

**CITY OF LONG BEACH
WATER COMMISSION
MINUTES**

**THURSDAY, APRIL 2, 2020
VIA TELECONFERENCE, 9:00 AM**

Harry Saltzgaver, President
Frank Martinez, Vice President
Arthur Levine, Secretary



Robert Shannon, Commissioner
Gloria Cordero, Commissioner

Christopher J. Garner, General Manager

Richard Anthony, Deputy City Attorney

REVISED

FINISHED AGENDA & FINAL MINUTES

The Water Commission minutes are prepared and ordered to correspond to the Water Commission agenda. Agenda items can be taken out of order during the meeting.

The agenda items were considered in the order presented.

CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Water Commission special meeting was called to order by President Saltzgaver at 9:00 A.M. This special meeting was held via teleconference pursuant to Executive Order N-25-29 issued by Governor Gavin Newsom.

ROLL CALL

Executive Assistant, Sandra Fox took the roll call and confirmed a quorum.

Also present: Christopher J. Garner, General Manager; B. Anatole Falagan, Assistant General Manager; Tai Tseng, Assistant General Manager - Operations; Sean Crumby, Deputy General Manager - Engineering; Sandra Fox, Executive Assistant to the Board.

Commissioners Harry Saltzgaver, Frank Martinez, Art Levine, Robert Shannon
Present: and Gloria Cordero

PUBLIC COMMENT

[20-052WA](#)

APRIL 2, 2020 BOARD OF WATER COMMISSION MEETING PUBLIC COMMENTS

President Saltzgaver asked if any written public comments had been received for the meeting. Ms. Fox, Executive Assistant to the Board advised no public comments had been received prior to the meeting.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Saltzgaver reported that a joint statement had been developed between the Long Beach Water Department, the Water Replenishment District and Metropolitan Water District advising the public that the water quality in Long Beach had not been affected by the Corona virus, and the tap water was safe.

He thanked Ms. Weatherly for her work in compiling this joint statement and seeing that it had been published to the LBWD website and social media platforms.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Garner provided an update on Covid cases to-date in the City of Long Beach. He noted eighteen firefighters and one Port employee had tested positive. He advised that there had been two deaths so far in the city.

Mr. Garner advised that two LBWD employees are working at the Joint Information Center (JIC) - Kaylee Weatherly who is directly working at the JIC, and Morgan Venter who is assisting via teleconference.

He reviewed the two new City health orders that had been released regarding isolation and quarantine rules.

He advised that all water shut-offs in the city had been suspended, and that the city is waiving late fees on utility bills. He noted the potential for these actions affecting both the Water Department and City revenues. He advised that there is an incorrect perception that with water shut-offs being suspended there was no need for customers to pay their bills. He advised that staff is working on a message to distribute that encourages customers to keep paying their utility bills whenever possible.

Mr. Garner asked Mr. Falagan, Mr. Tseng and Mr. Crumby to provide updates on how the virus is impacting their different bureaus.

Mr. Falagan advised that most of his bureau's staff were telecommuting when possible. He advised when it was necessary for staff to work on some financial transactions that a rotating work schedule had been established to assure proper social distancing within the office.

Mr. Tseng provided details regarding the Operations Bureau as follows: All office staff was telecommuting where possible. He advised that water and sewer crews had been split into five different crews, and they had all been assigned a day to report to work to complete ongoing maintenance and respond to any leaks or SSO's. He advised a stand-by team had been created to respond to any emergency repairs; and a bench team had been created to assist the other teams without co-mingling teams to prevent any spread of the virus. He noted the following for Water Treatment staff: The water quality staff had been reduced to 50% for testing onsite, and balance of staff is telecommuting. Treatment Plant repair work had been stopped in order to comply with the Safer at Home Order, and staff was telecommuting. He noted the plan was to bring all Treatment Plant operators back to work by the end of April to bring the plant back online. He said these dates were flexible due to the status of the Covid virus and how it could affect staff. He also reported that a team had been created to continue the work at the new homeless shelter in Long Beach to install water and sewer lines for this city project.

