

MINUTES

County of Inyo WATER COMMISSION

December 7, 2016

The Chairperson called the Water Commission meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. at the Inyo County Water Department, Independence, CA. Commissioners in attendance were Chairperson Mike Prather, Teri Red Owl, Mike Carrington, and Craig Patten. Commissioner Dishion was absent. Present from the Water Department was Bob Harrington and Laura Piper.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioner Prather led the pledge of allegiance.

2. Public Comment

Earl Wilson – Mr. Wilson asked if we were discussing the pumping plan. He stated he reviewed the County's response on the pumping plan and was wondering why the town wells didn't have the volumes for that time period.

3. Approval of minutes from the October 21, 2016 meeting

Moved by Commissioner Patton and seconded by Commissioner Red Owl to approve the minutes of the October 21, 2016 meeting. Two yes, 2 abstentions. Minute approval will be carried over to next Water Commission meeting.

4. Commissioners Report

The Commissioner's stated they had nothing to report at this time.

5. Presentation of ICWD 2015-2016 Annual Report

Dr. Harrington provided an in depth and detailed PowerPoint presentation of the 2015-2016 annual report. Dr. Harrington stated providing this report is a requirement of the 1997 MOU that LADWP/Inyo County prepare an annual report describing conditions in the valley and special projects related to the Water Agreement. The Commissioners, Dr. Harrington, and Aaron Steinwand discussed the report in detail.

Public Comment – Sally Manning – Ms. Manning stated the runoff is higher this year. Dr. Harrington stated recharge raises the water table, pumping generally lowers the water table. Dr. Harrington stated the difference between the two changes in the water table is due to 54,000 af being less pumping than the 75,000 af. Commissioner Red Owl stated they are going to pump 75,000 af and Dr. Harrington stated the water table will rise one quarter foot instead of a foot.

Public Comment – Ms. Manning stated the mitigation projects listed in LADWPs report states there are over 100 and stated the Water Dept information isn't accurate in stating there are only 60. Dr. Harrington stated the Standing Committee directed Inyo/LA staff to work together on the status of mitigation projects, and the first half would be to see which projects Inyo/LA disagreed on the status of, and the second would be to move ahead on the ones that are in bad condition. He stated, more importantly is to learn where Inyo/LA disagrees on the projects. He stated a table was being drafted which is more two tables, one is mitigation obligations, and the other is LA's general obligations (financial, etc). It is anticipated the table will be presented at the next Standing Committee meeting.

Public Comment – Earl Wilson – Mr. Wilson stated the big dip around 1990 on the presentation was the last great drought, a combination of that and serious over pumping.

Public Comment – Nancy Masters – Ms. Masters stated she read that Stanford University has a Water in the West program and they had discussion of modeling of groundwater basins that going to be required by SGMA and using standard open source software and she wondered if that's going to change the protocols for monitoring on the Owens Valley Groundwater basin and if that's going to make the form more extensive because it's a large basin. Dr. Harrington stated that's a few years down the road and depends on how the management areas in the valley are arranged. He stated he doesn't believe the plan regulations require that models be basin wide. The models in the Owens Valley have been developed with modflow and Dr. Harrington stated that's definitely a consideration.

6. Presentation of proposed changes to Green Book vegetation monitoring provisions

Dr. Harrington stated coming out of the Blackrock dispute the Standing Committee directed staff to work on a revision to the Green Books vegetation monitoring section concerning the line point monitoring. He stated in that dispute, the data and evaluating measurability of vegetation change was a big issue. The Standing Committee directed staff to work with a facilitator and a panel of experts from the Ecological Society of America to examine the sufficiency of the vegetation monitoring in the Green Book and make changes. They resolved that the vegetation monitoring methods that both Inyo/LA were using were both common methods and made suggestions that the parties might consider such as remote sensing and satellite imagery that would complement the line point program. Dr. Harrington stated Inyo/LA started a joint effort the past few years and have developed a draft Green Book revision describing the methods used as a joint program which will move forward to the Technical Group and then to the Standing Committee for their approval.

Public Comment – Randy Keller – Mr. Keller asked how this maps back to prior years and is there a way to get this data to compare with prior years. Dr. Harrington stated there is continuity with the existing data sets.

7. Presentation on Bishop Cone Audit procedures

Keith Rainville provided a detailed and in depth PowerPoint presentation on the Bishop Cone audit and the procedures involved. He stated this is an annual accounting that compares water use on Los Angeles land (bishop cone) to LA groundwater extraction from the Bishop Cone. He stated the audit is completed to confirm LA is in compliance with the 1940 Hillside Decree, the LTWA, and the Green Book. The Commissioners and Keith Rainville discussed the Bishop Cone audit in detail.

Public Comment – Daris Moxley – Ms. Moxley stated that the wells that are drilled on the map of the Matlick lawsuit from Keith's presentation are going to irrigated land. Keith stated that his display was LADWP's exhibit and their justification for pumped water coming from the eight wells and their names have changed. Ms. Moxley stated that LADWP wanted to install two new wells and are they going to show us where this is going to go onto their property. Keith referred Ms. Moxley to a map from his presentation and provided an explanation.

Public Comment – Sally Manning – Ms. Manning inquired if on slide number eight from Keith Rainville's Powerpoint, does he have a shape file of those and is it accurate. Keith stated he does not have one that he would consider up to date and accurate at this time. Ms. Manning stated all this time is spent discussing the Bishop Cone Audit and all the Water Agreement said is don't violate the Hillside Decree, and the Water Agreement also makes reference to Type E vegetation which the Bishop Cone is full of and there is no Type E vegetation monitoring program. Dr. Harrington stated Type E vegetation monitoring is a project the Water Department is currently working on.

Public Comment – Yaney MacIver – Ms. MacIver asked if all the PowerPoint presentations will be posted on the website. Dr. Harrington stated yes.

8. Public Comment

Earl Wilson – Mr. Wilson inquired if what was presented is the final report for the Green Book modifications? Dr. Harrington stated that is what we are proposing and is currently a draft.

Mary Roper – Ms. Roper stated she has not heard anything lately about the Lower Owens River Water Trail and she'd like to know where we are at with this project. Dr. Harrington stated we are working with the granting agency on agreement language and still working with LADWP as to what their land access requirements will be.

Nancy Masters – Ms. Masters stated she wanted to raise a point of concern and that is the Bell property now owned by LADWP on Oak Creek. She stated the amount of death of the native Oaks since their purchase is quite visible. She stated the Forest Service is going to be conducted stream restoration upstream and they are also concerned about the native Oaks as well.

Sally Manning – Ms. Manning stated the Water Agreement applies to all LADWP land so the land at Oak Creek falls under this as well.

9. Schedule next Water Commission meeting

The next Water Commission meeting will be tentatively scheduled prior to the Standing Committee meeting February 2, 2017.

10. Adjourn

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 8:10pm.