
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board

Meeting Minutes

Video and Teleconference Meeting Only
No Physical Location

*Authorized by and in Furtherance of Executive Orders
[N-29-20](#) and [N-33-20](#)*

March 11, 2021

Chair Yee called the meeting to order at 9:08 a.m.

Chair Yee explained the process for participation in the virtual meeting, noting that for those who only want to listen or watch the meeting, the Board's customary webcast was available and that the Board has Spanish translation services available through the Zoom platform for those who want to listen or participate in the meeting in Spanish. He provided instructions on how to join the Zoom meeting for those wishing to provide comments during the public forum or on an agenda item.

Item 1 – Roll Call

Board Members Present: Cynthia Guzmán, Michael Méndez, Irma Muñoz, David Nahai, James Stahl, Charles Stringer, and Lawrence Yee

Staff Present: Renee Purdy, Jenny Newman, Hugh Marley, Helen Rowe, Gerardo Rabelo, Khalid Abdullah, Tamarin Austin, Sophie Froelich, Adriana Nuñez, Milasol Gaslan, LB Nye, Cris Morris, Russ Colby, Yue Rong, Arthur Heath, Steven Webb, Susana Vargas, Megan Kung, Rebecca Christmann, Kangshi Wang, Bronwyn Kelly, Jeong-Hee Lim, James Kang, Ryan Nickerson, Jun Zhu, Jessica Pearson, Ivar Ridgeway, Alireza Rahmani, Erum Razzak, and Angineh Shahnazarian

Item 2 – Order of Agenda

No changes were made to the order of the agenda.

Item 3 – Approval of Draft Meeting Minutes for the February 11, 2021 Board Meeting

MOTION: Board member Nahai made a motion to approve the February 11, 2021 draft meeting minutes.

Seconded by: Board member Stringer
Motion carried: Approved by roll call vote.

Cynthia Guzmán – Yea
Michael Méndez - Yea
Irma Muñoz – Yea
David Nahai - Yea
James Stahl – Yea
Charles Stringer – Yea
Lawrence Yee – Yea

Item 4 – Board Member Communications

- a. Ex Parte Disclosure (Board Members will identify any discussions they may have had requiring disclosure pursuant to Government Code section 11430.40.)

Board Member Stahl reported on two ex parte communications:

- On February 12 and 28, 2021, he received emails from Mr. Ray Tahir. The emails contained a link to the County's GIS Website for storm drain systems. He did not respond to these emails. Both emails were forwarded to the Executive Officer, Renee Purdy, and were added to the record for the pending Regional MS4 Permit.

Chair Yee reported on two ex parte communications:

- On February 24, 2021, he received an email with attachments from Mr. Ray Tahir concerning proposed legislation, California Assembly Bill (AB) 377. This bill proposes to change certain state water quality regulations, which could affect aspects of the MS4 permit.
 - On March 4, 2021, he received an email from Mr. Tahir requesting time to speak during the March 2021 Board meeting. The email included comments relating to the incorporation of TMDLs in the pending Regional MS4 Permit.
 - The emails from Mr. Tahir were forwarded to the Executive Officer, Renee Purdy, and made a part of the record for the pending Regional MS4 Permit.
- b. Board Member Reports (The Board Members may discuss communications, correspondence, or other items of general interest relating to matters within the Board's jurisdiction.)

Vice Chair Guzmán reported she attended the Industrial Task Force meeting on March 1, 2021.

Board Member Stahl reported on attending the following events:

- February 23, 2021, a virtual tour of the Ojai Valley Sanitary District Wastewater Treatment Plant
- February 24, 2021, a Santa Monica Bay Stakeholders Workshop
- March 3, 2021, a PFAS Webinar sponsored by the University of California, Irvine

Board Member Méndez reported he met with Heal the Bay, LA Waterkeeper and NRDC on March 5, 2021. No pending matters were discussed.

Board Member Muñoz reported she attended the Industrial Task Force meeting on March 1, 2021.

Chair Yee reported he attended the virtual tour of the Ojai Valley Sanitation District Wastewater Treatment Plant with Board member Stahl on February 23, 2021.

