

**CalDesal Executive Committee Meeting Notes**

**Monday, March 20, 2020**

**11:00 a.m-12:00 p.m.**

**Executive Committee Members present:**

Bob Shaver (Chair)

Phil Rosentrater (Vice-Chair)

Mark Donovan (Secretary)

Warren Teitz (Treasurer)

Gilad Cohen

Jeremy Crutchfield

Carol Mahoney

Jeff Quimby

Makrom Shantila

Paul Shoenberger (alternate for Shawn Dewane)

Richard Svindland

**Executive Committee Members absent:**

Phil Paule

Patrick Sheilds (alternate for Harold Williams)

**Guests:** Nathan Carlson, California Advocates Management and Wendy Ridderbusch, Executive Director

Chair Bob Shaver, Alameda County Water District called the meeting to order at 11:04 a.m.

Wendy Ridderbusch, ED gave the following report:

**ACWA Spring Conference now Summer Conference**

* Moved from May 5-8 to July 28-31 due to Governor’s March Stay-at-Home order.
* CalDesal will hold its Board of Directors meeting in person at the ACWA conference OR virtually on a video conferencing platform. Both Zoom and Microsoft Teams will be investigated as potential platforms. Jeremy Crutchfield raised the issue of possible security concerns and problems for public agencies using Zoom because of recent hacking incidents. Wendy will report back at May meeting on any progress made. If the BOD cannot meet in person they will meet on the same day an hour later on Wednesday, July 29th from 8:00 a.m.-9:00 a.m.
* Paul Shoenberger asked if CalDesal had thought about difficulties holding the popular cocktail mixer in person and if other options were being explored? Wendy assured him that she was communicating with ACWA’s Paula Currie who will most likely have a formal protocol for all mixer hosts as CalDesal is just one of a handful of organizations that host these during ACWA conferences. Carol Mahoney shared that she recently participated in an online happy hour hosted by a consultant and that while it pertained to Covid-19 it was still a way to gather albeit virtually. She planned to send Wendy more information so she could pursue this as a possible option to the in-person mixer.
* Mark Donovan asked if CalDesal was fine tuning its recruitment message to take the Covid-19 pandemic into account since many agencies and companies that are potential members may feel that now is not the time to make new investments like a CalDesal membership? He pointed out that the messaging should include that now is in fact the perfect time to be thinking about and investing in long-term water reliability and that part of that investment is CalDesal. Wendy agreed and mentioned that she would work with the Outreach Communications Committee to ask if they would share what they have come up with for their own agencies and companies with CalDesal to make sure that our messaging is timely and addresses the coronavirus 800 lb. gorilla in the room.
* Lastly, Warren Teitz shared that many of Metropolitan’s retail member agencies are concerned by how several recent factors like the no water shut-offs order will cause significant fiscal pain and that CalDesal may get some push back when approaching people during recruitment. Just recognizing the constraints that some may be facing realistically may help temper our expectations.

* Sponsorships – we still want and need your participation as sponsors for the mixer. Please contact Nathan at CAMS directly: Nathan@caladmanagement.com

**Membership recapture, retention and recruitment efforts**

* Wendy created an excel spreadsheet for membership recruitment. She will include it as an attachment to the May Executive Committee meeting. It contains detailed information transparently displayed so everyone can be on the same page with respect to our recruitment activity and results.
* CalDesal Membership Draft Plan status. Wendy has draft and will send to the four officers for initial feedback. Then, she will send to the Executive Committee so that they may offer input during the May Executive Committee meeting.
* Annual Dues Timeline – Process has been condensed and streamlined. Dues invoices will be sent via snail mail as well as e-mail. Wendy will be included on them so if/when follow-up is needed for non-responders or slow responders she will be in the loop from the beginning and better able to engage. Initial dues invoice will be mailed on May 15. The second one on July 1 to those who have not yet paid. Then individual phone calls will be placed by Wendy to follow-up. CalDesal will know by the July 28th meeting who is, and who is not, a member of CalDesal. With this improved process we will not be wondering who has paid, etc. in October. The dues process will go from the current year-round formula to a three-month period.