Mr. Crumby provided the following update for the Engineering Bureau: Most of the Engineering staff is telecommuting; some staff are coming into the office for administrative work. He noted staff meetings within the bureau are being conducted via conference calls and teleconference. All projects in design are continuing on schedule and current construction projects are continuing on schedule with social distancing protocols in place. Construction projects that are ready to begin have been put on a temporary hold for two weeks until the Covid impact on these projects can be determined.

Mr. Crumby also provided an update on the cistern project at the Treatment Plant and the timeline for completion of this emergency project.

Mr. Tseng also provided a report regarding the cancellation of the LVL Operating agreement between LBWD and WRD at the request of WRD. He provided information regarding the transition of operations of the Leo Vander Lans plant from Long Beach Water department staff to a private contractor, Perc Water, chosen by the Water Replenishment District. He advised the target date for Perc Water to assume the operations at LVL was June 1st.

President Saltzgaver inquired how this change would impact the number of LBWD employees who are currently working at the LVL plant.

Mr. Tseng advised that with the vacancies currently in the Operations Treatment Plant Operators section that these workers could be absorbed into these Treatment Plant positions.

Mr. Garner commented on the difficulty in recruiting qualified, certified Treatment Plant operators at the current salary being offered.

Mr. Garner reported that with the Covid crisis, management from Tribus (AMI) had inquired about stopping meter reading, and possibility of temporarily halting AMI installs. Mr. Garner advised that under the current Health Order that this work was considered essential and should continue. He noted that depending on the length of the health crisis the Tribus agreement would need to be extended to adjust the end time of the contract. He advised this item would be brought back to the Board at the next meeting.

Mr. Garner advised that the Southern California Water Coalition was planning a panel to discuss how water agencies are building trust with their customers during the Covid crisis. MWD had recommended that Long Beach Water should participate on the panel. Mr. Garner advised that Ms. Weatherly would be participating on this panel via teleconference to explain how LBWD is reaching out to their customers regarding water quality during the Covid crisis.

Mr. Garner also advised that a new video had been created by LBWD that featured Kevin Caldwell, a LBWD Water Quality Lab technician. He noted the video addresses water quality and testing, but also contains a warning to customers to not flush anything besides toilet paper down their toilets, so to protect the LBWD sewer lines and the customer's sewer lines.

REGULAR AGENDA

[20-053WA](#)

Water Service Shut-off for Commercial Customers Refusing to Comply with City's Health Order:

SAFER AT HOME ORDER FOR CONTROL OF COVID-19 Temporary Prohibition of All Events and Gatherings Closure of Non-Essential Businesses and Areas Closure of Public Trails, Trailheads, Beaches, Piers, Beach Bike Paths, and Beach Access Points Closure of Public Basketball Courts, Tennis Courts, Volleyball Courts, Golf Courses, Dog Parks, Playgrounds, Skate Parks, and Picnic Areas - REVISED ORDER ISSUED March 28, 2020. Please read this Order carefully.

Violation of or failure to comply with this Order is a crime punishable by fine, imprisonment, or both. (Ca. Health & Safety Code § 120275)

Recommendation to authorize the General Manager to temporarily shut-off water service to any commercial customer at the written request of the City's Health Department, or its designee, to achieve compliance with the City's Health Order dated March 28, 2020.:

BUREAU: Executive

Mr. Garner provided background information regarding this agenda item.

President Saltzgaver requested Mr. Garner provide an explanation regarding Los Angeles Mayor Garcetti's power to implement their similar directive versus the directive being approved by the Long Beach Board of Water Commissioners.

Mr. Garner responded.

Mr. Garner also advised he would let the Board know of any requests he received to shut off water to any non-essential businesses as requested by the City's Health Officer.

Commissioner Shannon advised he appreciated Mr. Garner's comments.

Mr. Garner clarified his comment regarding Board notification, noting that he would let the Board know about the water shut-off after he had received the request from the Health Officer.

President Saltzgaver spoke.

President Saltzgaver requested a roll call vote be made.

The roll call vote carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Shannon, seconded by Commissioner Cordero, to approve recommendation. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Harry Saltzgaver, Frank Martinez, Art Levine, Robert Shannon and Gloria Cordero

1. [20-043WA](#) Recommendation to approve Special December 5, 2019 and Special December 19, 2019 Board of Water Commission meeting minutes.

President Saltzgaver called for a motion.

President Saltzgaver requested a roll call vote be made.

