

WESTERN REGIONAL WATER COMMISSION BOARD OF TRUSTEES MINUTES

Wednesday, September 10, 2010

The regular meeting of the Western Regional Water Commission (WRWC) Board of Trustees was held on Wednesday, September 10, 2010, at Sparks Council Chambers, 431 Prater Way, Sparks, Nevada.

- 1. Roll Call and Determination of presence of a Quorum** – Chairman Carrigan called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. There was a quorum present.

Commissioners Present:

Mike Carrigan, Chair
Steve Cohen
Patricia Lancaster
Geno Martini
Ron Smith

Representing:

Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA)
South Truckee Meadows General Improvement District (STMGID)
Sun Valley General Improvement District (SVGID)
Truckee Meadows Water Reclamation Facility (TMWRF)
City of Sparks

Commissioners Absent:

Dave Aiazzi, Vice-Chair
John Breternitz
Bob Cashell
Bob Larkin

Representing:

City of Reno
Washoe County
Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA)
Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA)

- 2. Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairman Carrigan asked Commissioner Smith to lead the Western Regional Water Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

- 3. Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner Lancaster made a motion to approve the September 10, 2010 WRWC agenda as posted. Commissioner Martini seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

- 4. Public Comment**

Chairman Carrigan called for public comments and hearing none, closed the public comment period.

- 5. Approval of the Minutes of the July 15, 2010 meeting.**

The minutes of the July 15, 2010 Western Regional Water Commission (WRWC) meeting were submitted for approval. Commissioner Martini made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

- 6. Report by the Desert Research Institute (“DRI”) on its Cloud Seeding Operations for the**

Truckee and Tahoe Basins for the past water year, and status of its Cloud Seeding Coalition efforts; discussion and possible approval of a request for funding in an amount not to exceed \$100,000 from the Regional Water Management Fund to support such Cloud Seeding Operations for the upcoming water year and, if approved, authorize the Chairman to execute an Interlocal Agreement with DRI for that purpose.

Chairman Carrigan invited Dr. Huggins, Associate Research Scientist for DRI, stated that Greg Bortolin, Director of Communications for Governmental Affairs, was also present to answer questions. Dr. Huggins referred to a PowerPoint presentation with the following highlights:

- In 2010 DRI received its primary funding through the Truckee River Fund, in the amount of \$65,000; along with supplemental funding from the Western Regional Water Commission in the amount of \$45,000. DRI contributed \$66,000 for a total of \$276,000.
- The goal was to enhance snowfall from the winter storms and to increase the snowpack in the Tahoe/Truckee watersheds.
- He referred to a conceptual diagram of how cloud seeding works and provided a brief explanation. He stated that cloud seeding increases the efficiency of a winter storm to provide precipitation.
- Over the past several decades, conceptual models of seeding have been developed and validated in a number of research studies in the western U.S. An increase in the precipitation in a specific seeding flume has been documented to be from a few hundredths to more than 2 millimeters an hour in the precipitation rate. The average can be on the order of 4 to 5 millimeters per hour.
- DRI developed a method for targeting where in the snowpack the seeding had an effect by analyzing snow samples for silver.
- The American Meteorological Society made a statement that wintertime seeding has the potential to enhance the snowpack by 10% in the area of seeding.
- In DRI's seeding projects in the Sierra, Elko, and Walker basins, the annual average shows an increase of approximately 60,000 acre-feet of snow water.
- In the Tahoe/Truckee watershed there are five seeding generators. He explained how the generators work and the common flume directions.
- He explained how the optimal seeding opportunities are tracked and utilized. He stated that the past winter season consisted of 56 storm events and 1,120 hours of generator seeding, with 72% efficiency. The estimated snow water from the 56 events was a little over 20,000 acre-feet. He stated that the dollar amount from the sponsors divided by the acre-foot increase results in approximately \$10.40 per acre-foot.

Dr. Huggins reported that the current version of the cloud seeding program status is as follows:

- Southern Nevada Water Authority agreed to fund seeding the Rubies in 2011.
- A proposal with the Bureau of Reclamation is in the NEPA process under the Desert Terminal Lakes Project for a five-year seeding program for the Walker Basin, with assistance from the Walker Irrigation District.
- An Advisory Board has been convened to advise DRI on different types of funding options available.
- A funding request for \$260,000 will be submitted to the Truckee River Fund for 2011.

