

Safe, Clean Water Program

Lower Los Angeles River

Watershed Area Steering Committee (WASC)



Meeting Minutes:

Tuesday, May 12, 2020

1:00pm – 3:00pm

WebEx Video Conferencing

Attendees

Committee Members

Dan Sharp (District)

Lyndsey Bloxom* (Water Replenishment District)

Kristen Ruffell (LA County – Sanitation)

Meredith Reynolds* (Long Beach Parks & Recreation)

James Vernon (Port of Long Beach)

Gladis Deras (South Gate)

Tammy Hierlihy (Central Basin)

Nick Jiles (Páo Strategies)

Manny Gonez* (TreePeople)

Melissa Bahmanpour (River in Action)

Dan Mueller (Downey)

Melissa You (Long Beach)

Chau Vu* (Bell Gardens)

Adriana Figueroa (Paramount)

Kelli Tunnicliff (Signal Hill)

Marybeth Vergara* (Rivers Mountains Conservancy)

Laura Ochoa (Lynwood)

Committee Members Not Present:

None

*Committee Member Alternate

See attached WebEx sheet for full list of attendees

1. Welcome and Introductions

Mr. James Vernon, the Chair of the Lower Los Angeles River WASC, called the meeting to order. As the official host of the WebEx meeting, Mr. CJ Caluag of the District introduced himself, and asked for a roll-call of WASC members, and with a majority present, quorum was established.

Mr. Vernon then went over the various WebEx housekeeping items for both the WASC members and the general public's participation, and reminded participants that public comment cards can be sent to the Safe, Clean Water (SCW) email. Mr. Caluag referred to the WebEx Conferencing Guidelines document and displayed it on his screen to further illustrate the various functions available on the WebEx platform.

2. Public Comment Period

Mr. Caluag stated that no emails were received for public comments, and reminded participants to use the "raise hand" feature to be called upon during this public comment period.

No public comments were received during this time.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes from April 28, 2020

The District uploaded a copy of the meeting minutes from the April 28th meeting on the SCW website. Mr. Vernon asked the WASC members for comments or revisions.

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Ms. Lyndsey Bloxom requested a small modification to a statement she made during the April 28th meeting and presented the language via the chat box. This language was presented to the WASC and with no further comments or objections, the Chair asked for a motion and a seconding of the motion to approve the meeting minutes. Mr. Manny Gonez motioned to approve the meeting minutes, with Mr. Nick Jiles seconding this motion. A roll call of the WASC was done on approving or not approving the meeting minutes, and approved the meeting minutes unanimously (Mr. Dan Sharp abstained as he was not present at the previous meeting).

4. Committee Member and District Updates

Mr. Vernon reminded participants to use the “raise hand” feature to be called upon for speaking during this meeting.

Mr. Caluag gave a brief update on the Watershed Coordinator. The solicitation (Request for Statement of Qualifications) is anticipated to be out for public review on May 18th, with a pre-bid virtual meeting and this WASC interviewing the candidates.

Mr. Caluag then gave a brief update on the fund Transfer Agreement (TA) templates. The TAs are being revised, and will be posted on the SCW website by the end of May. The TAs are expected to go to the Board of Supervisors in June.

The District anticipates that the nine WASCs are anticipating the approval their respective Stormwater Investment Plans (SIP) by late May or early June. The SIPs will go to the Regional Oversight Committee (ROC), which will convene on May 20th, June 18th, and June 24th to review each SIP. Depending on the ROC’s recommendations, there may be a need for the WASC to reconvene in July to review the recommendations for the LLAR SIP. This would allow the nine SIPs to be brought before the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (Board) for approval in August. At this time, the Rio Hondo, Lower San Gabriel, North Santa Monica Bay, and Santa Clara WASCs have approved their SIPs.

5. Discussion and Voting Items:

Mr. Caluag reminded WASC members that there are three voting items listed on the agenda, but that items 5.d (Assign Percent allocation target) and 5.e (Selection of Projects into the SIP) are not necessary to arrive at a final approved SIP. Those voting items are there to assist populating the SIP if needed. Ideally, the WASC members will have an organic discussion, listen to public comment, and then vote on the SIP. As mentioned before with the SIP Programming Guidelines, when the voting on the SIP the WASC members are affirming that the SIP criteria is being met, such as the 85/10/5 funding breakdown, DAC Benefits, municipality benefits, MS4 compliance, and Nature-Based Solutions.