The roll call vote carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Cordero, seconded by Commissioner Levine, to approve recommendation. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Harry Saltzgaver, Frank Martinez, Art Levine, Robert Shannon and Gloria Cordero

2. [20-044WA](#) Recommendation to Authorize the Board to determine the status of the previously approved sponsorship for the WomenShelter of Long Beach (WSLB), 2020 “Lead with Love” Gala (April 2, 2020) event due to postponement of the event per direction of Governor Newsom’s March 11, 2020 executive order regarding the Corona virus Covid-19 crisis.

BUREAU: Executive

President Saltzgaver advised he had spoken with the agencies who were seeking sponsorships (agenda items 2. - 4.) and they had advised they planned on rescheduling their events due to the Covid crisis, but that they did not as yet have new dates. President Saltzgaver advised he recommended holding these items over to a future agenda.

President Saltzgaver asked the Deputy City Attorney if this action could take place in one action.

Mr. Anthony advised President Saltzgaver could make this recommendation and that it would not require a vote.

3. [20-045WA](#) Recommendation to authorize attendance and sponsorship of Conservation Corps of Long Beach (CCLB) Dine on Pine (Corpsmember Education & Scholarship Benefit), Wednesday, June 24, 2020.

BUREAU: Executive

President Saltzgaver advised he had spoken with the agencies who were seeking sponsorships (agenda items 2. - 4.) and they had advised they planned on rescheduling their events due to the Covid crisis, but that they did not as yet have new dates. President Saltzgaver advised he recommended holding these items over to a future agenda.

President Saltzgaver asked the Deputy City Attorney if this action could take place in one action.

Mr. Anthony advised President Saltzgaver could make this recommendation and that it would not require a vote.

4. [20-046WA](#) Authorize attendance and sponsorship of the Rancho Los Alamitos Foundation 9th Annual Cottonwood Awards Luncheon, honoring Bonnie Lowenthal, President of the Port of Long Beach and honoring John Hancock with the Special Recognition Award at the Rancho Los Alamitos in Long Beach, California, May 28, 2020.

BUREAU: Executive

President Saltzgaver advised he had spoken with the agencies who were seeking sponsorships (agenda items 2. - 4.) and they had advised they planned on rescheduling their events due to the Covid crisis, but that they did not as yet have new dates. President Saltzgaver advised he recommended holding these items over to a future agenda.

President Saltzgaver asked the Deputy City Attorney if this action could take place in one action.

Mr. Anthony advised President Saltzgaver could make this recommendation and that it would not require a vote.

5. [20-047WA](#)

Authorize attendance and sponsorship for the Aquarium of the Pacific Blue Whale Gala Awards at the Aquarium of the Pacific in Long Beach, California, June 13, 2020, honoring the work of two Aquarium friends, Dr. Dawn J. Wright and Dr. David Titley.

BUREAU: Executive

President Saltzgaver advised that the Aquarium of the Pacific still plans to have their event on June 13, 2020 so he recommended this item be considered by the Board.

Mr. Garner provided background information regarding this sponsorship request. He noted the Board had approved sponsorships for this event in 2017 and 2018. He noted this event had been replaced with a different event in 2019. He advised the request was for a \$5,000 sponsorship.

Commissioner Martinez made a motion to approve the sponsorship. President Saltzgaver seconded the motion.

Commissioner Shannon made a substitute motion to lay this item over to the April 16, 2020 Board meeting. Commissioner Cordero seconded the motion.

Commissioner Levine spoke.

President Saltzgaver responded.

President Saltzgaver called for a roll call vote. The vote carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Martinez, seconded by Commissioner Cordero, to laid over. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Harry Saltzgaver, Frank Martinez, Art Levine, Robert Shannon and Gloria Cordero

6. [20-048WA](#)

Authorize the General Manager to execute a five (5) year License Agreement, allowing the Long Beach Water Department (LBWD) to enter upon Southern California Edison Company (SCE) right-of-way,

located east of the San Gabriel River, both north and south of East Willow Street, for water pipeline purposes.

BUREAU: Business - Administration

President Saltzgaver introduced agenda item 6. It was determined a staff report was not needed.

