[](http://www.caldesal.org/)

**Outreach Communications Committee Meeting Notes**

**August 4, 2020**

**2:00 p.m-3:00 p.m.**

**Members present:**

Chair Stacy Taylor, Mesa Water District

Vice-Chair Sonja Morgan, South Coast Water District

Gina Ayala, Orange County Water District

Tiffany Baca, Municipal Water District of Orange County

Maritza Fairfield, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

Lorraine Garcia, Coachella Valley Water District

Jessica Jones, Poseidon Water

Melissa McChesney, Padre Dam Municipal Water District

Roxanne Rountree, Eastern Municipal Water District

Nicole Stanfield, Santa Margarita Water District

Guests: Wendy Ridderbusch, Executive Director

Chair Stacy Taylor, Mesa Water District welcomed the committee at 2:04 p.m.

**Southwest Strategies (SWS) update**

* Key Message Finalization – the final redlined document was attached to the agenda. The key areas changed are in red and green and adjust the messaging by shifting the focus of the comparison of desal to imported water, add language incorporating the Governor’s Water Resilience Portfolio, and reference the importance of desal to the state’s overall water supply. Stacy and Wendy made small tweaks to those edits in yellow, and then added some minor edits in blue. Stacy polled the committee members to see if any of them had concerns, comments, or questions about any of the final edits on the Key Message document. Nobody expressed any issues with these final changes.
* Tiffany suggested that we continue to be clear and use layman’s terms on our website. Stacy thought that there could be value in using a glossary. Tiffany agreed and said it could be linked to a word so you could click on it and it would take you to a glossary pdf that contained the word, otherwise it would just get buried. Sonja pointed out that many websites have a helpful hoverbar where you hover over a complicated word and then a description pops up. She is not sure if the new website will have that capability. Stacy shared that she would circle back with SWS to see what is possible.
* Committee members believe that there was copy lost from the previous version of the Key Messages document to this latest “Christmas tree” colored sheet. Roxanne mentioned EMWD’s project that was inadvertently removed. Stacy told the committee that we will recirculate the fixed version and will re-include the material that was mistakenly removed. Wendy commented that the focus was on the latest amendments and that the removal of these sections was a mistake! Gina will also send Stacy some language that emphasizes the notion of local circumstances that shape local projects and that there is not a once-size-fits-all solution that they have utilized with success.
* Stacy will move bullet point number two to the number one spot per the recommendations of the committee. She will send all of it over to SW Strategies.

**CalDesal constant contact news blast input –** The committee members offered helpful input regarding the July News Blast to improve the product moving forward including:

* Remove the “wood plank flooring” background
* Remove the extra space on both sides of the copy
* Do not post entire article. Introduce the article with headline and a few short teaser sentences that lead into a link to click on a pdf that takes you off the newsletter page, to read further. You can enable the tracking of metrics to see what visitors are reading. The links could be on the back end in one location “document center”
* Have two recurring sections: member/associate highlight and then project spotlight each month showcasing member or associate and then also a desal project and other news about the agency/company
* Have good imagery, large, pretty pictures
* White space is our friend
* Ensure that the newsletter is sharable by placing CalDesal’s social media buttons like Twitter, LinkedIn, FB, and CalDesal website more prominently in the newsletter. Make the buttons larger and move their placement up towards the top of the newsletter
* Important to share the newsletter on CalDesal social media as you can reach folks that are not yet receiving the newsletter so that they may sign up to get it
* Use consistent formatting. Keep the member highlight section, project spotlight, etc. in the same place each month so folks know where to go to get the news they want to read
* Consider posting a few tweets from CalDesal members and associates in the newsletter

**Ocean Day FAQ page** -- Wendy included the Coastkeeper’s FAQ page as an attachment to the agenda. She told the committee that they will be receiving a draft document in the next month or so crafted by the Regulatory Committee debunking myths and offering the facts to be placed on the website and used for advocacy and education purposes.

**Subcommittee Reports**

* Social Media – Stacy asked that committee members send existing content that could be used on the CalDesal website. Tiffany Baca, Subcommittee Chair reiterated that they are waiting to find out what is needed right now from the subcommittee and what SW Strategies is doing so that there is not overlap. Next up is a content plan that will be forthcoming.
* Website – Jessica Jones, Subcommittee Chair, mentioned that they had a meeting coming up to continue to discuss and offer feedback on the wireframe. They are up to seven pages on layouts and specific pages. They are making sure that the comments that they have offered have been included. After the wireframe, the next section they will move into is design. The Website Subcommittee will be sharing the wireframe to the entire Outreach Communications Committee shortly. These meetings have been held in Zoom to encourage meaningful participation.
* Other items for discussion?

