



STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

February 3, 2015

The Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) met at Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA) in the Independence Room, 1355 Capital Blvd., Reno, Nevada. Chairman McGuire called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

1. ROLL CALL

Members and Voting Alternates Present: Rebecca Allured, Robert Chambers, Harry Culbert, Bruce Gescheider*, Colin Hayes, Neil McGuire, Fred Schmidt and Ron Turner.

Alternates Present: Mike Heffner, Carol Litster, Mike Pidlypchak, Mike Schulewitch, Jim Smith, Steve Stegmeir, and Jerry Wager.

Staff Present: Jack Byrom, Robert Charpentier, Laine Christman, John Erwin, Scott Estes, Sonia Folsom, Mark Foree, Bill Hauck, Kim Mazeres, Shawn Stoddard, and Legal Counsel Debbie Leonard.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Upon motion duly made and seconded, and carried by unanimous consent of the members present, the Committee approved the agenda.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 6, 2015 MEETING

Upon motion duly made and seconded, carried by unanimous consent of the members present, the Committee approved the minutes of the January 6, 2015 meeting.

5. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO SAC GOVERNING RULES

Debbie Leonard presented the proposed amendments to the SAC governing rules. Ms. Leonard stated the purpose of the amendments was to remove language that was no longer relevant and clarify existing language – specifically Rule #5, Agenda Items, and Rule #7, Conflicts of Interest.

Mr. Heffner commented that the amendments are straight forward and clear.

Mr. McGuire commented that all the amendments are good.

Mr. Chambers asked if committee members can receive a final copy. Ms. Leonard replied that all members will be emailed a copy once the revisions are finalized.

**Bruce Gescheider arrived at 3:06 p.m.*

Upon motion duly made and seconded, carried by unanimous consent of the members present, the Committee approved the proposed amendments to the SAC governing rules.

6. STATUS REPORT ON THE 2015 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

John Erwin introduced Steve Walker, one of TMWA's Lobbyists. Mr. Walker stated he would provide legislative updates pertaining to TMWA at every SAC meeting by presenting the bills TWMA is monitoring, including the status and the position for each bill.

Mr. Walker mentioned the bills that TMWA will be monitoring include: prevailing wages, public negotiations, and water issues (water rights, groundwater pumping, etc.) especially in reaction to the drought. He remarked that the State Engineer has called to reduce pumping of groundwater, recognizing there is a correlation between groundwater and surface water, and currently the water laws do not recognize this. For example, along the Walker and Carson rivers there are supplemental wells which are groundwater wells that supplement surface water irrigation rights.

Mr. McGuire asked how the state would monitor the supplemental well pumping. Mr. Walker replied that supplemental wells are supposed to have a meter, but 80 percent do not. The State Engineer's office would have to require that a measuring system be put in place to measure outflow.

Mr. Walker mentioned a bill draft request regarding emergency water supply, but it is not a bill as of today. It discusses what an emergency water supply is and if it is necessary to identify it in water resource plan. Also, there has been a bill proposed by the Public Lands Commission to create a state water committee to oversee water planning in the state of Nevada. It is in response to the fact that Nevada does not have a state water plan, because the river systems are not linked. Nevada has 232 basins that are managed by the State Engineer and most of them are not tied to a river system; therefore, it is TMWA's position that a state water plan is unnecessary since management occurs on the basin level.

Mr. McGuire asked if the state water master was a political position. Mr. Walker replied it is the State Engineer. TMWA Staff has met with the State Engineer about water planning, and they are in agreement. However, when there is political pressure to develop a water plan, it is proposed as legislation. As long as the State Engineer has a valid explanation why it would not benefit the state of Nevada to have a statewide water plan, his expertise is respected and the issue is generally not pursued.

Mr. Foree inquired if it is in statute to establish a water board. Mr. Walker replied that he does not believe so, but there is a State Water Planning Division in the State Engineer's division.

Mr. Schmidt inquired about a bill introduced by Senator Mike Roberson during the 2013 Session to have the Southern Nevada Water Authority regulated by the Public Utility Commission even though SNWA is a government entity similar to TMWA and if the issue may resurface this session. Mr. Walker replied that he spoke with Senator Roberson and he said he will not pursue it this session.

7. REPORT ON THE WATER SUPPLY

Bill Hauck presented the update on the water supply and operations this year. Mr. Hauck stated that the current water level at Lake Tahoe is lower than the same time last year and the weather forecast is presenting a meager outlook, but it is still too early to know for certain where the water level will be at the end of winter.

Mr. Schmidt asked when a conservation program should begin. Mr. Hauck replied that staff is currently meeting in preparation for implementing an enhanced conservation program. Staff

believes it will be similar to last year, but they also have developed a hierarchy system and will be asking for at least the same amount of conservation, if not more.

Mr. Schmidt commented that Mr. Hauck was reported in the newspaper as saying there will be full water supply this year. Mr. Hauck replied that the drought supply water reservoirs will be full.

Mr. Hayes asked if the current storms would not benefit the water levels at Independence and Donner Lakes. Mr. Hauck replied that is correct, right now TMWA is required to manage the reservoirs as a flood control season, but TMWA will be requesting an early fill this year at Donner Lake before March (which is typical for a dry year).

Mr. Walker asked if TMWA's water rights meet the 40 cubic feet per second rate. Mr. Hauck replied yes.

8. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE DIRECTION TO STAFF REGARDING AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

1. Presentation on legislative session update
2. Report on water supply and conservation
3. Presentation on post-merger tasks
4. Report on customer service issues with former STMGID and DWR customers

Mr. Schulewitch inquired if TMWA has identified and informed flat rate customers of a potential rate increase. Mr. Foree replied that every flat-rate customer will receive information about this via direct mail; the notice for the March 10 open house will also be in the bill inserts and the open house notice will be in the e-newsletter to be sent out this week.

9. STAFF ITEMS

Mr. Foree announced that welcome letters were sent out to the new customers, but there was an issue with the account numbers causing problems for some customers who tried to access their account online. The call center handled the customer calls, and this issue is now resolved since all customers have now received a bill with the full (correct) account number. New customers were also double charged for a portion of the monthly customer charge because unbeknownst to TMWA, the County billed for the customer charge on a different interval than the commodity charge. Customers are being credited that prorated charge this month. The final

issue new customers may be experiencing is being charged the convenience fee for paying by credit card. TMWA does not pay for this fee; rather the customers are required to pay the credit card fee; however, if customers pay via their bank account there is no charge.

10. COMMITTEE ITEMS

There were no committee items.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

12. ADJOURNMENT

With no further items for discussion, Chairman McGuire adjourned the meeting at 3:59 p.m.

Approved by the Standing Advisory Committee in session on April 7, 2015.

Respectfully submitted,

Sonia Folsom, Recording Secretary

***Bruce Gescheider was present for agenda items 5 through 12 only.**