

**SOUTH BAY IRRIGATION DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING**

March 15, 2010

The Board of Directors of South Bay Irrigation District held a regular meeting on Monday, March 15, 2010, at the Sweetwater Authority Administrative Office, 505 Garrett Avenue Chula Vista, California. President Thomas called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

- **ROLL CALL**

Directors Present: Bud Pocklington, Jose Preciado, *Maria Rubalcaba, Terry Thomas

Directors Absent: Margaret Welsh

Others Present: General Manager Rogers, Operations Manager Smyth, **Legal Counsel Miller, Treasurer Farrow, and Board Secretary Schoonderwoerd. Also present were Sweetwater Authority staff members Jack Adam, Janet Gonzalez, and David Torres.

- **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG**

Director Preciado conducted the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

- **OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT (Government Code Section 54954.3)**

There was no comment from the public present.

- **PRESIDENT'S PRESENTATION**

President Thomas noted that live-stream audio of Board meetings is still being provided on the Intranet for Sweetwater Authority staff, and that management is investigating the feasibility and financial impacts of providing video. President Thomas shared a website for the Citizens for Safe Drinking Water, www.nofluoride.com, which provides alternative arguments about fluoride.

ACTION CALENDAR ITEMS

1. PRESENTATION BY JACK ADAM, DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING, SWEETWATER AUTHORITY

Loveland Reservoir Transfer 101

General Manager Rogers stated that in January Sweetwater Authority began a transfer of water from Loveland Reservoir down to Sweetwater Reservoir. He introduced Mr. Adam to brief the Board on the water transfer process. Mr. Adam stated that the transfer has just recently been completed. The Sweetwater River watershed is about 232 square miles; approximately 180 square miles of that drains either to the Loveland Reservoir or to the Sweetwater Reservoir. The entire basin is broken up into three basins: the Upper Basin, which is about 98 square miles and drains into Loveland Reservoir; the Middle Basin, which

is 84 square miles and drains into Sweetwater Reservoir; and the remainder 54 square miles of the Lower Basin drains into the San Diego Bay. Historically, two-thirds of the winter runoff flows into Loveland Reservoir and one-third of the seasonal runoff flows into Sweetwater Reservoir. Mr. Adam stated that it is desirable to see about two-thirds of available storage in Loveland Reservoir and about one-third in Sweetwater Reservoir so that if Loveland spills first, most of the water can be saved and captured in Sweetwater Reservoir to avoid wasting water into the bay. Mr. Adam noted that there are two U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) stream gauges in the watershed; one in Descanso and one in Dehesa. (**Note: Legal Counsel Miller entered the meeting at 4:07 p.m.) The Middle Basin, which runs between Loveland and Sweetwater Reservoirs, is about 15.4 miles. A bunger valve (sleeve valve) is used to control the flow out of Loveland; as it opens up, it exposes orifices which let the water flow out. The flow hits the side of the sleeve, breaks the pressure, and flows down into the river. The valve can be modulated to regulate the flow between up to the maximum capacity of about 300 cubic feet per second (cfs) out of the reservoir. At this rate a football field could be filled three feet deep in about ten minutes.

