

**Minutes of the Regular Commission Meeting of the  
Southern California Coastal Water Research Project Authority (SCCWRP)**

**Held at the offices of the Authority:  
3535 Harbor Blvd., Costa Mesa, California 92626**

**September 5, 2014  
9:30 AM**

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**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

John Kemmerer — *US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region IX*  
Vicky Whitney — *State Water Resources Control Board*  
Catherine Kuhlman — *California Ocean Protection Council*  
Sam Unger — *Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board*  
Kurt Berchtold (Chair) — *Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board*  
Mas Dojiri — *City of Los Angeles*  
Grace Hyde — *Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts*  
Bob Ghirelli — *Orange County Sanitation District*  
Tim Stebbins — *City of San Diego*  
Gerhardt Hubner (Vice-Chair) — *Ventura County Watershed Protection District*  
Gary Hildebrand — *Los Angeles County Department of Public Works*  
Mary Anne Skorpanich — *County of Orange*  
Jo Ann Webber — *County of San Diego*

**STAFF PRESENT**

Stephen Weisberg — *Executive Director*  
Bryan Nece — *Administrative Officer*  
Wesley Beverlin — *Legal Counsel*  
Ken Schiff — *Deputy Director*  
Steve Bay — *Principal Scientist*  
John Griffith — *Principal Scientist*  
Keith Maruya — *Principal Scientist*  
Eric Stein — *Principal Scientist*  
Steve Steinberg — *Principal Scientist*  
Martha Sutula — *Principal Scientist*  
Scott Martindale — *Editor*  
Nathan Dodder — *Senior Scientist*  
Alvina Mehinto — *Scientist*

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Peter Vroom — *City of San Diego*  
Joe Gully (CTAG Chair) — *Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts*

Commission Chair Kurt Berchtold called the meeting to order at 9:38 AM.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

### **1. Minutes of Meeting Held June 6, 2014**

### **2. Quarterly Financial Statement for the Period Ended June 30, 2014**

### **3. Quarterly Statement of Investments at June 30, 2014**

### **4. Minutes of CTAG Meetings Held August 14, 2014**

Commissioner Ghirelli motioned to approve the consent items, and Commissioner Hildebrand seconded the motion. The Commission approved the motion unanimously with Commissioner Kemmerer abstaining.

## **REGULAR AGENDA**

### **5. Personnel and Finance Committee Report**

Commissioner Ghirelli, who was elected chair of the Personnel and Finance Committee during its September 5, 2014, meeting, reported that SCCWRP ended the 2013-14 fiscal year with a surplus and congratulated staff. Commissioner Hyde was thanked for her service as immediate past Committee chair.

### **6. Strategic Planning Committees**

The three strategic planning committees that were formed at the Commission's May 2014 Strategic Planning meeting provided updates:

- **Funding Model Committee:** Commissioner Ghirelli reported that the Funding Model Committee met for the first time on Sept. 5, 2014, to reevaluate the agency's funding model, including determining the proper balance of internal and external funding sources. The committee will provide the Commission with an update at the December 2014 or March 2015 meeting.
- **Mission Committee:** Commissioner Hyde reported that the Mission Committee was making good progress and was hoping to have a completed draft summary to present at the December 2014 Commission meeting.
- **Commissioner Lunch Committee:** Executive Director Weisberg reported that the Commissioner Lunch Committee decided Weisberg will host a series of informal lunches over the course of the next year for each of the major sectors that comprise the Commission: stormwater agencies, publicly owned treatment works, and regulators. Each sector will have its own lunch with Weisberg, although regulators will be broken into two groups – federal/state regulators and regional water boards – to ensure a quorum is not reached. The stormwater luncheon was the first scheduled and will take place immediately following today's Commission meeting.

### **7. Election of Commission Chair and Vice-Chair**

Weisberg reported that both the present Commission Chair and Vice Chair have served for one year. The Chair and Vice-Chair nominally serve one-year terms, but traditionally are renewed for a second year. Commissioner Ghirelli nominated Commissioner Berchtold as Chair and Commissioner Hubner as Vice-Chair. The motion was seconded by Commissioner

Dojiri. The nominations were unanimously approved, with Commissioner Kemmerer abstaining.

### **8. Future Meeting Dates**

Weisberg proposed the following dates for the 2015 Commission meetings:

- March 6
- June 5
- September 11
- December 4

No Commissioners expressed conflicts. The September 11 meeting was proposed for the second Friday of the month, instead of the traditional first Friday of the month, to accommodate the Labor Day holiday. Commissioner Stebbins motioned to approve the meeting dates, and Commissioner Whitney seconded the motion. The Commission approved the motion unanimously.