Ms. Marybeth Vergara asked if the District knows the date that the Board of Supervisors (Board) will approve the SIP, and Mr. Caluag responded that tentatively, August 18th is the date the Board will consider SIP approvals, dependent on ROC review and approval to the SIP.

a) Ex Parte Communication Disclosures

Mr. Vernon asked if any WASC members have any disclosures to present to the group, and there were no disclosures shared by the WASC.

b) General discussion on Projects

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Mr. Vernon stated that during this discussion, the group can talk about all projects, technical resources, and scientific studies, and that District can display the SIP tool or project reports or presentations as necessary. All speakers were reminded to state their name and affiliation before speaking, and to raise their hands.

Mr. Caluag stated that at the last meeting, the SIP tool ran various scenarios showing the selected projects and/or studies, the percent allocations each year, and the five-year totals. Mr. Caluag was able to present two table scenarios to the WASC, with the first being the originally submitted projects and their funding requests within five years, and the second including all projects with adjusted funding requests per year (no adjustment to the project funding total requested). At the last meeting, John Anson Park, LB MUST, and Salt Lake Park adjusted their annual funding requests.

Mr. Caluag populated the SIP tool with top-two infrastructure projects (IP) No. 1 (LB MUST) and No. 2 (John Anson Ford), the top two Technical Resources Program (TRP) No. 6 (Parque Dos Rios) and No. 7 (Willow Springs Park), and the watershed coordinator selected, yielding a 76 percent allocation in Year 1 (FY 20-21), a 45 percent allocation in Year 2 (FY 21-22), a 23 percent allocation in Year 3 (FY 22-23), a 1 percent allocation in Year 4 (FY 23-24), and a zero percent allocation in Year 5 (FY 24-25).

Mr. Nick Jiles asked the project proponents of LB MUST, John Anson Ford Park, and Salt Lake Park if they can provide the number of jobs to be hired for their project from shovel to completion, the number of jobs required for the project's operation and maintenance (O&M), and the number of support letters each project has received from community groups.

For LB MUST, Mr. Alvin Papa stated that the number of jobs is not known at this time, but the City of Long Beach can put together and bring back to present to the group. Also, since the project is above \$500,000, the City is required to award project jobs locally. Mr. Papa can bring back O&M figures as well, and stated that there is a lot of public support for the project, including support from the Wilmar Heritage Association, the Port of Long Beach, the City of Long Beach's Parks & Recreation, and have long-standing partnerships with the Coastal Conservancy and the Rivers and Mountains Conservancy, and received letters of support from Lina Gonzalez, City councilmembers, the State Senate, and others. Mr. Papa added that the City of Long Beach foresees future partnerships with Caltrans and L.A. County. Ms. Vergara clarified that the RMC is a financial supporter of the wetlands component of the LB MUST, but is not aware of having submitted a letter of support. Mr. Vernon added that the LB MUST was funded by the Port of Long Beach for a \$1 million grant.

For John Anson Ford Park, Ms. Chau Vu stated that local groups such as the Boys & Girls Club, Human Services Association, and the LA Conservation Corps are all in support of the project. In terms of jobs, \$8 million on construction has already been issued and spent and we are hopeful to have another \$10 million. O&M has not been calculated, but we would like to minimize O&M with a gravity (no pumps) system. Ms. Vu added that her project team met with the nonprofit organization, East Yard, to go over the project and their comments were that we had to have soils testing and ensure there are clean soils.

For Salt Lake Park, Mr. Cesar Roldan spoke in favor of this project for SIP funding as it is located in a D.A.C. community. Mr. Gerald Greene anticipates similar job creation as John Anson Ford Park as the capital costs are similar. In terms of O&M, jobs will be limited as the structure is below ground. For support letters, we had North East Trees and TreePeople writing a letter of support, and the Lower L.A. Reach 2 group in support of this project towards MS4 permit compliance.

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Ms. Melissa Bahmanpour asked about John Anson and Salt Lake Park projects and whether each has sought out unions to ensure prevailing wages are paid to the hired workers, and would these projects be willing to have a community outreach component in each project's FTA.

Ms. Vu stated that John Anson has prevailing wages in the construction project, and that the project has already had two community meetings. Mr. Caluag reiterated that the FTAs require each project to conduct community engagement events. Ms. Vu added that if John Anson receives SCW funding for Phase II, the project would need to conduct additional community meetings for this new phase of the project.

Mr. Greene stated that Salt Lake is still in the conceptual/design phase, but that the City is likely inclined to include prevailing wages and conduct community outreach meetings.

