

**NEWPORT BAY WATERSHED EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING/WORKSHOP
Meeting Minutes**

Date and location: June 17, 2009 1:30 – 3:15 p.m.
Boardroom of the Irvine Ranch Water District
15600 Sand Canyon Avenue, Irvine, CA 92618-3102

Participants: **NEWPORT BAY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**
Nancy Gardner, City of Newport Beach
Peer Swan, Irvine Ranch Water District
Kathryn McCullough, City of Lake Forest
Fred Ameri, Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board
Joseph Edwards, The Irvine Company

Committee Staff: Mary Anne Skorpanich, County of Orange
Marilyn Thoms, County of Orange
Chris Crompton, County of Orange
Kari Schumaker, County of Orange
Andrea Toscano De Souza, County of Orange

SAWPA Staff: Jeff Beehler

Attendees: Garry Brown, Coastkeeper
Irwin Haydock, resident
Phil Jones, County of Orange
Jack Keating, Newport Bay Naturalist and Friends
Roger Mallet, Newport Bay Naturalist and Friends
Lyndine McAfee, Nature Reserve of Orange County
Mark Tettermer, Irvine Ranch Water District
Alex Waite, City of Tustin
Marsha Westropp, OCWD
Robert Woodings, City of Lake Forest

Agenda Item 1 – Introductions

The meeting was called to order by the Ms. Nancy Gardner at 1:30 p.m., followed by self-introductions.

Agenda Item 2 – One Water One Watershed Integrated Planning Update

This special Executive Committee meeting was scheduled expressly for the purpose of this presentation in order to meet the Committee's request for a current update on OWOW efforts. Ms. Mary Anne Skorpanich introduced Mr. Jeff Beehler from the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority (SAWPA) to provide an overview and background on the One Water-One Watershed (OWOW) Plan for the Santa Ana River Region.

Mr. Beehler provided a history of how the OWOW Plan was developed. SAWPA planned to write the OWOW Plan with limited staff and budget, and rely on the resources of the Region. The Region contains the largest coastal river system in Southern California. It is a large and diverse community connected by one main river. He stated that the Region rarely speaks in a unified voice, however, when it did, it garnered \$235 million from Proposition 13 for a slate of water resources projects.

Mr. Beehler also explained that SAWPA's role centers on three main responsibilities:

- (1) operating the Santa Ana Regional Interceptor (SARI) System, a regional brine line designed to convey brackish groundwater desalination in the Inland Empire,
- (2) facilitating a number of multi-agency task forces focused on groundwater quality, water supply, and endangered species for the purpose of developing regional solutions and approaches; and
- (3) focusing on long-term regional watershed planning.

Mr. Beehler described how SAWPA's original watershed plans were developed and their focus mainly on water supply. Then he proceeded to explain the current OWOW effort and the contents of the Plan.

SAWPA is a joint powers authority of five large water agencies within the Santa Ana Watershed. As a result, its watershed planning traditionally focused on water supply with the idea that groundwater quality issues could be solved by better water supply elsewhere. As time went on and supplies became limited, different water supply sources have been sought. There has also been the recognition of different kinds of water such as canal water, stormwater, surface water, groundwater, wastewater, recycled water, environmental water, and nuisance water. The definitions of these types of water are dependent on who is regulating, consuming, or using the water. The greatest lesson to be learned is that these people do not always communicate. Therefore, the OWOW strategy is to get different interests to communicate with each other to develop common solutions.

The OWOW Plan is available online and that comments on the document are still welcome. SAWPA's goal is to create a discussion forum on the web. OWOW's Steering

Committee asked its Pillars or topic area committees to come up with current conditions and proposed strategies.

Mr. Swan commented that strategies are quantifiable achievements to be attained but do not appear to be part of the document. Mr. Beehler agreed that hard targets are an excellent idea, but should be explored.

Mr. Beehler explained that structural, institutional, and philosophical solutions are proposed in the Plan. The next step for the OWOW Steering Committee is to receive comments and to complete the Plan. An application for region acceptance was submitted to the California Department of Water Resources and an interview is scheduled in July. Plans and applications for Proposition 84 funding may only be submitted by a region deemed eligible through this process. Once the State of California finalizes the Proposition 84 funding guidelines, the Steering Committee will develop a call for projects. SAWPA will oversee the project prioritization and application process for the region.

Mr. Swan stated that the missing piece of the OWOW Plan is quantifiable goals. There are no targets and no amounts. Mr. Beehler replied that this was not designed to be a tool for Proposition 84. As soon as the rules are determined for Proposition 84, the objectives will be determined.

Mr. Ameri stated that the overview of the Plan did not mention new sources of water supply, and wants to know why SAWPA is not looking at desalination of ocean water, and sun and wind technology and other renewable sources of water and energy in order to improve the sustainability of the region.

Mr. Edwards addressed the slide regarding public comment dates. Mr. Beehler replied that the dates were taking longer than anticipated due to the State of California not selling bonds. Mr. Edwards requested the criteria for selection of projects. Mr. Beehler distributed a first draft of potential ranking criteria but said the list would be refined and scaled down to 7-8 criteria. A software tool called "Decision Plus" will rank the projects, and the tracking will be done electronically.

Ms. McCullough verified that the OWOW Plan is intended to be a living document rather than one that is formalized and never revisited. Mr. Beehler agreed that it is an iterative process and the plan will be revised as needed in the future.

Ms. Gardner stated that she expected something different and that her concerns have not been answered. She wants to see specifics and goals.

Mr. Swan restated that there must be finite quantitative objectives before projects are submitted. The ranking criteria ultimately selected should reflect the degree to which projects will achieve the goals and quantitative objectives of the Plan.

Agenda Item 5 – Public Comments

Ms. Gardner asked for public comments.

Mr. Irwin Haydock stated that he did not see the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP) on the list of participants in OWOW Plan development. Mr. Beehler replied that if SCCWRP participated it would have been with the water quality portion. Ms. Skorpanich stated that SCCWRP prefers to provide input on science and not policy.

Mr. Haydock asked how the coastal watersheds, specifically the Newport Bay Watershed, will be addressed and integrated into the OWOW Plan. He also recognized the need for sustainable future water supplies and asked how the OWOW plan would address water supply in terms of reliability and sustainability. Mr. Beehler assured Mr. Haydock that the OWOW Plan would address water supply in these ways.

Ms. Skorpanich stated that the OWOW Steering Committee's next meeting was the following day. She also stated that as a member of SCCWRP's governing body she's aware that they have funding to conduct California Rapid Assessment Method training as well as stormwater in coastal areas as well as inland areas. However, she also commented that while SCCWRP is an excellent choice for involvement from the scientific community, there are many academic entities that could be tapped for their scientific expertise.

Next meeting for this group will be August 19, 2009 at 2:30 p.m.

Agenda Item 6 – Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.