### **9. Executive Director's Report**

Weisberg reported that Commissioner Tesoro, who served as Water Protection Program Manager for the County of San Diego, retired in late August 2014. Weisberg thanked Tesoro for his service to the Commission.

Weisberg introduced Scott Martindale, who joined SCCWRP as the new communications specialist in July 2014 after an eight-year career as a newspaper reporter.

Weisberg reported that the organization was making progress in assessing whether there was a niche for SCCWRP in water recycling/reuse research. He indicated that Commissioner Whitney had moved forward with developing a State Board workshop on water reuse research needs that would take place on October 29, 2014 at SCCWRP. To help support the workshop, SCCWRP hosted a meeting with the National Water Research Institute and the WaterReuse Research Foundation on August 12, 2014. The three research organizations agreed on four topic areas around which the State Board should organize the workshop: (1) water quality, human health and monitoring, (2) performance reliability, (3) ambient water effects, and (4) balancing and communicating economic, social and environmental impacts. Commissioner Whitney commented that the October 29 meeting has the potential to be particularly satisfying and enlightening because it will be driven by science needs, rather than policymakers and attorneys.

### **10. CTAG Report**

CTAG Chair Gully reported that CTAG had two documents for consideration by the Commission. The first was a CTAG Charter, which needs Commission approval. He indicated that one aspect of the Charter discussions was whether to continue to have a California Coastal Commission representation on CTAG, as they were the only participant in CTAG without a corresponding SCCWRP Commissioner. Gully indicated that since the Coastal Commission has not named a replacement for their present CTAG Representative who recently left, or provided a commitment letter from management to actively participate in CTAG, CTAG has decided not to include the Coastal Commission as member in the present Charter.

The second document identified the recommended qualifications for selecting a CTAG representative. There is no need for Commission approval of this document, but was drafted in response to a Commission request for guidance in this area. The qualifications included: possessing both a technical and management perspective, being well-connected within the member agency, possessing a strong scientific/technical background and possessing strong interpersonal communication and participatory skills. The former two criteria are essential; the latter two are highly desired.

Gully reported that CTAG's newly launched inter-sessional research planning workshops were allowing for more proactive collaboration between SCCWRP scientists and CTAG. CTAG piloted the idea at a workshop focusing on sediment quality in April 2014, then refined the approach and hosted three highly successful subsequent workshops: bioassessment (April 29, 2014), sediment quality (June 26, 2014) and freshwater nutrients (July 17, 2014). The next one will focus on contaminants of emerging concern (October 14, 2014). Gully reported that CTAG was working to organize SCCWRP's annual research plan around a long-term research strategy that could result in a significant re-design of the research plan.

Two key questions emerged from the workshops that Weisberg asked the Commission to consider: Should SCCWRP expand its research focus to lakes and reservoirs, and how close should SCCWRP approach the dividing line between science and policy-making, especially in areas such as providing technical expertise to member agencies that are working with 303(d) listing/delisting decisions? Weisberg indicated that SCCWRP has historically focused on coastal waters and the watersheds that feed directly into them, but the agency has the technical expertise and infrastructure to broaden its focus to lakes and reservoirs at the Commission's discretion. Weisberg indicated that SCCWRP staff only feel comfortable entering into discussions about 303(d) listings when there is an explicit invitation to do so from state regulators, but there was a lot of interest among CTAG for greater involvement in that area.

The Commission tentatively endorsed the agency moving into lake/reservoir research, especially if it can be tied to existing SCCWRP research priorities like nutrients. Commissioner Whitney said she would follow up privately with Weisberg regarding the State Water Resources Control Board's preferences for SCCWRP involvement on 303(d) listing issues.

Commissioners Hildebrand and Skorpanich commended CTAG on its proactive research planning efforts; Commissioner Unger noted that the efforts would bring CTAG and the Commission closer together.

Gully recommended approval of the CTAG Charter and Contracts 1-3. Commissioner Hildebrand motioned for approval and Commissioner Skorpanich seconded the motion. The Commission approved the motion unanimously with Commissioner Kemmerer abstaining.

## 11. Contract Review

SCCWRP's Joint Powers Agreement requires Commission approval of contracts in excess of \$250,000. In addition, the State of California requests a resolution of acceptance for contracts exceeding \$100,000 offered by the State or Regional Water Boards. Weisberg recommended approval of all three contracts:

- 1) County of San Diego (\$1,500,000 – multiple contracts)  
San Diego Wet Weather Epidemiology Study
- 2) San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (\$200,000)  
San Diego Bay Shallow Water Habitat Bioaccumulation Study
- 3) California Coastal Conservancy (\$112,000)  
Climate-Smart Adaptive Strategies

Commissioner Stebbins motioned to approve the three contracts, and Commissioner Hildebrand seconded the motion. The Commission approved the motion unanimously, with Commissioners Weber and Stebbins abstaining on the first contract and Commissioner Kemmerer abstaining on all three.

