

**CalDesal State Legislative Committee Meeting Notes**

**Monday, April 20, 2020**

**Conference Call Meeting**

**3:00-4:00 p.m.**

**Members present:**

E.J. Caldwell, Chair, West Basin Municipal Water District

Danielle Coats, Eastern Municipal Water District

Christine Compton, Irvine Ranch Water District

Alicia Dunkin, Orange County Water District

Glenn Farrel, San Diego County Water Authority

Cory Kimball

Julee Malinowski-Ball, Contra Costa Water District

Greg Morrison, Lake Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District

Ivy Ridderbusch, San Diego County Water Authority

Rosalie Thompson, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

\*Several other committee members joined the call after it started

**Guests:** Wendy Ridderbusch, Executive Director

The meeting began at 3:04 p.m. Chair E.J. Caldwell, West Basin Municipal Water District called the meeting to order and informed the committee that he was also on a Zoom Managers’ call and would be exiting the call early. In his absence Executive Director Wendy Ridderbusch would chair the conference call meeting.

**State Legislative Activity:**

* **Covid-19 and the State Legislature**-- State Capitol recess discussion on 2020 tentative schedule. They may be coming back into session in person on Monday, May 4th to Sacramento. The bill loads will be greatly reduced. Mainly bills that will be dealing with the Coronavirus. Julee Malinowski-Ball who contract lobbies for Contra Costa Water District informed the committee that the Assembly is going to come back May 4th but the State Senate may not have decided on that restart date yet.

There will be a reduced bill load in both houses. In the Senate the Pro Tem will be making the decision on the bills. In the Assembly, Speaker Rendon is allowing the Chairs of committees to make that decision of whether bills will be moved forward.

The traditional May Revise is still scheduled for release on May 15th. Julee noted that it will be more like a reintroduction of the January budget since the fiscal outlook is so significantly different now. It will be followed up, after people pay their taxes which normally occurs on April 15th but which is now delayed until July 15th, to see what funds have been actually received. At that point another look at the Budget will take place during the summer more along the lines of what we all recognize as a May Revise type of assessment. This will be a second Budget and the legislature will in essence be going through the Budget process for the rest of the year.

There has been a lot of discussion about the legislature working through the summer without taking their historical month-long summer recess. It has not been determined yet however and conversations are still continuing. There may not be a significant number of bills left after they are culled for relevancy to the pandemic and for the legislature to address. There is no talk about a special legislative session after they adjourn on August 30. That has to deal though more with the fact that it is an election year and members are traditionally back in their districts for the fall campaign kick-off season that begins Labor Day weekend.

**General Obligation Climate Resiliency Bonds or Economic Stimulus Bond status** – The trajectory of the current climate change resiliency bond is in doubt as a result of the unexpected pandemic wiping out California from an economic standpoint. They are thinking instead about some type of Economic Stimulus Package (putting people back to work) to what Congress and the U.S. Senate have worked on. Thanks to Julee for sharing her knowledge and the committee similarly appreciated the update.

Discussion ensued regarding the progress of the bond, and whether it could morph into a stimulus or infrastructure bond vehicle. Danielle Coats offered that some folks are wondering if holding legislative hearings virtually are in fact constitutional? It has become clear that the legislature cannot vote remotely but the legality of holding informational or oversight hearings is undetermined at this time.

* WateReuse of California update – Executive Director Jennifer West broached the topic of collaborating with CalDesal for brackish and seawater desalination when lobbying to support the inclusion of recycled water within the Climate Change Resiliency Bond during their March 27th Board meeting. She reported back that the support was tepid and at that point in time post-Covid 19 fallout that the chance for movement through the legislature on a bond was not likely. So the Board did not go ahead and vote either way on a collaboration on a climate change bond. Wendy remarked that many of the members and leaders of WateReuse
* CalDesal SB 45 (Allen) letter – CalDesal sent its own “support if amended” position letter on this measure.

**Local Activity:**

* Southern California Water Coalition – Included salinity management and brackish and seawater desalination in their five recommendations for a climate change resiliency bond. Important that the region is asking for funds for these purposes.

**CalDesal Updates**

* ACWA Conference moved from May to July 28-31 in Monterey – CalDesal Mixer and BOD meeting on Wednesday, July 29.
* Members’ Only website page on the CalDesal website. Please let Wendy know if you do not yet have access to the page and she can assist you.
* Annual Dues timeline – Invoices will be snail mailed and e-mailed beginning May 15th. They are due by July 1 the first day of the new fiscal year.
* Women in Desal – Gloria Gray, Chair of both West Basin MWD and MWD of Southern California is partnering with CalDesal to establish and promote this networking group for women in and amongst the desal industry in California with a quarterly meeting with a speaker. Invites will be e-mailed from Chair Gray for an event this summer.

**Next meeting is on Monday, June 15, 2020 from 3:00-4:00 p.m.**

**The meeting was adjourned by Wendy Ridderbusch at 3:35 p.m.**