

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, September 16, 2021

1:30 PM

(Paragraph numbers coincide with agenda item numbers)

1. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Delta Conveyance Design and Construction Authority (DCA) Board of Directors was called to order remotely - Conference Access Information: Phone Number: (916)262-7278, code:1449447998#, <https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1449447998> at 1:30pm.

2. ROLL CALL

Board members in attendance were Richard Atwater, Martin Milobar, Sarah Palmer, Gary Martin, Robert Cheng, Adnan Anabtawi and Alternate Director Barbara Keegan sitting in for Director Tony Estremera, constituting a quorum of the Board.

DCA staff members in attendance were Graham Bradner, Joshua Nelson, and Nazli Parvizi.

Department of Water Resources (DWR) staff member in attendance was Carrie Buckman.

3. CLOSES SESSION

(a) Conference With Labor Negotiators

Agency designated representatives: Richard Atwater, Shane Chapman

Unrepresented contractor: Executive Director

Mr. Nelson reported there were no reportable actions from closed session.

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Richard Atwater convened the open session at approximately 2:00 p.m. and led all present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

President Atwater opened Public Comment, there was one public comment request received from Mr. Dan Whaley; however, Mr. Whaley was not on the call during this agenda item. President Atwater asked that we move forward with the agenda and could take Mr. Whaley's comment when he joins the call. No other public comment requests were received. President Atwater closed Public Comment.

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: July 15, 2021, Regular Board Meeting

Recommendation: Approve the July 15, 2021, Regular Board Meeting

Motion to Approve Minutes from July 15, 2021, as

Noted: Palmer
 Second: Martin
 Yeas: Atwater, Milobar, Palmer, Martin, Cheng, Anabtawi
 Nays: None
 Abstains: Keegan
 Recusals: None
 Absent: None
 Summary: 6 Yeas; 0 Nays; 1 Abstain; 0 Absent. (Motion passed as MO 21-09-01).

7. CONSENT CALENDAR

None.

8. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

a) **September DCA Monthly Report**

Informational Item

Mr. Bradner walked through some key points in the September monthly report. Starting on the Section 1: Work Performed page, Mr. Bradner highlighted that we added a program sequence at the bottom of the report to provide some context with regards to where we are in the overall sequence of activities. We are currently in the planning and permitting step and part way through the project definition phase of CEQA and will continue to update and reference the sequence as we step through the program. The engineering team continues to work closely with the Delta Conveyance Office (DCO) on responding to request for information (RFI), clarifications on the engineering and technical backup, updating the engineering project reports (EPRs) and continuing to develop various technical studies all in support of the preparation of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Mr. Brader went on to mention that we are also very engaged in a range of outreach efforts which will be covered further in the meeting agenda.

Moving on to the budget summary in Section 3, the revised budget of \$23.5M is based on the July approval from the Board for the \$2M underspend that was rolled over from FY 20/21. We have committed approximately \$17M and have about \$6.5M in reserve.

In Section 5, Mr. Bradner highlighted the Field section of the program schedule, working on a relatively small investigative and testing program this fall as we continue to collect subsurface data and confirm assumption for conceptual design. These are locations we currently have temporary entry permits (TEPs). The court order entry process continues to move at a slow pace due to court backlogs. DCA is optimistic that we will have access to more locations for a more comprehensive and robust investigation program in the spring and summer of 2022.

President Atwater confirmed that the Board Members are comfortable with the amount of information they are receiving in the monthly report. There were no questions or comments on the Monthly Board Report.

b) Sr. Leadership Spotlight – Karen Askeland, DCA Environmental Liaison*Informational Item*

Mr. Bradner briefly introduced DCA's Environmental Liaison, Karen Askeland. She has a key role especially given where we are in the environmental process. Karen is really a critical link between the engineering and environmental teams. She helps keep the teams connected ensuring priorities are clearly understood and needs are being met.

Ms. Askeland provided an overview of her education and career background, her role with the DCA, and her current priorities. She has a bachelor's degree in Environmental Science and Management from UC Davis with an emphasis on watershed science and minor in soil science. She also obtained a Master of Environmental Science and Management from UC Santa Barbara's Bren School. She focused on watershed sciences with an emphasis on market-based approaches to water resources management. This was an interdisciplinary program that focused on the natural sciences, statistics, economics, law, policy, and business. Instead of an individual master's thesis, she was part of a group project where they had a real client and worked on real issues. Ms. Askeland's thesis was to develop an operational plan on a potential groundwater mitigation bank or exchange in the Gallatin Valley in Montana. This experience really prepared her for a career in consulting.