As an informational item, Weisberg also presented contracts with a value of \$250,000 or less, which SCCWRP has accepted or indicated a willingness to accept. While SCCWRP's governing agreement requires no Commission action on these, the contracts were presented to ensure consistency of the agency's directions with the Commission's intentions.

- 4) Moss Landing Marine Laboratory/San Jose State University (\$120,500)  
SWAMP Special Studies
- 5) Moss Landing Marine Laboratory/San Jose State University (\$56,700)  
Analysis of Pyrethroid Data for Stream Assessment
- 6) Moss Landing Marine Laboratory/San Jose State University (\$63,924)  
San Diego River Post-CADDIS
- 7) Moss Landing Marine Laboratory/San Jose State University (\$48,377)  
Southern California Stormwater Monitoring Coalition (SMC) Data Analyses and Reporting Writing
- 8) Moss Landing Marine Laboratory/San Jose State University (\$5,881)  
Cyanotoxin Analyses
- 9) Moss Landing Marine Laboratory/San Jose State University (\$59,033)  
Technical Report on Cyanotoxins
- 10) Moss Landing Marine Laboratory/San Jose State University (\$40,000)  
San Diego Bay Debris Study

The Commission did not raise any objections to these contracts.

## **12. Contaminants of Emerging Concern**

Principal Scientist Maruya gave a presentation on SCCWRP's two-pronged strategy to advance monitoring efforts for contaminants of emerging concern, or CECs. The first prong of SCCWRP's strategy is to adapt bioanalytical cell screening assays for use in ambient water-quality monitoring. In recent months, SCCWRP has shown that at least one of the bioassays is advanced enough to produce technically acceptable results, though it is still only part of a larger bioassay monitoring framework whose systems will take several more years to develop. He indicated that this bioassay is now ready for initial trial at a wastewater facility and that he was in discussion with several member agencies. The second prong of SCCWRP's strategy is to use nontargeted chemical analysis to identify CECs that are not regularly monitored, and also to integrate nontargeted techniques into an overall CEC screening strategy.

Asked by Commissioner Hubner about bioassay screening costs, Maruya said bioanalytical screening assays would likely cost anywhere from a fifth to half the cost of traditional chemistry-based monitoring. Asked by Commissioner Unger about whether SCCWRP recommended relying less on chemistry-based screening as bioassays are developed, Weisberg said the science would dictate the relative usefulness of each screening method and that was why the pilot efforts using them together was so important. Commissioner Dojiri commented that SCCWRP's strategy was logical and expressed support for promptly moving into bioassay pilot testing.

## **13. Annual Report**

Weisberg reminded the Commission that they had agreed at their previous meeting to move in a new direction with the SCCWRP Annual Report and presented a mockup of the 2014 report for the Commission feedback. Weisberg explained the report historically has been written by scientists for scientists; this year's report will strike a different balance by providing in-depth, magazine-style articles written for a lay audience, as well as abstracts of every journal article and technical report SCCWRP has published in the past year. Weisberg said it was ineffective to continue printing full-text journal articles because most journals have already published SCCWRP's manuscripts elsewhere, including online, by the time the Annual Report is released.

The Commission endorsed the new direction and expressed confidence it would more effectively reach the non-technical governing boards that Commissioners report to, as well as a broader swath of their staffs. Asked by Commissioner Hyde about cost savings, Weisberg said SCCWRP anticipated more than halving the cost, which was \$238K for the last Annual Report. Asked by Commissioners Hubner and Unger about how the topics for the report's articles were being selected, Weisberg explained that SCCWRP staff developed the article topics and would ask CTAG to provide review. Asked by Commissioner Dojiri about the relationship between the new Annual Report format and SCCWRP Fact Sheets, Weisberg said he anticipated the Annual Report would replace the Fact Sheets.

Commissioner Kuhlman left at 11:45 AM.

**14. Future Meeting Agenda Items**

Commissioner Berchtold asked that the Commission receive a briefing on outcomes from the Oct 29 State Board Workshop. Weisberg indicated that the primary agenda item for the next CTAG meeting was a description of SCCWRP's initiatives in information management and data visualization. Commissioner Berchtold indicated that would be a good topic for the Commission to hear as well.

**15. Other Business and Communications**

No other business was raised.

**16. Public Comments**

No public comments were raised.

**17. Adjournment**

Commission Chair Berchtold adjourned the meeting at 11:54 AM until the next Commission meeting on December 5, 2014.

Attest:

Bryan Nece  
Secretary