**Policy Committee Activity**

* State Legislative, Regulatory, Outreach Communications, and Technical Innovation Committee highlights:
* Our committees are interfacing with other CalDesal members creating a sense of community and purpose. The State Legislative Committee is monitoring the unpredictable Legislative schedule which recessed on March 16 because of Covid-19 the first unscheduled work stoppage in 158 years. Right now they are scheduled to return May 4th but of course that is subject to change. The Senate and the Assembly don’t seem to be communicating smoothly and may have different ideas about reconvening.
* Working with member agencies, CalDesal was able to force inclusion of funding into ACWA’s ask on the general obligation climate change resiliency bond. The Southern California Water Coalition released their five recommendations for the bond which did include desal funding. That was not a given as some within SCWC view desal as controversial. While a bond will most likely not be moving in 2020, when it does get teed back up our organization will be in a strong position to obtain a funding piece within that bond for brackish and ocean water desal.
* The Regulatory Committee is working on crafting a “in our back pocket” list of items that our folks would like to see addressed IF the Ocean Plan desalination piece gets featured in the State Water Board’s sights in 2020. Their last committee meeting featured the City of Santa Barbara discussing their pending application with the Coastal Commission. Josh Haggmark reported that they were trying to perform repair activities on their weir box located on the beach and then Channelkeepers and Surfriders sent last minute comments trying to force them to reopen their permit. It appears the Coastal Commission is working with them to prepare to approve their request but we will know more this summer.
* Outreach Communications asked to hold off on meeting in April due to the emergency nature of their work with Covid-19 and their districts. They will be meeting in May to fashion a response to the NRDC comments regarding the Governor’s Water Portfolio maligning desalination and Carlsbad in particular.
* The Technical Innovation Committee will be formed and organized late this summer when the initial Covid-19 scramble subsides a bit. Our Secretary Mark Donovan will Chair with Gilad Cohen serving as the Vice-Chair.

**Communications and Social Media**

* Members’ Only Website Update – Wendy has been receiving positive feedback on the page that is now up and running. As an Executive Committee member you should have received an e-mail with explicit instructions on how to create a login and password so that you have access to the members’ only page. If you have not yet logged in, please do so! If you need assistance, please contact Wendy directly by e-mail or phone so she may help you.
* Our members may be on one committee but want to know what is occurring in some of the other committees. The notes that are posted from each meeting are allowing our members to cut and paste into their own Board reports to communicate what is going on with CalDesal -- which should only help us as we move toward dues renewal. Wendy noted that It was critical to get the page working and get visits there from our members and associates before we send out our Annual Dues invoice next month. This should help quantify value that they are receiving from us just when we need it the most.
* **Voluntary Contribution for Professional Communications Contract Progress Update** --

We have three checks in hand from CalAm ($25,000), Mesa Water District ($25,000), and Poseidon ($25,000). West Basin MWD will be sending a check for $10,000 for a total of $85.000. If your district is thinking about contributing, please let me know so I can get an invoice out to you for whatever amount you can and are willing to contribute.

* This is what has been accomplished so far:
* Signed contract with Southwest Strategies based on the plan they presented and that CalDesal made some changes to. A copy of the contract was e-mailed to you. The primary objectives are to improve CalDesal’s visibility and positive recognition, increase awareness of desalination among key stakeholders and the public as well as unify and enhance CalDesal messaging and publications to aid membership recruitment.
* The kick-off planning meeting was held
* SWest Strategies is beginning to implement the plan
* Second meeting tomorrow
* We are meeting twice a month to track progress
* Will report on that progress in May during Executive Committee meeting
* **BOD Liability Insurance** -- Mark Donovan inquired into whether or not CalDesal had liability insurance for its officers or board members. Nathan and Wendy worked together to uncover that CalDesal does not currently have that insurance. As ED Wendy was required to purchase her own general liability insurance as well as Executive Director Errors and Omissions insurance policies. Wendy asked Nathan to research to see what other statewide organizations like CalDesal have for their officers and boards and obtain some comparison costs for coverage in order to have a fuller discussion at the May Executive Committee meeting. Wendy plans to bring this item back to provide additional background and to vote on whether to purchase this for volunteer leaders to protect them as well as the organization.
* **CalDesal Officer Elections** -- CalDesal is rebounding and the interest members are expressing about gaining a seat at the Executive Committee table to shape the organization going forward is a tangible illustration.
* Wendy will be writing an elections overview along with a timetable so that anyone interested may understand the steps in the process. We plan to post this document onto the members only page so interested parties can plan their campaigns for these two-year terms which begin on January 1, 2021 and last through December 31, 2022.

**ED Activity**

Invitations, Requests, Meetings

* In-person meetings and conferences on hold due to stay-at-home restriction
* Women In Desal kick-off meeting is planned for July 12th but may be postponed due to possible continued statewide stay-at-home orders. An update will be provided at the next meeting.

Next Executive Committee Meeting: **Monday, May18, 2020 from 11:00-12:00 noon.**

**Chair Bob Shaver adjourned the meeting at 11:43 a.m.**