Mr. Adam stated that, typically, when a transfer is started, the valve will be opened up to 100 cubic feet per second, and stepped up over the course of three days to the maximum flow. (*Note: Director Rubalcaba entered the meeting at 4:09 p.m.) The Dehesa stream gauge, installed and maintained by the USGS with funding from Sweetwater Authority, is located between Loveland and Sweetwater Reservoirs near Sloane Canyon off Willow Glen Road. The stream gauge is a box with an antenna that transmits up to a satellite. This allows the monitoring of the natural flow in the river and the assessment of increased flow from the transfer. A bubbler gauge measures depth of flow by emitting a stream of air bubbles against the water pressure built up by the depth. The second (Descanso) stream gauge is located upstream of Loveland Reservoir to measure the flows coming into that reservoir. In response to an inquiry from Director Pocklington, Mr. Adam stated that Sweetwater Authority can monitor these flows on the internet in real time at the USGS website. Using a map drawing, Mr. Adam pointed out Lake Emma, which is located between Loveland and Sweetwater and is owned by the Sycuan Indian Tribe. Sweetwater Authority has an operating agreement with Sycuan that allows the transfer of water through Lake Emma; as part of the agreement, Sweetwater Authority has the ability to control the set of gates on the downstream end of Lake Emma to let water out, but when the transfer is done, the water cannot be left any lower than it was originally found. Mr. Adam said that, typically, that is not a problem; during the summer months, evaporation is happening and Lake Emma is going down. Sweetwater Authority must consider water loss to Lake Emma, and it is preferable to see Lake Emma full with natural runoff prior to transferring. Just before the Sweetwater Reservoir is the low-flow barrier, which was built by Sweetwater Authority as part of the Urban Runoff Diversion System that allows the diversion of poor quality water around the reservoir. During a transfer, it allows gross measuring of flow into Sweetwater Reservoir; using that, the daily gauge readings of the reservoir can be taken.

Both people and endangered species residing between Loveland and Sweetwater Reservoirs need to be considered during a transfer. Annually, in the event that water can be transferred, Sweetwater Authority sends more than 90 letters out to property owners within the 100-year flood plain. Nine river abutters (golf courses and property owners) are given phone calls to advise them that the transfer is impending, so they can make necessary preparations. The flow is controlled as much as necessary with the bunger valve to avoid any

property damage. For example, Mr. Adam stated that during the middle of this last transfer, it began to rain one weekend, so the valve was closed back from 300 to 100 cfs so as not to cause any property damage. The Arroyo toad, which was listed as a federally endangered species in 1994, likes to breed in the riverbed when the river is wet and the weather is warm; too much flow will endanger the toad. Typically, surveys are conducted prior to the transfer in breeding months, if conditions warrant, to ensure transfers do not flush away the eggs or tadpoles. Mr. Adam noted that surveys were not conducted prior to this past transfer because the weather was not conducive to breeding. In the event that it rains during breeding season and Mother Nature has already flushed the toad away, it is okay to transfer, which is what is typically done. Mr. Adam noted that Sweetwater Authority's transfers have never washed any toads down the river. The other endangered species is the Least Bell's vireo, which was listed as endangered by the state in 1980 and federally in 1986. They nest in willow forested areas in the Habitat Management area downstream from the low-flow barrier. Their habitat can be impacted by inundation, so Sweetwater is very careful and has strict rules about the placing of imported water. However, those rules are not as strict about transfers, and there have been no issues with that thus far. Generally, transfers are compatible and enhance and sustain their habitat through recharge of groundwater in the Habitat Management Plan (HMP) area.