Mr. Dan Mueller stated that at the last meeting, the group was looking to defer funding for Furman Park into future years. However, looking at dry weather flows and TMDL deadlines, the City of Downey will have compliance issues with the bacteria TMDL if we defer funding into future years, and was inquiring if there is any opportunities to include design funds in Year 1 (FY 20-21). Mr. Caluag reminded the WASC, this is the opportunity to populate the SIP with different scenarios and restructure funds to subsequent years.

Mr. Vernon stated that at the last meeting, the group was close to finalizing the SIP. Items 5.d and 5.e are not necessary if a WASC member presents a motion with a seconding of this motion to approve the SIP as currently presented with the top two IPs, the top two TRPs, and a watershed coordinator to move forward with a formal vote of the SIP.

Mr. John Hunter stated that it is critical that Furman Park receive design funding early on, and requested splitting \$2 million over the first two years. Mr. Vernon reminded the group that the percent allocation (76 percent) is already near the recommended threshold, that Furman Park is the fourth ranked project, and was not sure how more funds could be added in the first year. By selecting the top four IPs, the top two TRPs and a watershed coordinator, the percent allocations became 76 percent in Year 1 (FY 20-21), 80 percent in Year 2 (FY 21-22), 81 percent in Year 3 (FY 22-23), 100 percent in Year 4 (FY 23-24), and 45 percent in Year 5 (FY 24-25).

Mr. Gonez asked to only see the top three IPs, with no TRPs, and a watershed coordinator. In this scenario, the percent allocations became 72 percent in Year 1 (FY 20-21), 56 percent in Year 2 (FY 21-22), 65 percent in Year 3 (FY 22-23), 51 percent in Year 4 (FY 23-24), and 45 percent in Year 5 (FY 24-25).

Ms. Adriana Figueroa stated that MS4 permit compliance needs to be at the top of the list when it comes to funding projects, so can the SIP include just the design component in the early years for Furman Park. Mr. Caluag restated that MS4 permit compliance is one of the criteria that must be prioritized when finalizing the SIP.

Ms. Kelli Tunncliff stated that the WASC is struggling with not having enough funding for all of the qualified IPs and TRPs, and asked if there's anything that can be done to fund design work that is critical for MS4 permit compliance. Ms. Tunncliff also asked if the group agrees with Mr. Vernon that only the top two IPs and top two TRPs should be funded at this time. Mr. Caluag reminded the group that no vote on projects took place, and Mr. Vernon stated that Item 5.e on this agenda would be an official vote of projects to be included or not included in the SIP if that is the route the WASC wants to take; this is one option this group has, or another option is to populate the SIP tool as we have been doing and move forward with a scenario that works for the WASC via a vote. Ms. Tunncliff stated that the top two IPs take up a majority of the available funds and if we move forward with these projects, we miss out on discussing or considering any other projects. Mr. Caluag

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reminded the group that the rankings showed these two projects as the top two ranked by the WASC.

Ms. Vergara stated that at the last meeting, two WASC members had not ranked the projects and that the RMC was one of these outstanding members, and asked whether the latest ranking results included the RMC's rankings or not. Mr. Caluag informed the group that the RMC's rankings were included in the latest ranking results, and that the only member that abstained was Ms. Tammy Hierlihy of Central Basin. Ms. Vergara also echoed the MS4 permit comments from Ms. Figueroa.

Mr. Gonez stated that on behalf of TreePeople, the group should explore all possibilities and not just rely on the top two IPs and top two TRPs. Top three or four IPs should be considered.

Ms. Gladis Deras shared similar sentiments to Ms. Figueroa and Ms. Tunncliff regarding MS4 permit compliance, and would like further consideration of Furman Park with construction funding in the later years. Mr. Mueller stated that if the project can do a full design early on and then break up the construction into two phases with the first focus on dry weather flows and then focus on addressing the wet weather flows in the later years of the SIP. Mr. Vernon asked if a Time Schedule Order (TSO) has been considered with the Regional Board, and Mr. Mueller said this has not been considered. Mr. Hunter added the City of Downey loses a compliance milestone with a TSO, and so now is not the time for a TSO.

Mr. Sharp asked if these changes and adjustments consistent with the SCW requirements. Mr. Sharp recalled that applicants could not adjust their project funding requested totals. Mr. Caluag stated that the total funding request could not change, but in individual years within the SIP, the funding requested could be altered as necessary. Mr. Sharp then stated that the top two ranked IPs are clearly regional projects and have significant funding sources, but Salt Lake Park and Furman Park are requesting funding without any leveraged funds. Mr. Caluag reminded the group that no voting has taken place and that scenarios have been run to evaluate which projects could be considered for inclusion in the SIP.

