

**CITY OF LONG BEACH
WATER COMMISSION
MINUTES**

**THURSDAY, MARCH 4, 2021
VIA TELECONFERENCE/WEB, 9:15 AM**

Frank Martinez, President
Arthur Levine, Vice President



Christopher J. Garner, General Manager

Robert Shannon, Secretary
Gloria Cordero, Commissioner
Naomi Rainey, Commissioner

Richard Anthony, Deputy City Attorney

SPECIAL MEETING

FINISHED AGENDA & DRAFT 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 Martinez at 9:15 A.M. This special meeting was held via teleconference pursuant to Executive Order N-29-20 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; Sandra Fox, Executive Assistant to the Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. [21-027WA](#) Recommendation to receive March 4, 2021 public comment.

President Martinez opened the public comment period and asked if any written public comments had been received. Ms. Fox advised no written

public comments had been received for the March 4, 2021 Board meeting. President Martinez then inquired if there was anyone from the public on the line who would like to speak. Hearing none he closed the public comment period.

Report of the Communications Standing Committee held March 4, 2021

Commissioner Cordero, Chair of the Communications Standing Committee, provided a summary report of the March 4, 2021 Communications Committee meeting held prior to the board meeting.

She advised a Communications Workshop for the Board was being planned to take place in April. She noted the topics to be discussed at the workshop were: 1) Research and insights; 2) Strategic Communications Plan Development; 3) Program of work planning; 4) Implementation; 5) Evaluation.

She commented on the results of a previous communications survey of Water Department customers.

She also noted that she and Commissioner Rainey would be working to improve communications and outreach to the underserved residents of Long Beach.

There was discussion amongst the Committee members and staff regarding new efforts to implement the education program in Long Beach Unified Schools before the end of the current school year.

Commissioner Rainey made comments regarding the committee meeting.

Commissioner Cordero made closing comments.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Martinez advised the Board that an hours long closed session regarding department security had been scheduled to follow the April 1, 2021 board meeting.

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Garner reported to the Board that a resolution had been agendized on the March 2, 2021 council agenda related to the MWD sexual harassment issues.

He noted the Council had also agendaized an item to discuss return to in-person city council meetings. He noted they approved initiating video on-camera connections for the council to use during teleconference meetings which had not been taking place. He advised they also had asked the city manager to come back with a report on the logistics regarding resuming in-person meetings. He advised he would keep the Board updated on these actions.

At this point in the meeting Mr. Anthony, Deputy City Attorney reported on action taken at the closed session two weeks ago. The final action: to conditionally approve a settlement of a claim with L'Opera, Inc. in the amount of \$63,115.00. The condition of that claim has been met. He noted the condition of the payment is that the claim would be paid out of the city's general liability insurance fund, rather than being paid from the water fund or the sewer funds.

2. [21-028WA](#) Recommendation to approve February 4, 2021 Board meeting minutes.

President Martinez called for a motion to approve the February 4, 2021 board meeting minutes.

A roll call vote was taken.

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

Yes: 5 - Gloria Cordero, Naomi Rainey, Robert Shannon, Art Levine and Frank Martinez

3. [21-029WA](#) Recommendation to authorize the General Manager to execute an agreement with KPFF to provide engineering services for the demolition of the existing Under Ocean Floor Seawater Intake Facilities (EO-3011), in an amount not-to-exceed \$296,914.

BUREAU: Engineering

President Martinez introduced agenda item 3. Robert Verceles provided the staff report and reviewed a presentation with the Board.

President Martinez called for any Commission questions or comments.

Commissioner Shannon requested brief background information on desalination in Long Beach.

Mr. Pincherli provided a summary of the under ocean pilot program (one of four components of the pilot Long Beach Water Department (LBWD) desalination program).

President Martinez requested that staff provide an overview report at a future meeting regarding the LBWD desalination pilot program.

Commissioner Shannon requested that Mr. Pincherli provide an overview of the information gathered from the pilot under ocean project.

Mr. Pincherli responded.

Mr. Tseng also provided comments regarding the benefits of this type of pilot project technology.

Commissioner Levine inquired about the decision that LBWD had made regarding moving ahead with a desalination program.

Mr. Garner responded.

Commissioner Levine commented on the cost of producing desalinated water.

Mr. Garner provided additional comments regarding desalination in Long Beach.

President Martinez commented on the LBWD pilot process - nano vs. ro. and cost of producing desalinated water using these processes.

He requested that staff provide the Board with a chart showing the cost of producing/purchasing the different types of water resources in the LBWD water portfolio.

Mr. Falagan advised staff could bring a section of the LBWD Water Resources Plan back to the Board which showed the differences in pricing for the LBWD water resource types.

Mr. Tseng commented on the current costs for the LBWD water resource types.

President Martinez commented on the current off-peak battery storage capabilities that might be used in a future desalination project assisting in

reducing the production cost of desalinated water.

Mr. Garner advised the Board that staff would return with a report at a later Board meeting.

President Martinez called for any other questions or comments from the Commissioners. He then called for any public comment. Hearing none he called for a roll call.

Ms. Fox advised we did not yet have a motion for this item.

Commissioner Cordero made the motion to approve and Commissioner Shannon seconded the motion.

President Martinez called for a roll call vote. A roll call vote was taken.

