Commission asked the Executive Director to provide them a list of the members of the technical advisory committee.

14. FUTURE MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

The Commission requested updates regarding three items: 1) the Agency's progress on nutrient and eutrophication research; 2) an overview of the Agency's wetland research program; and 3) an assessment of the integration between the Agency's Model Monitoring Program and the SWRCB's amendments to the California Ocean Plan.

15. OTHER BUSINESS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Tesoro, who had arrived after the meeting began, was introduced. He expressed his appreciation at being part of the Commission and expressed his common interest with the Agency. Commissioner Hubner mentioned that the County of Ventura had recently received a \$5 million grant from the SWRCB to assist in the removal of the Matilija Dam on the Ventura River.

16. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None

17. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:55 pm until the next Commission meeting on December 8, 2006.

ATTEST:

Bryan Nece
Secretary