In looking at the top four IPs, with no TRPs, and a watershed coordinator, the percent allocations became 72 percent in Year 1 (FY 20-21), 77 percent in Year 2 (FY 21-22), 78 percent in Year 3 (FY 22-23), 96 percent in Year 4 (FY 23-24), and 43 percent in Year 5 (FY 24-25). Mr. Sharp stated that he's concerned with how much funding Salt Lake Park is requesting, and believes it warrants further discussion amongst the group or possibly a resubmittal should this WASC elect to not fund this project this year.

c) Public Comment Period

Ms. Tunncliff requested that the LB MUST be deselected in the SIP tool and to run a scenario where IP No. 1 (John Anson), IP No. 3 (Salt Lake), IP No. 4 (Furman Park) and a watershed coordinator be evaluated. The percent allocations became 64 percent in Year 1 (FY 20-21), 44 percent in Year 2 (FY 21-22), 36 percent in Year 3 (FY 22-23), 58 percent in Year 4 (FY 23-24), and 24 percent in Year 5 (FY 24-25). Ms. Tunncliff specified that this scenario is only for discussion purposes.

Ms. Figueroa asked if the group would be willing to consider the top two IPs, skip IP No. 3 (Salt Lake) and include IP No. 4 (Furman Park) just for design costs in the first two years, and include the top two TRPs and a watershed coordinator. The percent allocations became 76 percent in Year 1 (FY 20-21), 67 percent in Year 2 (FY 21-22), 28 percent in Year 3 (FY 22-23), 23 percent in Year 4 (FY 23-24), and 18 percent in Year 5 (FY 24-25). For this to move forward, a motion is required with a seconding of this motion for a formal vote.

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Ms. Vu stated SCW funds will be giving selected projects the funds upfront. This is not the typical reimbursable process, and as such, projects may need to look at Year 2 (FY 21-22) for design funding to proceed with construction and be shovel-ready in future years.

Ms. Kristen Ruffell is concerned with the current motion proposed by Mr. Sharp (see item 5.f) and intends to vote against the motion. Also, projects that are considering MS4 permit funding, the group has that future funding bucket for further consideration. Mr. Caluag stated that the SIP tool includes a column for "Future Funding" which can be populated as necessary.

Ms. Bahmanpour is not in favor of moving forward with lower ranked projects, and that the question should be whether the group wants to vote to fund two, three or four IPs. Mr. Vernon was in agreement of this statement and does not agree with skipping a higher ranked project.

Mr. Gonez asked why the group cannot partially fund planning. Mr. Caluag stated that when projects are scored, part of the score is dependent on the project benefits and the associated costs with the project, meaning by default, it is more than just planning that is required for a project to be scored. Also, Mr. Caluag reiterated that project fund requests could be restructured for planning early on, with construction funding at later years, but the entire requested amount would need to stay the same.

Ms. Bloxom asked if projects not included in the SIP would get automatically included for review in the next call for projects, or would they need to resubmit. Mr. Caluag stated that these projects can stay as is for future SIP consideration with their current scores, or revise their plans/projects and resubmit for consideration. Ms. Bloxom added that she agrees that these two IPs are taking up a large portion of the funding in the early years and hopes that the other IPs are considered for funding in the next call for projects.

d) [Voting Item] - Assign Percent allocation target (if needed)

After Item 5.c on the agenda, the group moved to item 5.f and elected to skip this voting item.

e) [Voting Item] – Selection of Projects into the SIP (if needed)

After Item 5.c on the agenda, the group moved to item 5.f and elected to skip this voting item.

f) [Voting Item] – Confirm final Stormwater Investment Plan

Mr. Vernon stated that at the last meeting, several members were in support of being fiscally conservative, and this concluded our last meeting with funding the top two IPs, the top two TRPs, and a watershed coordinator. Ultimately, these percent allocations allows us to have available funds in future years for future projects. Mr. Sharp was supportive of this approach and proposed the following:

Mr. Sharp motioned to approve the SIP with the top two IPs, the top two TRPs and a watershed coordinator, with Ms. Bahmanpour seconding.

Mr. Jiles asked for more information about this motion, and Mr. Caluag stated that this motion would entail a 35 percent allocation over the five years and include John Anson Park and LB MUST as the IPs, and Parque Dos Rios and Willow Springs Park as the TRPs, and a watershed coordinator.

