



...A United Voice for the Santa Ana River Watershed

OWOW STEERING COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

May 28, 2020

Committee Members	
<u>Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority Representatives</u>	
Kati Parker, Inland Empire Utilities Agency	Present
Kelly E. Rowe, Convener, Orange County Water District	Present
<u>County Supervisor Representatives</u>	
Doug Chaffee, Orange County Board of Supervisors	Present
Karen Spiegel, Riverside County Board of Supervisors	Present
Curt Hagman, San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors	Present
<u>County Municipal Representatives</u>	
Deborah Robertson, Mayor, City of Rialto	Present (11:07 a.m.)
Rusty Bailey, Mayor, City of Riverside	Present
Jose Solorio, Councilmember, City of Santa Ana	Present
<u>Business Community Representative</u>	
James Hessler, Director of West Coast Operations, Altman Plants	Present
<u>Environmental Community Representative</u>	
Garry W. Brown, President, Orange County Coastkeeper	Present
<u>Regional Water Quality Control Board Representative</u>	
Linda Ackerman, Regional Water Quality Control Board	Present
Others Present	
<u>SAWPA COMMISSIONERS:</u>	T. Milford Harrison
<u>SAWPA STAFF:</u>	Rich Haller, Karen Williams, Mark Norton, Dean Unger, Rick Whetsel, Ian Achimore, Kelly Berry, Marie Jauregui, Sara Villa
<u>OTHERS PRESENT:</u>	Andrew D. Turner, Lagerlof LLP; Melissa Matlock; TJ Crowley, Jeff Sorenson

The OWOW Steering Committee meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. by Kelly Rowe, Convener, at the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, 11615 Sterling Avenue, Riverside, CA 92503. The record will reflect this meeting was conducted virtually.

1. **CALL TO ORDER | PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Pursuant to the provisions of Executive Order N-25-30 issued by Governor Gavin Newsom on March 12, 2020, and Executive Order N-29-20 issued by Governor Gavin Newsom on March 17, 2020, any Commission



member may call into the Commission meeting without otherwise complying with the Brown Act's teleconferencing requirements.

Executive Order N-33-20 issued by Governor Gavin Newsom on March 19, 2020, ordered all individuals to stay at home or at their place of residence. In concert with state and local efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and until further notice, the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority will be holding all Board and Committee meetings by teleconference and virtually through the Zoom app.

As set forth on the posted meeting agenda, this Commission meeting was accessible to the public by teleconference and through Zoom. Members of the public who were unable to participate by teleconference or virtually were invited to submit comments and questions in writing via email for the Commission's consideration. All votes taken during this meeting were conducted via oral roll call.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments; there were no public comments received via email.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES – November 21, 2019 and January 23, 2020

MOVED, approve the November 21, 2019 and January 23, 2020 meeting minutes.

Result:	Adopted by Roll Call Vote (Unanimously)
Motion/Second:	Parker/Hessler
Ayes:	Ackerman, Bailey, Brown, Hagman, Hessler, Parker, Rowe, Solorio, Spiegel
Nays:	None
Abstentions:	Chafee
Absent:	Robertson

4. BUSINESS ITEMS

A. Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Support in Future 2020 Bond Measures (SC#2020.9)

Ian Achimore provided a PowerPoint presentation titled, *IRWM Support in Future 2020 Bond Measures*; contained in the agenda packet on pages 19-32. A brief background was provided on the funding of IRWM. Since 2002, through voter-approved bond measures Propositions 50, 84, 1E, and 1, the IRWM Program has awarded grants for planning and projects. The funding has been made available to more than 600 grantees in 48 IRWM regions to fund projects that provide water resource benefits throughout the state. IRWM's coverage of regions represent 87% of the State's land area and 99% of its population. SAWPA staff worked with the IRWM Roundtable of Regions, a task force composed of staff from most of the State's IRWM regions, on a coordinated letter to the California legislature's leadership. The letter urges \$1 billion for IRWM and other programs/projects that achieve regional and interregional resilience. The letter was signed by representatives from 22 IRWM regions, including SAWPA, and was submitted in February. The legislature's and Governor's response to COVID-19 has been a priority over bond funding focused singularly on climate resiliency. The Governor's budget must be adopted no later than June 15, 2020 by both the Senate and Assembly; the Legislature will recess July 2, 2020, and any legislatively proposed bond measures will need to be adopted by that time. The actions going forward include continuing to meet with local representatives; coordinate with the Roundtable of Regions and SAWPA member agencies on bond measures; highlight nexus between public health, job creation, disadvantaged communities, and IRWM projects; advocate for IRWM funding for programs focused on education and outreach, particularly those efforts led by non-



governmental organizations (NGOs); and advocate for IRWM funding for innovative projects focused on using new technology and decision support tools. There was no discussion.

