



Metro JPA Involved in Discussions of Secondary Treatment Waiver Application and Options — Vital Issue for Ratepayers

The Metro Wastewater JPA and Commission has established an ad hoc committee to work with City of San Diego officials to assist in negotiations surrounding the application for a renewed waiver of secondary treatment at the Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant. The new committee includes JPA Chair Henry Abarbanel, Del Mar Councilmember; JPA Vice Chair Mayda Winter, Imperial Beach Mayor Pro Tem; Ernest Ewin, La Mesa Vice Mayor; Al Ovrom, Coronado Councilmember; and Augie Caires, Padre Dam Municipal Water District Board Member.

Even if the current waiver application is approved, it's widely believed that San Diego eventually will have to go to secondary treatment. This would be of immense importance to the JPA's participating agencies, which would face a significant financial impact. San Diego Wastewater officials estimate the cost of going to secondary using BAF (biological aerated filtration) technology at \$1.5 billion. Approximately \$500 million of this would have to be paid by the JPA's participating agencies.

On behalf of their rate-paying constituents, the new ad hoc committee will work with and advise San Diego in the upcoming negotiations on the waiver application, as well as examine the various options for secondary treatment.

The Metro JPA's technical expertise can play a vital role in negotiations with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and state regulators this year. If lawsuits are filed by opponents of the renewed waiver application, the JPA can help formulate responses in the hearings that will ensue. Such opposition to the waiver is expected from environmental groups and others, even though scientists at Scripps Institution of Oceanography and elsewhere have shown that the Point Loma facility's current advanced primary treatment does not harm the ocean environment

The new committee would also participate in a working group the JPA is asking the City of San Diego to establish to explore "Plan B" options to the waiver. In a letter to Mayor Jerry Sanders and City Council President Scott Peters, the JPA said the working group should be composed of "one or two San Diego City Councilmembers, one person from the Mayor's office and two members of the Metro JPA to begin in early 2008 working together to explore options to the waiver that serve the ratepayers both in the City of San Diego and the eleven jurisdictions of the PAs."

Metro JPA Seeks IROC Representation at Monthly Commission Meetings

The Metro JPA is urging the City of San Diego to designate a member of the Independent Rates Oversight Committee (IROC) to attend its monthly Commission meetings. The JPA voted to send the request at its January 10th meeting. Despite requests for a voting seat on IROC, the Metro JPA has been allowed only an ex-officio member on the panel, which last year replaced the Public Utilities Advisory Commission (PUAC). "With the vital issues now facing our constituent ratepayers," said JPA Chair Henry Abarbanel, "good regional coordination and communication between our agencies and the City of San Diego is more important than ever."

Metro JPA/Commission to Meet on February 7th

The next meeting of the Metro JPA and Commission will be held at 12 noon on Thursday, February 7th in the Metropolitan Operations Center (MOC II) auditorium, 9192 Topaz Way, Kearny Mesa. Lunch will be provided for Commissioners and staff.

Metro TAC Convenes on February 20th

The Technical Advisory Committee (Metro TAC) will hold its next meeting at 11 a.m. on Wednesday, February 20th in the MOCII auditorium.

Metro Commissioners

Councilmember Henry Abarbanel, Del Mar - Chair
 Mayor Pro Tem Mayda Winter, Imperial Beach - Vice Chair
 Mayor Cheryl Cox, Chula Vista
 Councilmember Al Ovrom, Coronado
 Mayor Mark Lewis, El Cajon
 Vice Mayor Ernest Ewin, La Mesa
 Councilmember Jerry Jones, Lemon Grove Sanitation District
 Councilmember Luis Natividad, National City
 Board Member Mark Robak, Otay Water District
 Board Member Augie Caires, Padre Dam Muni. Water District
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