Mr. Adam concluded by presenting the results for this year's transfer. Loveland Reservoir had a beginning storage of 13,620 acre-feet of water and 75,190 acre-feet was transferred out. Sweetwater Reservoir had a beginning storage of 12,580 acre-feet of water and received almost 5,500 acre-feet from the transfer. The estimated loss was about 2,100 acre-feet (28 percent) of water during the transfer. During the early days of the transfer, some high flows were seen through the low-flow barrier, but the reservoir was not coming up. That led to speculation that a lot of water was being lost into the HMP area. Mr. Adam said that, overall, it was a successful transfer. The transfer brought 5,400 acre-feet of water into the reservoir; during that time we had some rain, and it was estimated that there was about another 430 acre-feet of local runoff into Sweetwater Reservoir during that period and another 2,200 acre-feet at Loveland Reservoir. Hopefully, this will be the setup for a similar situation next winter as well. In response to an inquiry from Director Pocklington, Mr. Adam stated that the 90 property owners in the affected area receive their water from Otay Water District or wells. He also clarified that Sweetwater Reservoir is approximately 68 percent full, with about 8,000 acre-feet of local water owned by Sweetwater Authority, and 7,000 acre-feet of San Diego County Water Authority owned water; just Sweetwater Reservoir would provide about six to seven months' water supply. In response to Director Thomas' inquiry about the loss of water to percolation rather than runoff, Mr. Adam stated that it is estimated that about 28 percent of the volume released from Loveland was lost in the Sweetwater Middle Basin. He added that previous General Manager Reynolds had plans in the 1990s to go back to get that water, but it proved not to be cost-effective; Sweetwater has rights to the water lost in the basin, but the question is whether it is cost-effective to retrieve that water. General Manager Rogers added that, because that is Otay Water District's service area, they are claiming that the water used by their customers goes into the aquifer, and some of that water is theirs; Otay has contracted to a consultant engineering firm to study that. Mr. Rogers noted that anyone who has a well, especially the two golf courses (Singing Hills and Cottonwood), are very happy whenever Sweetwater releases, because it raises the water table and drops their costs because they have less distance to pump. Mr. Adam also explained that the reason it is always beneficial to keep as much water as possible in Loveland Reservoir (25,000 acre-feet volume) versus Sweetwater Reservoir (28,000 acre-feet

volume) is because Loveland is very narrow and deep, so the surface area is not as susceptible to evaporation as Sweetwater is. In a summer month about 300 acre-feet per month is lost to evaporation at Sweetwater, and about 100 acre-feet at Loveland; over the course of a year, about 1,500 acre-feet is lost to evaporation at Sweetwater, and only about one-third to one-half of that much is lost at Loveland to evaporation. He said it is always beneficial to keep as much water as possible up at Loveland Reservoir. The Board thanked Mr. Adam for his presentation.

President Thomas welcomed Legal Counsel Miller who was attending the meeting in Legal Counsel de Sousa's place.

2. ITEMS TO BE ADDED, WITHDRAWN, OR REORDERED IN THE AGENDA

There were none.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Director Preciado made a motion, seconded by Director Pocklington, that the Board approve the minutes of the February 15, 2010 meeting. The motion carried.

4. APPROVAL OF DEMANDS AND WARRANTS

Director Preciado made a motion, seconded by President Pocklington, that the Board approve Warrants 10871 through 10877 including all voided checks. The motion carried.

5. NEW BUSINESS

Call for nominations – California Special Districts Association Board of Directors, Region 6, Seat B. There was no interest expressed by the Board members for nomination to this position.

6. APPROVAL OF DIRECTORS' ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS AND FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

There were none.

7. REPORTS BY DIRECTORS ON EVENTS ATTENDED

There were none.

8. REPORT OF TREASURER

The investment portfolio and treasurer's report for the month of February 2010 was noted and filed. Treasurer Farrow noted that, not surprisingly, revenues are down. She stated that the budget projection of approximately \$500 per month for interest earnings is on track. In response to an inquiry from Director Pocklington, Ms. Farrow replied that the IRS has contacted her requesting a meeting on the 19th. She reported that the intent was to maintain the independent contractor status of the SBID directors, but she will be reporting back to the Board. Director Pocklington added that there is a movement by the IRS to take all 1099s and make them reportable for FICA taxes, which is against the IRS rules.

9. REPORT OF SWEETWATER AUTHORITY DIRECTOR TO THE WATER

CONSERVATION GARDEN AUTHORITY

Director Rubalcaba reported that the new Development Director updated the Board at last Wednesday's Garden Board meeting on her plans to date. She has spent some time auditing the financial statements, looking at the business development plan, and the activities that are already in place at the Garden; on May 1st she will give the Board a fundraising plan. Director Rubalcaba announced that the Garden will host a plant fair on March 20th, and the Spring Garden Festival on April 24th. Also, they are still looking for a few board members for the Friends of the Garden.