Prior to going to grad school, Ms. Askeland worked in communications and outreach for an environmental nonprofit organization, Environmental Defense Fund. She worked on wildlife conservation issues, specifically on a project that paid landowners to provide ecosystem services, such as wildlife habitat. She mentioned this was a great experience and got to work on a project she was passionate about. She learned a lot about effective communication and outreach amongst diverse groups of stakeholders.

She started working for CH2M Hill right after grad school, which is now Jacobs Engineering and continues to be part of their team. Ms. Askeland has worked on a variety of water resource projects including several climate change resiliency projects, such as City of San Francisco's sea level rise vulnerability and consequences assessment. She also worked with other Bay Area counties or water agencies on resiliency projects, including projects on flood risk reduction. Additionally, she worked on environmental permitting for the City of San Mateo's clean water program.

Ms. Askeland joined the DCA in summer of 2019. In her current role, she serves as that connection between the DCA engineering team and DWR's environmental team. She facilitates the transfer of engineering information to DWR for use in the environmental documents, analyses, and permit applications. She provides input to DCA's engineering and field work team related to environmental considerations or permitting requirements. Additionally, she is DCA's environmental lead for field work by coordinating biological and cultural monitors for the soil investigations program. Ms. Askeland also provides information to DWR for environmental analysis and other documentation. Additionally, she works on developing materials for the Stakeholder Engagement Committee meetings.

Ms. Askeland's current priorities are working with the DCA engineering team on the project engineering reports and summarizing engineering design information that will be given to the DWR Environmental team, which provide technical information to be included in different analyses. She helps write the narrative summaries and worked on technical memorandums.

Additionally, she works with the GIS team when pulling in design drawing and information into GIS for use by the DCA and DWR. Another priority is to review information in DWR's environmental analysis and responding to information requests.

President Atwater expressed his appreciation for all of Ms. Askeland's work, background, and professionalism.

Director Anabtawi expressed how nice it is to have the Spotlights and see the team. He mentioned that Ms. Askeland is super qualified and exceptional person working as part of a large and complex team. Kudos to all the work that has gone in to finding great people to work on this complicated project. He went on to mention that Karen's background is fantastic.

Director Palmer mentioned that it is fabulous to hear about Ms. Askeland's background and what she is doing. Ms. Palmer is a mentor to high school students and would like to invite Ms. Askeland to speak at a round table discussion.

Director Cheng thanked Ms. Askeland for her background.

Director Martin thanked Ms. Askeland for her presentation and echoed Director Anabtawi's comments. He mentioned that the DCA is fortunate to have her as part of the team: such a young person to have such a broad background in education and work experience; and appreciated the presentation.

Director Milobar welcomed Ms. Askeland and is sure that she will do a great job and will help to get the permits. Looks forward to all the good work she will be involved in.

President Atwater again thanked Ms. Askeland for her work and presentation.

c) **Stakeholder Outreach Efforts**

Informational Item

Ms. Parvizi introduced Julie Spezia, Delta Liaison now working with the DCA Communications Team. She will be helping with community outreach, is a Delta expert and is involved in any number of organizations in the Delta.

Ms. Parvizi mentioned that the DCA decided that as SEC work winds down and as we head towards the EIR, to spend time going back to the some of the communities and newer communities to go over materials that have been presented. This is a really complicated project from a design and engineering perspective. There is a lot of misinformation and there are folks that have not had time to participate in public meetings.

Ms. Parvizi further explained that based on recommendations from the SEC and other folks that have reached out to us, we have organized small meetings. The purpose of the meetings are not to change anyone's hearts and minds; however, to provide facts about the project, specific to these communities and neighborhoods. We talk about traffic, facility siting, construction schedules and get feedback from people that live nearby and will be affected by the project. We have had a few meetings and will continue to have them over the next few months, as well as make information accessible to folks.

Ms. Spezia mentioned that your local librarian is a great community resource. She expressed that we were missing out on an asset in the community that could get the most accurate information out to people. She mentioned that people in the SEC expressed concern that not everyone is computer savvy or able to logon online. Taking a proactive approach to address the concern, we thought why not put materials out in the libraries and have them available and get them updated quarterly. The team looked at the libraries that the DCA have been working with, there are five (5) libraries that are in the heart of the Delta in the traditional Legacy Communities and realized it wasn't adequate. Depending on the alignment chosen by DWR, it will go quite a bit outside the area that those five (5) libraries cover.

