

Executive Officer Report

Item 5 -- May 21, 2004

The purpose of the Executive Officer Report is to provide you with information / status reports on topics that are not covered in today's agenda¹. This report will be a key mechanism by which I will keep you informed on a variety of issues ranging in importance.

Immediate Need for Administrative Support / Status of Executive Secretary

I am currently unable to recruit for an Executive Secretary due to the statewide hiring freeze. I am currently unable to hire temporary administrative assistance due to the statewide contracting freeze. I am currently unable to make purchases (i.e., access SDRC's support services budget) due to the statewide contracting freeze.

As a result, I have an urgent need for administrative support. John Robertus (Executive Officer) and Art Coe (Assistant Executive Officer) of the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board have been extremely gracious in providing limited administrative support to prepare for today's Board meeting (e.g., assistance in producing Agenda Briefing Packets, provision of basic supplies, logistics for hearing room and conduct of meeting, etc.). Mr. Robertus has indicated a willingness to consider providing limited support for the conduct of future SDRC Board meetings. The State Coastal Conservancy has also provided limited administrative support for today's meeting (e.g., provision of supplies and Marc Beyeler has agreed to serve as recording secretary). In addition, the Coastal Conservancy has prepared a Request for Hiring Freeze Exemption and a Request for Contracting Freeze Exemption on behalf of the SDRC². These efforts by the Regional Board and Coastal Conservancy have been enormously helpful and greatly appreciated.

Nevertheless, there is an immediate need for ongoing administrative support. There are significant administrative tasks (and costs) associated with the conduct of Board meetings³ and we can not expect the Regional Board to indefinitely continue to provide administrative support for SDRC Board meetings, in addition to providing the use of its hearing room facilities⁴. Furthermore, there are extensive administrative tasks involved in the establishment of a new State Agency, well beyond the conduct of SDRC Board meetings⁵ (although Board meetings are the highest priority).

The purpose of this Executive Officer Report is to make you aware of this need. I will keep you apprised of our progress as we explore various alternatives, and may in the future, request your support to address the situation.

Office Space for Executive Officer and Executive Secretary

John Robertus (Executive Officer) and Art Coe (Assistant Executive Officer) of the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board have offered to provide office space for the SDRC Executive Officer and Executive Secretary on a temporary short-term basis and potentially also on a long-term permanent basis as well. Their offer includes not only the provision of office space, but also provision of basic services such as all utilities, access to conference rooms, access

to common areas (restrooms, kitchen, lobby and reception area), limited storage space, phones, IT services, and use of some equipment. This arrangement, in which the SDRC will lease office space and pay for a percentage of utilities and the overall costs of maintaining the building, will result in substantial savings to the SDRC in comparison to the costs of leasing office space and setting up and furnishing an office completely from scratch.

It is my recommendation that the SDRC accept this offer on a short-term basis and seriously consider it for the long-term as well. Art Coe and I are currently in the early stages of planning financial arrangements and I will gather cost comparisons to facilitate an informed decision (e.g., what is potential cost of leasing space and services from the San Diego River Park Foundation?).

The Regional Board is currently providing 100% support for me (i.e., office space, utilities, computers, phones, etc.) without compensation.

Your Direction Requested: Regional Board Issues / Providing Comments

There are a number of upcoming San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board issues of significance to the SDRC. Current examples of issues that overlap both agencies include the 2004 Clean Water Act section 303(d) List of Impaired waters; Triennial Review of Basin Plan; Storm Water MS4 Permit renewal; and Kinder Morgan Tank Farm, etc.

I have already received separate requests for the SDRC to provide a letter of comment on the following: (1) Kinder Morgan; and (2) UCSD's Regional Workbench Consortium (the later is not directly Regional Board related)⁶. I would like direction from the Governing Board regarding how the SDRC (and Executive Officer) should best participate in these issues and respond to requests for comment letters.

Your Direction Requested: Mechanism for Prompt Action

I can envision situations in which direction or a decision from the Governing Board is needed in between regularly scheduled Board meetings. For example, a decision regarding a potential acquisition with an extremely short window of opportunity. Does the Board wish to provide direction regarding a mechanism to facilitate prompt action when needed?

Tours of the Watershed

I believe it is very important to develop a "hands-on knowledge" and appreciation of the River and watershed we are tasked with protecting. For this reason, I plan to arrange a series of San Diego River Watershed tours for Board Members. I have approached Rob Hutsel and Michael Beck of the San Diego River Park Foundation on this topic, both of whom have extensive field knowledge of the watershed. Mr. Hutsel and Mr. Beck have enthusiastically volunteered to assist in coordinating these tours. Details to follow.

SDRC Website

The existing website is supported by the Resources Agency. I am currently in the very early stages of planning moderate enhancements to the website and establishing a mechanism to pay

Resources Agency for this service.

Board Member Compensation: Travel and \$100 Stipend

I have initiated the process of reimbursing Board Members for travel costs associated with Board meetings (six meetings to date) and \$100 stipend (to eligible Board members). Although underway, the process may be very slow in light of the contracting freeze (i.e., no current way to access SDRC support services budget).

San Diego River Day is Saturday May 22, 2004

Sponsored by the San Diego River Park Foundation, the inaugural day of this annual event is tomorrow, Saturday May 22. Activities are planned throughout the day at a variety of River locations. See brochure for details.

-
- 1 Note: This "Executive Officer Report" (EO report), which covers topics not in the Agenda is to be distinguished from "Executive Officer Summary Reports" (EOSRs), one of which is provided for each item in the Agenda. EOSRs are provided in your Agenda Briefing Packet. The EO report will generally be included in your Supplemental Agenda Briefing Packet (as well as any EOSR or Supplemental EOSR not previously transmitted).
 - 2 Although Department of Finance (DOF) has indicated that it will not process any further exemption requests, it has apparently agreed to process ours. Regarding timing, although Coastal Conservancy has requested prompt processing, their last exemption requests required three months for DOF approval.
 - 3 For example, the production and distribution of the Agenda Briefing Packet (and Supplemental packet) alone is very labor / time intensive.
 - 4 As you may know, John Robertus has previously agreed to allow the SDRC to conduct its meetings in the Regional Board's hearing room throughout the remainder of the calendar year.
 - 5 Administrative tasks to set up a new State Agency include assist in establishing lines of Agency credit; assist in establishing Interagency Agreements and other contracts (for office space, services, and capital outlay expenditures); establish Agency filing system; order basic supplies (paper, file folders, business cards, etc.); order basic equipment (computers, printers, office furniture, phones, photocopy machine, postage meter, file cabinets, etc.); create required data bases (for contract tracking, budget tracking, interested parties); etc. There are also numerous ongoing routine administrative tasks such as process Board Member Travel and Stipend claims; pay invoices; maintain filing system and databases, etc.
 - 6 I have recently met with key staff from the UCSD Regional Workbench Consortium and will provide a future Executive Officer Report on this topic.