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

Yes: 5 - Gloria Cordero, Naomi Rainey, Robert Shannon, Art Levine and Frank Martinez

4. [21-030WA](#)

Recommendation to authorize the General Manager to execute an Agreement with Psomas, to provide Engineering Design Services for the Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation and Replacement Program (SSRRP) Project 10 (SC-0424), in the amount not-to-exceed \$267,175.

BUREAU: Engineering

President Martinez introduced agenda item 4. and called on Jinny Huy Huang for the staff report.

President Martinez called for any Commissioner questions. Hearing none he called for any public comment.

A motion and second were made. President Martinez then called for a roll call vote.

A motion was made by Secretary Shannon, seconded by Vice President Levine, to approve recommendation. The motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 5 - Gloria Cordero, Naomi Rainey, Robert Shannon, Art Levine and Frank Martinez

5. [21-031WA](#)

Recommendation to authorize the General Manager to initiate discussions with the City Manager to determine current work processes that are analogous within the City of Long Beach's natural gas, water, and sewer utilities for consideration of consolidating such processes in a manner that is fully within the confines of the current provisions of the City Charter.

President Martinez introduced agenda item 5.

Mr. Garner provided a staff report regarding initiation of discussions with the City Manager to determine current work processes that are analogous within the City of Long Beach's natural gas, water, and sewer utilities for consideration of consolidating such processes in a manner that is fully within the confines of the current provisions of the City Charter.

President Martinez called for any Commissioner questions or comments.

Commissioner Shannon requested that the City Attorney be fully involved to actively oversee the activities of a possible consolidation.

He also commented on the previous ballot measure language for the previous utility consolidation that did not go forth. He advised that language should note that this consolidation will be a positive issue for the City of Long Beach. He also mentioned the possibility that the authority of the Board of Water Commissioners could conceivably be compromised depending on the final language

Commissioner Cordero noted this was a good first step in the process. She advised there were good opportunities in this proposed consolidation. She noted it would be important to have discussions with other partners and the citizens to explain the purpose of this proposed consolidation.

President Martinez asked the City Attorney regarding the motion for agenda item 5.

Mr. Anthony addressed the previous comments of Commissioner Shannon, noting that he had been deeply involved with the previously proposed consolidation effort, and advised he expected to be just as

involved in the current proposed consolidation.

He clarified the motion language regarding agenda item 5.

Commissioner Cordero made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Levine.

President Martinez called for any public comment. Hearing none he called for a roll call vote.

A roll call vote was taken.

6. [21-032WA](#) Receive Prohibited Uses of Water Violation Enforcement Process Report.

BUREAU: Water Resources

President Martinez introduced agenda item 6.

Mr. Wang provided the staff report and reviewed a presentation with the Commissioners.

The report included the following components: 1) Reviewed LBWD Water Supply Shortage Plan; 2) Reviewed a chart that showed the number of Prohibited Use of Water violation reports that had been received from 2008 to January 2021; 3) Reviewed a chart that showed the different types of Prohibited Use of Water violation reports; 4) Provided steps that staff takes to follow-up with the customers regarding Prohibited Use of Water violation reports - uses friendly educational approach before pursuing formal enforcement process; 5) Reviewed levels of Prohibited Use of water enforcement process; 6) Provided data regarding warning letters and fines; 6) Discussed AMI and Customer Portal; 7) He then reviewed enforcement steps that would be taken with the AMI roll out.

President Martinez requested that staff provide an update report to the Board regarding the AMI roll out.

President Martinez called for any Commissioner questions or comments.

Mr. Garner thanked Dean and his team for developing the new, more friendly enforcement process for Prohibited Uses of Water. He spoke

about the usefulness of the AMI portal in reaching out to customers.

Commissioner Cordero thanked Dean for the report.

President Martinez reported that during a recent walk in his neighborhood he had noticed at least eight of his neighbor's sprinklers running at the wrong the time of date. He inquired if there was another way to identify these types of Prohibited Use of Water violations without reporting his neighbors.

Mr. Wang responded. He noted that the AMI portal would be able to identify these types of Prohibited Uses of Water.

Commissioner Cordero suggested that a note be developed for customers to hand to their landscapers indicating the proper watering days and sprinkler time limits.

Mr. Wang responded.

Mr. Levine encouraged staff to take the educational approach with customers instead of the punitive steps previously taken with Prohibited Use of Water.

Commissioner Shannon made comments regarding elimination of the neighbors reporting on neighbors process that had previously been in place. He advised he always thought this was a bad idea.

Mr. Wang thanked his team for their efforts in handling Prohibited Use of Water calls that can be difficult at times.

President Martinez made closing comments.

CONSIDER STANDING COMMITTEE REFERRALS

President Martinez called for any Standing Committee referrals.

He then asked if a Financial Standing Committee meeting date had been set.

Mr. Sorensen responded, and noted since staff was still compiling the budget components, a Finance Committee meeting would probably not be scheduled until the end of April.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

ADJOURNMENT

President Martinez read the closed session language into the record as follows:

Pursuant to paragraph (b) (1) of Section 54957 of the California Government Code regarding Public Employee Performance Evaluation: General Manager.

He called for any public comment. Hearing none he adjourned the Board to the closed session at 10:33 A.M.

President Martinez reconvened the Board meeting at 10.52 A.M. and advised he had nothing to report from the closed session.

He adjourned the Board meeting at 10:53 A.M.

Note:

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