Item 5 – Executive Officer’s Report

The EO reported on the following items:

- Update on the Racial Equity Initiative
 - The State and Regional Water Boards are holding a series of internal employee listing sessions on the Water Boards’ Racial Equity Initiative.
 - On February 10, 2021, Regional Board management and staff met with a class of students at Whittier College to talk about their backgrounds and their jobs at the Water Board as a part of efforts to expand recruitment efforts.
 - On February 17, 2021, the Executive Officer approved the 2021 Disadvantaged Community Supplemental Environmental Project List submitted by the Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment. The list consists of 23 projects, including 20 rollover projects and 3 new projects reflecting community outreach efforts conducted by staff and the Rose Foundation to encourage additional program participation. The new project list is available on the Los Angeles Regional Water Board website.
- Update on Industrial Task Force.

- The EO highlighted outcomes related to passage of SB205 and outreach by the Industrial Task Force. From January 20, 2020 to March 2021 there has been an increase of over 500% in industrial general permit applications.
 - The greatest increase in applicants has been in Santa Fe Springs, Vernon, Oxnard, and some Gateway cities.
 - The Industrial Task Force meets quarterly. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 2021.
 - There were four workshops held from November 2020 through February 2021, attended by over 130 attendees representing 54 cities and counties in the region.
- Update on Funding: Approval of projects submitted for Round 2 of the Proposition 1 Storm Water Grant Program.
 - \$100 million in funding was available statewide.
 - 17 applications were submitted for projects in the Los Angeles Region with a total funding request of \$77 million.
 - Funding in the amount of \$20 million dollars was approved for 5 projects in the Los Angeles Region. The 5 projects are in South El Monte, Huntington Park, Lawndale, North Hollywood and Santa Monica.
 - Update on Wastewater Surveillance related to COVID-19.
 - The Wastewater Surveillance group has transitioned to a large statewide group named California National Wastewater Surveillance System Work Group.
 - The group participants include the California Department of Public Health, the State Water Board, four regional boards (Los Angeles, San Francisco Bay, Santa Ana, and San Diego), wastewater agencies, and local public health agencies.
 - The group shares and submits data on wastewater and COVID-19 case counts to the CDC's national wastewater surveillance system data platform in order to help develop a tool to assist public health agencies in monitoring trends in the prevalence of SARS-CoV-2 in communities, and possibly anticipating increases in positive COVID-19 case counts.

Item 6 – Update from State Water Board Liaison Sean Maguire

State Water Board Member Sean Maguire discussed the State Water Board's 2021 Strategic Work Plan, including actions in 4 areas:

- Protect public health by ensuring reliable access to safe, affordable drinking water and sanitation.
- Protect and restore watersheds, marine waters and ecosystems.
- Increase statewide water resiliency in the face of climate change.
- Strengthen internal capacity and systems.
- He highlighted key 2020 accomplishments, including:
 - Adapting under COVID-19
 - Creating an Administrative Hearings Office (Water Rights)
 - Adopting statewide Toxicity Provisions
 - Adopting the Safe and Affordable Drinking Water Policy and Funding Plan
 - Conducting statewide PFAS investigations and beginning the regulatory process to establish thresholds for PFAS
 - Establishing ELAP laboratory regulations
- He also identified some of the State Water Board's highest priority actions for 2021, including:
 - a) COVID-19 and Affordability
 - b) Chrome VI
 - c) Total Coliform Rule
 - d) Winery Order
 - e) Temperature Management
 - f) Direct Portable Reuse
 - g) Conservation
 - h) SGMA
 - i) Stormwater Cost of Compliance
 - j) Construction Stormwater
 - k) Bay-Delta
 - l) SAFER: Communications
 - m) Data: Management Plan
 - n) Racial Equity Initiative
 - o) Fi\$Cal
 - p) Workforce Strategy
 - q) HR Center Excellence

Item 7 – Public Forum

Speakers:

- Chuck Carter, Channel Islands Neighborhood Council
- Professor Rebecca Overmyer-Velazquez, Whittier College
- Bruce Reznik, LA Waterkeeper
- Karin Wisenbacker and Josh Westfall, Aquatic Bioassay & Consulting Laboratories and Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts

Item 8 and 9 – Uncontested Items

The Chair stated the uncontested items calendar as Items 8 and 9.

MOTION: Board member Stahl made a motion to approve uncontested calendar items 8 and 9.

Seconded by: Board member Muñoz
Motion carried: Approved by roll call vote.

Cynthia Guzmán – Yea
Michael Méndez - Yea
Irma Muñoz – Yea
David Nahai - Yea
James Stahl – Yea
Charles Stringer – Yea
Lawrence Yee – Yea

Item 10 – Presentation by the City of Santa Monica on their Sustainable Water Infrastructure Project (SWIP).