Ms. Spezia worked with the library managers and developed a list of 20 libraries that they thought would serve the people we are trying to reach. A binder was developed and includes all materials that can be printed, plus a flash drive with all videos and materials, to make a complete set of everything. It includes DWR documents, tribal engagement, EIR process, and all items we have produced at the DCA. There is also a map book available. All of the materials will be updated on a quarterly basis, and we will keep refreshing the thumb drives as more videos are produced. Also, if/when the EIR does come out we will help DWR get materials out to the libraries.

Ms. Spezia mentioned that we are also exploring a training session with the Sacramento librarians and have received positive responses. As previously mentioned, the librarians see it as their mission to get information out to people when they are looking for it.

Ms. Parvizi, reminded the group that the next SEC meeting is set for September 22, 2021, from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Ms. Spezia mentioned that virtual tours are now available in Cantonese and Spanish on the DCA website.

Ms. Parvizi went on to explain that virtual tours are a great way to show where the proposed facilities are and allows folks to get an in-depth view of the proposed project.

President Atwater thanked Ms. Parvizi and Ms. Spezia for their efforts and enthusiasm.

Director Cheng asked about participation and attendance of the small community briefings.

Ms. Parvizi mentioned that they are purposefully meant to be small meetings and are requested by a few people, usually between five (5) and 15 people. It is really just neighbors spreading the word about the meetings. There is nothing like living in the neighborhood, the feedback and concerns that folks bring up at the briefings is great, otherwise we may not be aware of them. It

is incredibly helpful to have these smaller meetings. It is really surprising how little is known about the proposed project and the misinformation as well.

d) **SEC Report Out – David Gloski, At Large Contra Costa Representative**

Ms. Parvizi introduces Mr. David Gloski, SEC member representing Contra Costa at Large. Mr. Gloski has been a homeowner in Bethel Island for 22 years, make a lot of use of the water, boating, skiing, fishing, and just hanging out. He is an engineer by training both nuclear and mechanical, and focuses on flows, energy, and environmental issues in his career. He is mostly retired now. He ended up the last half of his career working on environmental software and helping large companies manage environmental data.

Mr. Gloski mentioned that he is active in the area, with DWR on the initial false river barrier and some of the flows that they are seeing. He is also involved in the Franks Tract futures project, which they are currently looking for funding.

Mr. Gloski went on to discuss his tenure on the SEC. He mentioned that he addressed the DCA Board in 2020 and his primary message was to try to be a good neighbor and show empathy for the people in the communities out in the Delta. He has always pushed for a discussion on community benefits and is happy to see how that discussion is progressing with the Delta Fund.

One of the things that he has been talking about since last year, and will continue until he gets some resolution himself, is he believes that beyond the financial benefits, there is an opportunity for this project to deliver more solid physical benefits. One is the ability to deliver fresh water to the South Delta to address algae blooms, water quality and stagnant water. He thinks there is an opportunity to bring positive benefits there in this design and to improve emergency response to levee breaks, terrorism, and climate change. Some of the people he has spoken to about have mentioned that the initial Peripheral Canal Design of the 70's had some of this concept built in.

The second one is he strongly believes that there should be redundancy between any new pumping station and the current Banks Pumping station. It is better economics, it can help water quality, emergency response, all kinds of things, DWR, the people in the area, exporters, and everybody benefits. He is really surprised there isn't any traction in looking at this and having complete operational redundancy between those two pumping stations.

Mr. Gloski provided an excerpt and table from the Peripheral Canal Design Environmental Impact Report (EIR) from the 70's. The table shows how the original design of the 70's planned to have 6300 cfs available to push into the Delta to help with fresh water and quality. There are still ways to have the new design have available capabilities to support this type of concept when it is needed. There is a reason why they had this design in the original plan of the 70's. It would be interesting to hear about the work—that knowledge should be recovered to affect the new design.

He attended half a dozen meetings arranged by the DCA staff. A lot of the driver was to get to people that could set him straight; however, it did the opposite and supported his feelings. He asked the board to get informed about what he presented and mentioned that he could participate in a discussion should the Board like for him to participate.

Mr. Gloski mentioned that he learned about emergency response and met people that handle emergency operations plans for the Delta. He stated that in the event of a levee break or terrorism there would be high salinity in the South Delta and having the ability to put fresh water in would be a great tool to have and would save a lot of time and recovery. These design changes will cost time and money, but they are really smart. He believes that if anybody, like an organization or a project as such, are going to be a good neighbor and partner in the Delta, then you are going to think of good things you can do, not just financially but operationally.

