

**CalDesal Regulatory Committee Meeting Notes**

**Wednesday, July 22, 2020**

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

**Members present:**

Kim Adamson, Liberty Utilities

Hannah Ake, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

Alejandra Cano, West Basin Municipal Water District

Jeremy Crutchfield, San Diego County Water Authority

Mark Donovan, GHD

Tim Hogan, TWB-ERC

Eric Miller, Miller Marine Science

Rich Svindland, CalAm

Warren Teitz, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

**Guests:** Wendy Ridderbusch, Executive Director

Chair Kevin Thomas was unable to attend this meeting due to scheduling conflicts. Wendy Ridderbusch chaired the meeting in his absence and called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.

**Agenda**

* **Ocean Plan Review Subcommittee** **Update**–The first meeting has been scheduled on Tuesday, August 4 from 11:00 a.m. -noon. Subcommittee members who attended the meeting: Kevin Thomas, Jeremy Crutchfield, Warren Teitz, Joe Monaco, Hannah Ake, and Eric Miller. The meeting notes are attached. The formation and first meeting of this Subcommittee will be timely because the state agencies finally released an inter-agency MOU-- an important piece that needed to be completed before the State Water Board embarks on reopening of the Ocean Plan Amendment.
* **State agencies MOU –** Committee members talked about how this seemed very perfunctory, as if the state agencies were just trying to complete it without real regard to how they still may not be communicating that well with each other regarding desal projects. There may have been a rush to get the MOU completed before the Huntington Beach project was being voted upon by the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board. Eric Miller brought up the concern regarding what looks like a shielding of outside review by entities on communication between the state agencies on desal projects with the of the inclusion of federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and state Public Records Act (PRA). He pointed out the language on the bottom of page four of the MOU, onto page five-- articles fourteen through sixteen.
* **Seawater Desal FAQ** – There was lively discussion regarding the Ocean Day Fact Sheet Ocean Desalination document authored by a coalition including California Coastkeeper Alliance. There were many great ideas on how to shape a CalDesal FAQ sheet debunking many myths and half-truths that were contained in the environmentalists’ Ocean Day FAQ sheet. Those concepts and that information is now housed within a draft CalDesal Seawater Desal FAQ sheet. The goal of this exercise was to get a “rough cut” of technical information and then have the Outreach Communications Committee polish it and put it into Layman’s terms so we could produce a finished product – our own FAQ sheet on seawater desalination that our members could use in different situations like meeting with their local legislator for instance. The committee was able to wade through half of the Ocean Day FAQ sheet and will finish reviewing and commenting on the second half at the regular Regulatory Committee meeting on August 26, 2020.

**Recent Regulatory Activity:**

* **Project Regulatory Permitting Updates**:

**CalAm** – Rich brought the committee up-to-speed by sharing that the California Coastal Commission will hold a hearing on September 17 reserved just for CalAm’s Monterey project. The meeting will be virtual and the format has not yet been decided. The staff report has not been released yet. They are doing everything in their power to turn around the earlier staff position of recommending denial of the project. CalAm has provided answers to every question posed by staff. They have seen the hydrogy report commissioned by the Commission with a third party peer review.

**Huntington Beach** – Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board vote will be held later this month. If the project receives approval it will move forward to the California Coastal Commission.

**Doheny** – Mark told the committee that they submitted their package to the state and regional water quality control boards. They are addressing some of the concerns such as redoing some of the modeling. They are getting ready to submit the Coastal Commission package next month. The Orange County Register ran a story this week that showed positive polling results for both the Huntington Beach and the Doheny project.

**Other issues?**

* **Zoom meeting?** – Wendy asked the committee if there was interest in utilizing the Zoom platform for future meetings? There was general interest in holding a future Regulatory Committee meeting via Zoom. Rich pointed out that you could choose to join via phone instead of video with Zoom but that it would provide the option for folks wanting to see each other during the meeting. Wendy will look at the calendar and schedule one in the fall for the committee.

2020 Meeting Dates: 8/26, 9/23, 10/28, 11/25, and 12/16

Next Regulatory Committee Meeting: **Wednesday, August 26, 2020**

**Wendy Ridderbusch adjourned the meeting at 2:51 p.m.**