This item was for information purposes; no action was taken on Agenda Item No. 4.A.

B. Disadvantaged Communities Involvement (DCI) Program Status (SC#2020.10)

Rick Whetsel provided a PowerPoint presentation titled, *Disadvantaged Communities Involvement Program Status Report*; contained in the agenda packet on pages 40-54. The Disadvantaged Communities Involvement (DCI) Program has four (4) Program Elements: 1) Strengths and Needs Assessment, 2) Engagement and Education, 3) Project Development, and 4) Grant Administration. Whetsel provided a verbal status update on the activities within each of the Program Elements.

Activity 9 – Tribal Consultation’s objective is to establish a Tribal Advisory Committee (Tribal AC) with California Native American Tribal Government representatives and agency staff to provide opportunities for collaboration. The Activity Lead is California Rural Water Association (CRWA), and the budget is \$120K. It is anticipated that in June staff will seek SAWPA Commission approval to finalize the charter and resolution establishing the Tribal AC; if approved, the first formal Tribal AC meeting is anticipated in the July/August timeframe.

Activity 11 – Translation Services – translation of documents, forms, and newsletters within our watershed into foreign languages. The budget is \$100K; anticipated closeout is June 30, 2020.

Activity 15 – Water Agency Community Engagement Training – a partnership with Local Government Commission (LGC) and CRWA to conduct water agency training for small community water systems and mutual water companies. The budget is \$150K, and the goal is to complete ten (10) trainings and host three (3) workshops in different counties by December 2020.

SAWPA was approached by Department of Water Resources (DWR) to host a statewide summit focusing on Disadvantaged Communities (DCI) and Tribal Government lessons learned through the Proposition 1 IRWM Program. The event planning committee is led by SAWPA and it includes DWR, other IRWM regions and NGOs. Due to COVID-19, it is anticipated to be a two-day virtual event (4-5 hours each day) in October/November timeframe.

Activity 16 – Local Elected Leader Training – provide training for local elected leaders and their staff in the watershed. These training sessions will relay the findings of the Strength and Needs Assessment Program Element. Watershed Ambassador Workshops are scheduled June 2 and June 4 (virtually) to communicate the value of water to your constituents.

Activity 17 – Community Engagement Program – provide internships for students from the CSU, UC, and community college campuses of the watershed. The activity lead is CSUSB and Civic Sparks. There was a placement of 60 interns and the allocated funding is \$500K.

Activity 18 – Technical Assistance for Community Needs – the objective is for the development of projects and programs that address the water needs of DCI and underrepresented communities. It requires evaluation of projects, plans, and programs following the set of evaluation criteria developed by the DCI Technical Advisory Committee. The allocated funding is for \$2.9M.

Committee Member Solorio asked to which agencies were the interns assigned. Whetsel noted the interns were assigned to water agencies, cities, and NGOs across the watershed.

Committee Member Solorio asked if any of the interns were placed in Orange County and if the non-profit agencies work directly with disadvantaged communities. Whetsel offered to provide



the Committee a list of the interns and where they were placed. Committee Member Solorio asked about the attendees and topics for the Ambassador Workshops. Whetsel noted the attendees are mainly senior water agency/city staff, mayor, and several elected, and offered to provide the Committee with the list of attendees. Workshop topics communicate the value of water and encompass communicating challenges and opportunities related to sharing information with community members to discuss best practices and problem solving. Committee Member Solorio which vendors/consultants utilized work closely with disadvantaged communities. Whetsel noted that our program partners are NGOs; CRWA, LGC, CA State University WRPI Center, and water agencies directly. Committee Member Solorio noted that the DCI Technical Committee project funding list contains primarily traditional water projects and asked if any serve real improvements to the disadvantaged communities. Whetsel noted the nexus of the projects is to help get clean drinking water to customers, and many of the project proponents are small community water systems.