After the motion and second, President Saltzgaver called for a roll call vote. The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Shannon, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, to approve recommendation. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Harry Saltzgaver, Frank Martinez, Art Levine, Robert Shannon and Gloria Cordero

ADDITIONAL CALL FOR WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENTS

At this point in the meeting, President Saltzgaver asked if any written public comment had been received.

Ms. Fox, Executive Assistant to the Board advised no written public comment had been received for this meeting.

7. [20-049WA](#) Recommendation to authorize the General Manager to execute an agreement with Spectrum Communications, for the purchase of Internet services at the Administration Building for a three-year period for an amount not-to-exceed \$82,037.

BUREAU: Business - Administration

President Saltzgaver introduced agenda item 7. and called for a motion.

He asked the Board if a staff report was needed.

Commissioner Levine inquired if the \$82,000+ amount was cumulative.

President Saltzgaver called on Mr. Garner for a response. Mr. Garner asked Mr. Falagan to respond.

Mr. Hawkins advised this was a cumulative amount for the three years of the contract.

President Saltzgaver called for a roll call vote. The roll call vote carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Shannon, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, to approve recommendation. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Harry Saltzgaver, Frank Martinez, Art Levine, Robert Shannon and Gloria Cordero

8. [20-050WA](#)

Recommendation to Authorize the General Manager to execute an agreement with AireSpring, for the purchase of Internet services at the Treatment Plant for a three-year period for an amount not-to-exceed \$79,920.

BUREAU: Business - Administration

President Saltzgaver introduced agenda item 8. He advised the \$79,920 cost was also cumulative for the three-year period.

He then called for a motion. After that he asked if there was a need for a staff report.

Hearing no requests, he called for a roll call vote. The motion carried unanimously.

A motion was made by Commissioner Cordero, seconded by Commissioner Martinez, to approve recommendation. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Harry Saltzgaver, Frank Martinez, Art Levine, Robert Shannon and Gloria Cordero

9. [20-051WA](#)

Report of the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) Board meeting on March 10, 2020

BUREAU: Metropolitan Water District Director

Metropolitan Water District Director, Gloria Cordero provided a report regarding the March 10, 2020 Metropolitan Water District Board meeting.

She advised that the MWD Board would be meeting via teleconference until further notice. She reported the only action they had taken at the March 10, 2020 meeting was to approve a purchase of additional laptops outside of the normal RFP process for staff who were now needing to telecommute. She advised that the majority of the MWD staff was working from home due to the Covid health crisis, but that all essential workers were still performing their regular duties.

CONSIDER STANDING COMMITTEE REFERRALS

President Saltzgaver called for any Standing Committee referrals. Hearing none he moved on in the agenda.

NEW BUSINESS

President Saltzgaver thanked the IT group and Ms. Fox for organizing the first teleconference meeting for the Board. He said it appeared that the next Board meeting would also be held via teleconference, but that staff would let the Board know.

Commissioner Martinez asked Mr. Garner about the status of the leadership search for the Central Basin Municipal Water District.

Mr. Garner advised that the agency was in a state of chaos, and could not even decide who was the President of the Board; who was the General Counsel to the Board and who the interim General Manager was, even though a majority of the Board had named someone to this position.

President Saltzgaver commended the entire LBWD staff for the hard work they were accomplishing during this unusual time of the Covid crisis.

ADJOURNMENT

President Saltzgaver adjourned the meeting at 9:46 A.M. to the next regular meeting to be held Thursday, April 16, 2020 via teleconference.

NOTE:

If written language translation of the Commission agenda and minutes for non-English speaking persons is desired, please make your request by phone to the Office of the City Clerk at (562) 570-6101, 72 business hours prior to the Commission meeting.

Kung nais ang pagsasalin ng nakasulat na wika ng agenda ng Komisyon at ang minutes para sa mga taong hindi nagsasalita ng Ingles, mangyaring isagawa ang iyong hiling sa pamamagitan ng telepono sa Opisina ng Clerk ng Lungsod sa (562) 570-6101, 72 oras ng negosyo bago ang pagpupulong ng Commission.

Si desea obtener la traducción escrita en otro idioma de la agenda y actas de la comisión para personas que no hablan inglés, haga su solicitud por teléfono a la Oficina de la Secretaría Municipal al (562) 570-6101, 72 horas hábiles antes de la reunión de la comisión.

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