10. REPORT OF LAFCO SPECIAL DISTRICTS REGULAR MEMBER

Director Pocklington reported that the Commission met on February 1st. He noted that they discussed the proposed Church of the Good Shepherd annexation, and the March legislation status report was given, neither of which was controversial. Staff answered questions posed last month regarding the details of the budget. Director Pocklington stated that the proposed budget is \$2,100 less than last year, and that the manager did a wonderful job keeping it in line.

11. REPORT OF LAFCO SPECIAL DISTRICTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBER

President Thomas reported that the main discussion at the February 19th Committee meeting was on the Legislative Policy for LAFCO. She stated that recommendations from the Advisory Committee (SDAC), the Cities Advisory Committee, as well as the staff were joined to make a synthesis document proposal for the Legislative Policy, copies of which she provided to the Board. Staff was recommending that if there seemed to be agreement by LAFCO staff that there was no controversy, (proposed jurisdictional changes) would not come to the SDAC at all. The SDAC recommended that changes would go to the SDAC and planning and other citizens groups. President Thomas did not think it was good for the SDAC to be completely out of the loop as far as knowing what an annexation proposal is for their area. The SDAC recommended language be reinserted in the policy that, no matter what, a proposed annexation goes to the SDAC. If it seems it is not controversial, it would go on a consent calendar, and go through in one meeting; if there was, it would then be discussed and go to the planning and other entities. The reason was because LAFCO staff could change with time and they do not necessarily have the outlook of all the diverse special districts. The SDAC consists of managers as well as directors that are working together and trying to reflect the needs of the special districts. President Thomas stated that, at the end of the day, this will be decided by the LAFCO Commission.

12. REPORT OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVE

Director Pocklington stated that he will report on the March 25th San Diego County Water Authority Board meeting agenda at the next Sweetwater Authority Board meeting. He read from a news article in the *Central Valley Business Times* about California's new homes being far more water efficient. The article indicated that homes built in California in 2009 use water far more efficiently than those built 20 years earlier, according to a study paid for by the California Homebuilding Foundation. When the California Green Building Standards Code comes into effect in 2011, retrofitting of existing homes could be even more significant in California's efforts to reduce water in California. The study found that the homes built in 2009 reduced indoor water use by 20 percent, saving more than 15,000 gallons of water per

year when compared to homes built in 1990. New homes built by 2011 standards will further reduce indoor water use by 21 percent, saving over 12,000 gallons per year. Director Pocklington found it amazing that the estimated cost increase for a new home to meet the 2011 standards will be only \$350 per home; in terms of construction, if it can be done all at once rather than retrofitting, it is much cheaper. The study also found that landscaping accounts for 57 percent of total household water use and that the California Department of Water Resources Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance would help save an additional 26,000 gallons of water per year. The report says that combining the outdoor water savings with the indoor water savings in a home built in 2011 will use 38,000 gallons of water less per year. Director Pocklington said that there are 7.5 million homes in California, and about half were built before 1980; that includes the ones in our service area. It is going to take a lot more money to retrofit, and it may take a much longer time. He stated, for example, that in his own home to take out the lawn and retrofit would cost \$10-\$15,000. As younger people, perhaps with two incomes, take over older homes, they may have the finances to do something, but it will take some time.

13. REPORT OF MANAGEMENT

There was none.

14. REPORT OF LEGAL COUNSEL

Legal Counsel Miller provided a short update on the legislation that Senator Feinstein was expected to introduce to the Endangered Species Act to address pumping restrictions in the Bay-Delta. She stated that it is believed that the legislation was introduced as a means to make the Administration more aware of this issue. Legal Counsel will continue to track the issue.

15. DIRECTORS' COMMENTS

President Thomas requested that a review similar to the one being conducted of the Sweetwater Authority Board policies be made of South Bay Irrigation District Board policies.

16. CLOSED SESSION

There was none.

17. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business before the Board, President Thomas adjourned the meeting at 4:53 p.m.

Teresa Thomas, President

Attest:

Rita Schoonderwoerd, Board Secretary