Dr. Huggins stated that the funding requests have not yet been submitted but if all funding is approved, it would provide for the same program as 2010 (five generators operating November through April). Options to the plan would include an aircraft component that would cost an additional \$55,000 and additional ground seeding units, which would bring the additional funding need to about \$125,000 on top of the \$260,000.

Dr. Huggins summarized that as the presentation shows, very successful results have been realized. He reiterated that the basic program cost is about \$260,000, of which he is requesting an amount not to exceed \$100,000 from the Western Regional Water Commission. He welcomed questions from commissioners.

Chairman Carrigan thanked Dr. Huggins for his presentation and invited questions or comments.

Commissioner Cohen asked if the seeding downwind has ever resulted in litigation for causing drought conditions in other areas. Dr. Huggins stated that the program has never resulted in litigation due to drought or flooding.

Commissioner Smith asked if a certain level of moisture is required for seeding. Dr. Huggins stated it is and added that it must be “super cool” water. Commissioner Smith asked if the targeted storms are only those coming from Alaska based on the temperature versus that of Pacific storms. Dr. Huggins stated that is the case for the major seeding. Commissioner Smith asked if problems have been noted due to increased aircraft icing resulting from seeding. Dr. Huggins stated no and explained that aircraft mapping and plotting of icing is provided to DRI for use in the program.

Commissioner Smith asked about previous funding. Dr. Huggins stated that the State previously funded the program; however, with budget cuts that is no longer the case, which is the reason for the request for funding from the WRWC.

Commissioner Martini asked at what point a decision would be made as to whether to pursue the basic program level or the enhanced program with aircraft. Dr. Huggins stated it is dependent on the level of possible funding received from the Truckee River Fund (TRF).

Chairman Carrigan asked what the difference in cost is between the basic and enhanced programs. Dr. Huggins stated that the aircraft portion accounts for approximately 15 to 20% of the program cost.

Members discussed the funding sources and amounts requested. Mr. Bortolin reported that the only existing funding for the program currently is what is left from last year’s budget.

Mr. Smitherman reported that \$100,000 was budgeted for this Fiscal Year from the Regional Water Management Fund (RWMF). Commissioner Martini asked there is a possibility that if funding were approved today, if the legislature could take the money. Jeff Tissier stated he certainly hoped not and did not expect that it would happen. He stated that as directed by the WRWC, an Advisory Board was created to seek other funding sources. He stated that the group has met twice this year and added that the representatives include Dr. Steve Wells, DRI President, Joe Guild, Commissioner John Breternitz, Bruce Moore, SNWA, Ken Spooner, Walker Irrigation District, the Cattlemen’s Association of eastern Nevada, Mervin Wright, Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, Jeff Tissier, and hopefully Andrew Strain, Heavenly Valley. He stated that staff from DRI also participates.

Commissioner Cohen stated he sees it as “cheap water” and made a motion to approve the funding request in an amount not to exceed \$100,000. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

7. Status report on development of the 2011 Comprehensive Regional Water Management Plan, including timeline and contractual services, and possible direction to staff.

Mr. Smitherman reported that the Water Plan update is progressing well and on schedule. He reviewed the upcoming schedule, which includes:

- December 6, 2010 Distribute draft Plan to WRWC members
- December 14, 2010 Deliver draft Plan to County Clerk for 30-day public inspection period, required by statute, and hold public workshop at Department of Water Resources
- January 4, 2011 Publish notice of public hearing
- January 14, 2011 Public hearing and possible Plan adoption by the WRWC

Commissioner Cohen made a motion to approve the staff report. Commissioner Martini seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

8. Status report on integration/consolidation of the Washoe County Department of Water Resources (“DWR”) and TMWA, and possible direction to staff

Ms. Menard provided a brief Power Point presentation of the status of the TMWA/DWR Integration. She stated that the initial conclusion from the TMWA Board and the Board of County Commissioners was that the merger of the utilities could improve the management and use of water resources, make more efficient use of infrastructure, avoid future costs for maintenance and provide other benefits.

Ms. Menard reported that work is proceeding on:

- Engineering modeling, including hydraulic analysis
- Conjunctive use of surface and groundwater evaluation
- Electric and power costs that could be reduced
- Water rights and will-serve commitments analysis

Progress to date includes:

- Customer services assessment – call center consolidation, etc.
- Alignment of business practices

She reported on some of the key findings, which include:

- Good opportunities to make better use of surface water and use groundwater for peaking capacity
- Good opportunities for recharge
- The Longley Lane treatment plant could possibly be operated seasonally saving power costs
- Integrated capital funding has identified opportunities for efficiency and cost savings

Ms. Menard stated that a presentation of the findings, conclusions and recommendations will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners and the TMWA Board.