Staff Introduction

- Steven Webb, Sr. Water Resources Control Engineer, Municipal Permitting – Watershed Regulatory Section

Speakers:

- Sunny Wang, City of Santa Monica

Item 13 – Closed Session

Legal counsel Sophie Froelich announced that the Board was going into closed session to discuss Items 13.b., 13.c., 13.d., and 13.i. on the agenda.

(The Board went into closed session at 12:00 p.m. and reconvened at 1:20 p.m.)

Item 11 – Continuation of the item on extensions of Final Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Implementation Deadlines for Certain TMDLs in the Los Angeles Region, which the Board began its consideration of at the February 11th board meeting.

Staff Presentation: Dr. LB Nye, Section Chief, Regional Programs Section

Board member Deliberation: Board members discussed the proposed TMDL schedule extensions. Board member James Stahl presented his rationale for an alternative to staff's recommended schedule extensions.

MOTION: Board member Stahl made a motion to (1) replace staff's recommended extensions with a 10-year extension of wet-weather implementation deadlines through Basin Plan Amendments for the nine TMDLs, with an annual report to the Board in a scheduled public meeting as to progress on implementation of projects, including but not limited to funding, to achieve compliance with permit requirements and (2) notice a meeting to discuss a 10-year extension of dry- weather implementation deadlines for these nine TMDLs.

Seconded by: Board member Muñoz

The Board deliberated on Board member Stahl's motion and asked clarification questions of staff and stakeholders. After deliberations concluded, the scope of Board member Stahl's motion was clarified and the motion was limited to the ten- year extensions for wet weather deadlines. A roll call vote was taken.

Motion not carried: Not approved by roll call vote:

Cynthia Guzmán – No
Michael Méndez - No
Irma Muñoz – Yea
David Nahai - No
James Stahl – Yea
Charles Stringer – No
Lawrence Yee – Yea

MOTION: Board member Stringer made a motion to adopt the staff recommended extensions and staff report including the proposed changes. The scope of the motion was clarified to indicate that adoption of this motion would include revisions to the Basin Plan Amendments and Resolution included on the Change Sheet presented at the February Board meeting as well as revisions to the Resolution presented at the March Board meeting to require annual written and oral progressreports from MS4 permittees .

Seconded by: Board member Nahai

Motion carried: Approved by roll call vote:

Cynthia Guzmán – Yea
Michael Méndez - Yea
Irma Muñoz – Yea
David Nahai - Yea
James Stahl – Yea*
Charles Stringer – Yea
Lawrence Yee – Yea

*Board member Stahl noted that he voted yes because he felt that it was extremely important to provide some extension but reiterated that he continued to think these extensions were too short.

Board Direction:

Board member Méndez asked what the process is for the board to provide input on the federal infrastructure bill. Ms. Purdy indicated that she would follow up with the Water Board's Office of Legislative Affairs.

The Board tabled discussion of any additional TMDL extensions to a future board meeting to be scheduled in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair as soon as possible taking into account staff workload.

Item 12 –Continued discussion of the pending Regional Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) NPDES Permit for Los Angeles and Ventura Counties (Regional MS4 permit).

Staff Presentation: Dr. LB Nye, Section Chief, Regional Programs Section

Speakers:

- Arne Anselm, Ventura Countywide Stormwater Quality Management Program
- Paul Alva, County of LA
- Shahram Kharaghani, City of Los Angeles Sanitation and Environment
- Richard Watson, Richard Watson & Associates, representing MS4 Permittees in Los Cerritos Channel Watershed
- John Hunter, representing MS4 Permittees in the Lower LA River and Lower San Gabriel River Watersheds
- Rowan Rodrick-Jones, The Nature Conservancy
- Annelisa Moe, Heal the Bay
- Ray Tahir, TECS Environmental, on behalf of the Gardena Valley Democratic Club
- Shelley Luce, Heal the Bay
- Cori Bell, NRDC

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m. (For more detailed information on any matter at our meetings, you may contact Helen Rowe at (213) 576-6612 or email at: Helen.Rowe@waterboards.ca.gov, and she may provide an electronic copy of the transcript or audio, if available.)

Written and submitted by Helen Rowe, Board Clerk on, 4/9/2021

Signature on File

Helen Rowe