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For each year, this would mean a 76 percent allocation in Year 1 (FY 20-21), a 45 percent allocation in Year 2 (FY 21-22), a 23 percent allocation in Year 3 (FY 22-23), a 1 percent allocation in Year 4 (FY 23-24), and a zero percent allocation in Year 5 (FY 24-25).

The WASC voted to approve voting item 5f as stated above (11 aye, 6 nay).

6. Items for the Next Agenda

Mr. Vernon asked the District if we will need to meet on May 26th. Mr. Caluag stated that the SIP will likely not be reviewed by the ROC on May 20th, and will instead consider this SIP on June 18th. As a result, a meeting is not necessary on May 26th. But there may be a June meeting to review the ROC's recommendations on the SIP if necessary.

7. Adjournment

Mr. Vernon thanked the District for the WebEx platform and the WASC members and public for their time and participation and adjourned the meeting.

Next Meeting:

Tuesday, June 30, 2020 1:00PM – 3:00 PM (*tentative*)

LOWER LOS ANGELES RIVER WASC MEETING - MAY 12, 2020

		Quorum Present				Voting Items	
Member Type	Organization	Member	Voting?	Alternate	Voting?	Meeting Minutes	Approve the final SIP
Agency	District	Dan Sharp	x	Carolina Hernandez		A	y
Agency	Central Basin	Tammy Hierlihy	x	n/a		Y	y
Agency	Water Replenishment District	Diane Gatza		Lyndsey Bloxom	x	Y	y
Agency	LA County Sanitation Districts	Kristen Ruffell	x	Mike Sullivan		Y	n
Agency	Port of Long Beach	James Vernon	x	Dylan Porter		Y	y
Community Stakeholder	Páo Strategies						
Community Stakeholder	Conservation Corps of Long Beach	Nick Jiles	x	Kedrin Hopkins		Y	y
Community Stakeholder	Rivers & Mountains Conservancy	Mark Stanley		Marybeth Vergara	x	Y	n
Community Stakeholder	TreePeople	Cindy Montanez		Manny Gonez	x	Y	y
Community Stakeholder	City of Long Beach Parks & Recreation	Stephen Scott		Meredith Reynolds	x	Y	y
Community Stakeholder	River in Action	Melissa Bahmanpour	x	Erica Maceda		Y	y
Municipal Members	City of Commerce						
Municipal Members	City of Bell Gardens	Gina Nila		Chau Vu	x	Y	y
Municipal Members	City of Downey	Dan Mueller	x	Delfino Consunji		y	n
Municipal Members	City of Long Beach	Melissa You	x	Alvin Papa		y	y
Municipal Members	City of Lynwood	Laura Ochoa	x	Noe Martinez		y	y
Municipal Members	City of Paramount	Adriana Figueroa	x	Sarah Ho		y	n
Municipal Members	City of Signal Hill	Kelli Tunnicliff	x	Cecil Looney		y	n
Municipal Members	City of South Gate	Gladis Deras	x	Clint Herrera		y	n
Total Non-Vacant Seats		17			Yay (Y)	16	11
Total Voting Members Present		17			Nay (N)	0	6
Agency		5			Abstain (A)	1	0
Community Stakeholder		5			Total	17	17
Municipal Members		7				Approved	Approved

Attendees

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Dan Sharp	James Vernon	Melissa You
Mike Sullivan	Colin Averill	Jon Dearing
blee	cityuser	Grace Kast
OliverGalang	JAIME.SAYRE	Gina Nila
Chloe Cipolla	Thuan Nguyen	Mike Antos (Stantec)
GGreene	Lyndsey Bloxom	Jill Sourial
kruffell	Omar Gomez	gderas
Adriana Figueroa	Marybeth Vergara	Cesar Roldan
Elisha	Mackenzie	Colin Averill
Deborah Enos	Alvin Papa	Chau Vu
Meredith Reynolds	porter	Michael Gagan
Laura Ochoa	Kristen Ruffell	sloanep
Lincoln Lo	Katie Harrel	mgonez
Michelle Kim (JLHA)	Joe Venzon - LA County	Jacqueline McMillen
Tammy Hierlihy Central Basin MWD	Mayra Cabrera - LACFCD	CJ Caluag - LACFCD
Alex Torres	ktunnicliff	Safe Clean Water LA
Gregor Patsch - Torrent Resources	Melissa Bahmanpour	
eback	john	
Nicholas Jiles	Deborah Enos	
Jonathan Abelson		