



Sen. Boxer Seeks Support for Oceans Protection Act; JPA Members Want More Information on Local Impacts

At the July 7 meeting, Caridad Sanchez, Regional District Director for U.S. Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.), briefed the Metro JPA and Commission on the National Oceans Protection Act of 2005 (SB1224). She asked for the JPA's support of the act, which would provide for a national oceans policy with far-reaching measures to protect the ocean ecosystem.

Commissioners Jerry Jones, Luis Natividad and others told Ms. Sanchez that although they strongly support steps to protect the ocean environment, they have questions about the funding needed to implement new federal mandates. How, for example, would new sediment and invasive-species monitoring programs be funded?

SB1224 is a comprehensive legislative response to the recommendations of the President's Commission on Ocean Policy and the independent Pew Oceans Commission. The two commissions recently stated that prompt changes in U.S. ocean management are needed to reduce the impact that humans are having on the nation's ocean ecosystems. Among other things, the act would establish an independent National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and create a new Council on Ocean Stewardship, a federal entity in the Office of the President to conduct an annual review and analysis of funding, policy recommendations and programs for oceans.

Commissioners voted to ask Ms. Sanchez to return in September with more information before taking action.

Ad Hoc Committee Reports

Community Relations Committee

Its research subcommittee met with the County Water Authority to obtain findings from its 2004 public opinion survey. CWA is conducting a follow-up survey this year and a report on those findings will be made to the Metro JPA next month.

The web site subcommittee is submitting a Request for Proposals to webmasters that have been recommended to the JPA. The final selection will be brought to the Commission for approval. The new web site is to become operational within 60 days of selecting a webmaster.

Relationship Liaison Committee

In answer to a question, Alex Alagha, the City of Chula Vista's Director of Public Works and its representative to Metro TAC, said that his city is studying the benefits of officially joining the Metro JPA. Although a charter member of the Metro Commission, Chula Vista has not yet decided to affiliate with the Joint Powers Authority.

Finance Committee

Commissioner Ernie Ewin said the committee continues to study the City of San Diego's financial situation. He pointed out that the investigation being conducted by the federal Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC) has spread beyond the pension system to include Metropolitan Wastewater Department (MWW) rate charge practices.

Next Commission Meeting Scheduled for Aug. 4

The next Metro JPA/Commission meeting will be held at 12 noon, Thursday, Aug. 4 in the Metropolitan Operations Center (MOC II) auditorium at 9192 Topaz Way, Kearny Mesa. Lunch will be provided for Commissioners and staff. The agenda will include:

*An update by the IBWC on the status of the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) for Clean Water Act Compliance at the International Wastewater Treatment Plant (IWTP)

*A briefing by John Liarakos of the County Water Authority on its latest regional public opinion survey

*A report by Dr. Paul K. Dayton of Scripps Institution of Oceanography on what our region can do in terms of ocean-water monitoring and protection

Metro TAC to Meet on July 20

The next meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (Metro TAC) will be Wednesday, June 20 at 11 a.m. at MOC II.

Metro Commissioners

Councilmember Henry Abarbanel, Del Mar - Chair
 Councilmember Mayda Winter, Imperial Beach - Vice Chair
 Mayor Steven Padilla, Chula Vista *
 Councilmember Frank Tierney, Coronado
 Mayor Mark Lewis, El Cajon
 Councilmember Ernest Ewin, La Mesa
 Councilmember Jerry Jones, Lemon Grove Sanitation District
 Councilmember Luis Natividad, National City
 Councilmember Merrilee Boyack, Poway
 Scott Tulloch, Director, MWW, City of San Diego
 Supervisor Dianne Jacob, County of San Diego
 Mark Robak, Otay Water District
 Augie Scalzitti, Padre Dam Municipal Water

* Member of Metro Commission but not Metro JPA

Metro JPA News Brief

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