He has spoken to a lot of people and would like to convey that he has not seen an organization that represents the Delta as a whole. Most of the organizations have their own charter and swim lane. He is not sure of any organizations that have a charter to raise new ideas or things, such as what he presented, could actually be put on the table, or looked in to. He has not seen an organization that could advocate on that behalf. That is not resolvable by the DCA, which has their own charter and swim lane. It is unfortunate that there is not a member of the Board who lives and works in the Delta and cares about it and has that voice.

Director Palmer provided a comment regarding Mr. Gloski's suggestions. She mentioned that in terms of if one were to put something like this in, it is not a Peripheral Canal, it is a different physical entity in terms of something that is 150 feet down to pull water up to put water in the South Delta. She understands his rationale and it makes sense but thinks the cost would be astronomical. She asked what the realities are now with climate change in terms of environmental issues for doing something like he proposes?

Mr. Gloski responded to Director Palmer's inquiry. He believes it could be a tool used to fight off issues of climate change which will result in higher waters and more problems with salinity; and this would be a tool to hold it off. In terms of cost, he doesn't think it will be a huge cost based on the size of the project. One of the initial designs of the Southern Forebay was a spill over into Indian Slough which was a crude form of taking water that is fresh and putting in the South Delta. Having a design that handles that a little bit cleaner, not just an overflow into Indian Slough, would be good. As well as having a way to move water from underground in the Bethany Alternative over into the forebay. Everything should be connected to have complete operational flexibility.

Ms. Buckman wanted to echo Ms. Parvizi's comments about Mr. Gloski's regarding his creative ideas and interesting things to try and add and contribute to the project. It is helpful to have that push and pull in terms of looking at creative ideas and out of the box things. Regarding the design suggestions, the ability to add fresh water, there are two pieces to that. One is the Peripheral Canal along the edges into the Delta tributaries and the second is at the southern forebay. At the southern forebay, this is something that could be included in the community benefits program however not as part directly of the Delta Conveyance Project (DCP) because it is not what the project is trying to accomplish. The purpose and objectives are to improve reliability of the State Water Project (SWP) infrastructure in the face of the many challenges that are coming.

Ms. Buckman added that it was helpful to meet with the emergency response team, they have a system that whenever there is an emergency action, like a levee break, they have a model that looks at different tools they have available and how to respond to that emergency action. They did acknowledge that having a connection to the Southern Forebay would be another tool in the toolbox that would be beneficial, however only in a small area close to the forebay. It is all

something we can consider in the community benefits program. Regarding the Peripheral Canal, putting water into the tributaries on the west side of the Delta, that was a different kind of action. The Peripheral Canal, as mentioned, had a much higher capacity 20,000 cfs it was at the ground surface, it was fairly easy to have a connection in to a stream or water way. It is different now that we are looking at a facility that is 150 ft below ground. Have concerns about putting water in the west side due to migrating fish.

9. STAFF REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

a. General Counsel’s Report

A written report was provided in the Board package. Mr. Nelson highlighted the future of remote only meetings; the executive order will expire at the end of the month. While it is possible that the order may be extended, the Governor may also sign the AB361 emergency legislation which was passed at the end of the legislative cycle. This would allow local agencies to meet in a remote only format during state emergency when social distancing is recommended or meeting in person would present imminent risks to health or safety of attendees. There are some procedural requirements, agencies would need to make findings every 30 days to support remote meetings. We are waiting for the Governor to take action. Staff is working to accommodate future hybrid meetings in the Board room.

b. Treasurer’s Report

Three written reports were provided in the Board package. Ms. Katano provided an overview of the total disbursements and ending cash balance of \$1,943,223.00. The DCA intends to refund seed money and provide \$500K to prepay bills such as the lease and items that can’t wait for reimbursement.

c. DWR Environmental Manager’s Report

A written report was provided in the Board package. Ms. Buckman mentioned that they are continuing to develop impact analysis and mitigation measures towards a draft EIR next summer. There is a technical webinar to talk about environmental justice and how DWR is approaching impacts. Field investigations that are a part of the soil investigations in the Delta, are starting up next week.

d. Verbal Reports

Ms. Palmer mentioned it was interesting to hear about the library project and really letting people know about the project and how many people do not know about the project. She finds this is true outside of the Delta as well and this is still people that will be affected by it. We have to reach more folks, engage our various agencies for output and to do outreach. Ms. Palmer will be giving a presentation to the Dublin Rotary in October. She mentioned that we need to get the word out on what we are planning, get the word out on why and educate more.

10. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

None.

11. ADJOURNMENT:

President Atwater adjourned the meeting at 2:56p.m., remotely - Conference Access Information:
 Phone Number: (916)262-7278, code:1449447998#
<https://meetings.ringcentral.com/j/1449447998>