Next Outreach Communications Committee Meeting: **Tuesday, September 1, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.**

Adjourn

* **Website Design Progress.** Stacy recounted that there is Website Subcommittee and Outreach Communications Committee approval of the website outline including the navigation, the tabs, the content, and the format. CalDesal has arrived at the wireframe stage of the website development. Wireframe is the IT term for a birds’ eye view on a website of where text, images, and white space are placed. This will be completed in July. Once a refined product is ready to share further it will be presented to the Website Subcommittee for input and further refinement, and then that product will be brought back to the Outreach Communications Committee for final approval. Wendy asked if there was a sense of when CalDesal will be ready to move from its current Go Daddy site which is administered by CAMS over to this webflow platform? Stacy felt that September would be a good bet to have the new website ready. Mike added that from his experience with website redesign that three months is a reasonable timeline. He stressed that it is attention-to-detail work and that it is worth taking the time to do it correctly so that is accurately reflects the professional nature of the organization.

* **Materials** -- CalDesal Fact Sheet, etc. Once the website and social media work is largely complete we will develop some digital collateral that can be stored on the website to be accessed as needed. The current newsletter, which is essentially an e-mailed news “blast”, will be reworked by the end of the year. Wendy talked about discovering the Coastkeepers’ coalition communication for their Ocean Day FAQ sheet. She thought this would be a great product that the Regulatory Committee to weigh in as subject matter experts and then the Outreach Communications Committee could help shape it and get it ready for posting to the CalDesal website. Wendy wanted the committee to know that a rough draft would be coming later this summer for message and phrasing refinement.
* **Subcommittee Reports**
* **Social Media** – Chair Tiffany Baca is waiting for everyone to return from summer vacations and settle in before another Subcommittee meeting is scheduled so that all members would be able to attend. She felt that they needed to understand what CalDesal was looking to the Subcommittee to supplement SWS’s products. Stacy clarified that SWS is starting on a social media calendar to move forward and that it would be helpful for Tiffany’s Subcommittee to review that draft of the calendar in August. Stacy reported that the curation of content is beginning to occur for CalDesal’s social media. She asked the committee to please forward content to Stacy so she can share it with SWS. Jessica suggested that the latest positive news out of Santa Barbara that she had previously sent to Wendy regarding the 50-year desal water supply sale to Montecito Water District would be a good choice for social media content. Wendy let the committee know that this news item was included in the constant contact newsletter which was going to be e-mailed to members in July. Stacy also thought that as the end of summer nears and SWS moves into the contract’s third phase that the two current Website and Social Media Subcommittees might combine into one subcommittee. She also felt that a new Subcommittee may be formed that would work on content and collateral.
* **Website** – Chair Jessica Jones shared that the Subcommittee did not meet due to all the work that was happening with SWS on the website.
* **Other items for discussion?**
* Wendy thanked the committee for the brainstorm assistance with Covid-19 invoice messaging that was included in the invoice letter.
* Mike asked if we were considering utilizing either Zoom or Microsoft Teams for future Outreach Communication meetings as we get to more content that is visual? Stacy responded that she thought the committee would share a dead link. Shared screens can be difficult to see the full page and some have had trouble in recent meetings. CalDesal will think about scheduling a meeting in later summer or early fall.
* Tiffany offered a suggestion that CalDesal ask some of its committee members to co-host a Zoom meeting so that all the responsibility for hosting would not fall on CalDesal. Wendy promised that they would consider options and try to schedule a video based meeting for the Outreach Communications Committee.
* CalDesal Virtual Event – Wendy explained the virtual event that CalDesal is planning for the late fall. It will be a one-hour to 1 ½ hour program with speakers and a fun element of “desal bingo”. It will be free to members and associates thanks to sponsors which will underwrite it. Additional information will be communicated once it is further developed.
* Membership leads – Stacy reminded the committee if they run across folks in the course of their jobs that could be a good fit within CalDesal, to please forward those names and contacts to Wendy for follow-up!

Next Outreach Communications Committee Meeting: **Tuesday, September 1, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.**

Chair Taylor adjourned the meeting at 2:44 p.m.