Committee Member Solorio stated that from the beginning he has voiced reservations about the direction of the program and is concerned there continues to be a disconnect. Programs like this are meant to directly help disadvantaged communities, non-profit leaders, and people of color, though nothing reflects that. The money is being sent to the general water agencies and cities and it is unfortunate that \$500K is going to interns that are not being placed with the actual local disadvantaged communities.

Committee Member Robertson questioned if the interns were assigned to any of the projects from the list and if there was an opportunity for interns that are within our local community to be a part of the program. Whetsel noted that the Intern Program started in 2017 and they were placed prior to the project list; he will work on distributing the list of interns. Committee Member Robertson noted that she will be hosting the Watershed Ambassador Workshop on June 2 and it is open to all local leaders in the watershed area.

Committee Member Bailey concurred with Committee Member Solorio's comments; he feels the biggest impact to the watershed is the homelessness. Whetsel noted that the project on the homelessness impacts on water quality is wrapping up and we could possibly have the consultant present the results at the next meeting.

Committee Member Brown noted that he has expressed his concerns for years and he supports Committee Member Solorio's concerns. The funding is always going to planning and nothing is going to implementing. Committee Member Ackerman suggested incorporating the impact, value, and benefit of the disadvantaged community for each project. Convener Rowe noted that he and Committee Member Parker will communicate everyone's concerns with SAWPA staff and the SAWPA Commission for further discussion.

This item was for information purposes; no action was taken on Agenda Item No. 4.B.

C. Proposition 1 Round 1 Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Draft Funding Award (SC#2020.11)

Ian Achimore provided a PowerPoint presentation titled, *OWOW Proposition 1 Round 1 Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Draft Funding Award*; contained in the agenda packet on pages 58-72. The Department of Water Resources (DWR) released their draft funding award for the Santa Ana River Watershed in response to SAWPA's November 1, 2019 submittal of the Proposition 1 Round 1 IRWM grant application. The application includes ten (10) projects for a total grant request of \$23,091,428. The draft award fully funded eight (8) general implementation projects but requested additional information from two (2) disadvantaged



community projects (Replenish Big Bear and Physical Harvesting of Algal Biomass in Lake Elsinore). SAWPA submitted additional narrative for the two (2) project proponents describing how the projects directly benefit residents of disadvantaged communities. The next steps are for DWR to make final Proposition 1 Round 1 award announcement, and then develop and execute grant agreements between SAWPA and DWR and sub-agreements with project proponents in mid-year 2020. There was no discussion.

This item was for information purposes; no action was taken on Agenda Item No. 4.C.

D. Proposition 84 Projects Status Update

Marie Jauregui provided a PowerPoint presentation titled; *Proposition 84 Projects Status Update* contained in the agenda packet on pages 73-89. Under Proposition 84 there are Round 1, Round 2, Drought Round, and 2015 Implementation Round with a total of 36 projects, and 25 of the projects are complete. The total grant amount is \$99.5M and \$55.2M has been invoiced as of April 2020. Proposition 84 Round 1 consists of 13 projects and the grant agreement expired in June 2019; all projects are complete. Proposition 84 Round 2 consists of 18 projects and the grant agreement expires December 2020; however, due to COVID-19 a time extension has been requested to DWR to extend through July 2021. There are 11 projects complete, four (4) projects in construction, and three (3) starting construction next quarter. The project proponents have been experiencing COVID-19 impacts; regulatory /permitting delays, materials and equipment delays, process changed with RFP and Bid openings, and site visits on hold per DWR's request. There was no discussion.

This item was for information purposes; no action was taken on Agenda Item No. 4.D.

5. COMMITTEE MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Convenor Rowe noted that there was a presentation during the SAWPA Commission on the Santa Ana River Watershed Weather Modification for Water Supply Feasibility Study, and he recommended that it be brought forward to the OWOW Steering Committee.

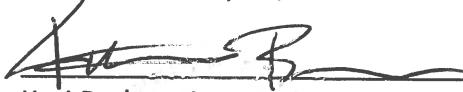
6. REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were no requests for future agenda items.

7. ADJOURNMENT

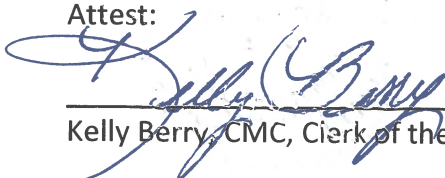
The meeting ended at 11:44 a.m.

APPROVED: July 23, 2020



Kati Parker, Convenor

Attest:



Kelly Berry, CMC, Clerk of the Board