Chairman Carrigan thanked Ms. Menard for her update.

9. Informational report on the third and final 2010 meeting of the Legislative Committee to Oversee the Western Regional Water Commissioner

Ms. Menard referred to the staff report and stated that the last meeting included a work session consisting of two items:

- Proposed Bill Draft Request (BDR) to authorize the issuance of bonds to finance loans made to provide financial assistance to persons to connect to the public water or sewer system in certain counties (Assembly Bill [AB 54], Chapter 325, Statutes of Nevada 2009)
- Proposed BDR to allow issuance of County Bond Bank bonds to be issued for refunding of securities previously issued to an entity other than the County Bond Bank.

10. Discussion and possible approval of the Memorandum of Legislative Cooperation Among Local Governments, Affected Government Entities, Service Providers, and other Agencies in the Truckee Meadows Region for the 2011 session of the Nevada Legislature, and, if approved, authorize the Chairman to execute the Memorandum (Heard out of order)

Mr. Smitherman reported that the Regional Planning Governing Board invited the WRWC to participate in its Memorandum of Legislation Cooperation among Local Governments, Affected Government Entities, Service Providers, and other Agencies in the Truckee Meadows Region. He added that a number of other entities were invited to participate as well. Commissioner Cohen mentioned that South Truckee Meadows General Improvement District (STMGID) was recently invited and the issue would be discussed at the next meeting. Commissioner Lancaster reported that Sun Valley General Improvement District (SVGID) discussed the issue at its last meeting and agreed to participate.

Mr. Smitherman briefly reviewed some of the points of the MOU, for which Chairman Carrigan has been asked to sign for the WRWC.

Commissioner Martini made a motion to approve the Memorandum of Legislation Cooperation among Local Governments, Affected Government Entities, Service Providers, and other Agencies in the Truckee Meadows Region. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

11. Discussion and possible amendment of the Agreement for Consulting Engineering Services between the WRWC and ECO:LOGIC Engineering in an amount not to exceed \$16,000 for additional tasks related to the development of the 2011 Comprehensive Regional Water Management Plan, and if approved, authorize the Chairman to execute the Amendment.

Mr. Smitherman stated that ECO:LOGIC Engineering has been providing technical assistance on the Water Plan update; however, additional work is needed to complete the Water Plan update. He stated that ECO:LOGIC has a current contract for technical assistance. He added that he requested some back-up tables to explain the data behind the Water Balance Model by planning areas. He stated that he could also use ECO:LOGIC's assistance in developing the issues associated with wastewater and reclaimed water in Chapter 8 and the related policies. He stated that once the issues are developed, they need to be compiled into a prioritized list that will transform into the work plan for future years. He added that development of the Executive Summary would be much easier with technical assistance. He requested that an amendment to the existing agreement is being presented for approval.

Commissioner Smith asked if the requested amount is within Mr. Smitherman's authorization to \$25,000. Mr. Smitherman stated it is; however, since it is related to an existing agreement, he thought it better to request an amendment to the contract.

Commissioner Lancaster made a motion to approve the proposed amendment to the Agreement, in an amount not to exceed \$16,000, and authorize the Chairman to execute the Amendment. Commissioner Martini seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

12. Discussion and possible amendment of the Agreement for Legal Services for the WRWC and the NNWPC with Rhodes Law Offices, Ltd., and if approved, authorize the Chairman to execute the Amendment.

Mr. Rhodes stated that per his previous offer to reduce his rates in line with what County employees agreed to, he is rate by 3% retroactive to July 1, 2010.

Chairman Carrigan and members thanked Mr. Rhodes for his offer.

Commissioner Martini made a motion to approve the amendment to the Agreement for Legal Services, and authorize the Chairman to execute the Amendment. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

13. Discussion and possible direction to staff regarding agenda items for the October 8, 2010 meeting and future meetings.

Ms. Menard stated that there are no time-sensitive items for October and reported that staff has been busy working on the Water Plan Update. She suggested canceling the October meeting, with the next meeting to be scheduled in November, with which members agreed.

14. Commission Comments

None

15. Staff Comments

None

16. Public Comment

Chairman Carrigan called for public comments and hearing none, closed the public comment period.

17. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Niki Linn, Recording Secretary

Approved by Commission in session on November 12, 2010.

Mike Carrigan, Chairman