

**Sacramento Environmental Commission (SEC)
Minutes – September 24, 2007**

Commission members present: Robert Bailey, Panama Bartholomy, Krista Clark, Mike Fallon, Michael Mendez, Marjorie Namba, Frederick Tornatore, and Mark White.

Commission members absent: Shane Jiang.

Commission Staff: Val Siebal, Director, Environmental Management Department (EMD) and Karen Nelson, SEC Executive Secretary.

Other Guests: Edison Hicks, Manager, Solid Waste Division and Sherill Huun, Project Manager, North Transfer Station, City of Sacramento; Peter Buck, Sacramento Flood Control Agency (SAFCA); Cecilia Jensen, Chief and Steve Kalvelage, Supervising Environmental Specialist, Water Protection Division, EMD.

The meeting was called to order by **SEC Chair Fallon** at 6:00 p.m. Attendance list and sign in sheet were distributed.

1. **Public Comment** - **Chair Fallon** read a statement relative to audiotaping of the meeting and posting of agendas. He then opened the meeting to members of the audience.
2. **Consent Item** - **Minutes** - It was **moved (White)**, **seconded (Namba)** and **carried** to approve the minutes of the August 27, 2007 meeting as presented.
3. **Vegetation Issues on Levees** - **Chair Fallon** introduced **Peter Buck**, Sacramento Flood Control Agency (SAFCA), who noted that in response to the disaster in New Orleans, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has taken a more rigid stance and enforced its national vegetation policy in California for the first time. That policy allows no plants larger than two inches in diameter on levees.

Mr. Buck provided information on a survey that SAFCA commissioned on the Sacramento River levees and Natomas and Pocket areas. The cursory survey found that an estimated 3,800 mature trees would have to be cut along the Sacramento River adjoining Natomas and 1,300 along Sacramento's Pocket neighborhood. The Corps has proposed that levees which fail to meet the existing standards be rated as unacceptable, which could cause a loss in eligibility for federal assistance to rebuild after a flood.

In order to learn more about how levee safety goals can be met while protecting these environmental assets, the Corps, the State of California, and SAFCA sponsored a levee vegetation symposium in Sacramento. **Mr. Buck** noted that experts presented evidence that trees may actually strengthen levees by binding soil layers together and that there was little evidence that trees contribute to levee failure. The Corps has agreed to use the best available science to shape new policy that meets local needs.

4. **Status of Environmental Review for City of Sacramento North Transfer Station** - **Chair Fallon** called upon **Edison Hicks**, Integrated Waste Superintendent, City of Sacramento. **Mr. Hicks** introduced **Sherill Huun**, North Station Project Manager and **Shawn Guttersen**, BLT Enterprises. **Mr. Hicks** gave background information on the Sacramento Recycling & Transfer Station North. In an effort to enhance customer service and stabilize customer utility fees, rising energy costs and traffic-related air and stormwater pollution, the City of Sacramento's Solid Waste Division, in coordination with the project applicant, BLT Enterprises (the company that processes recyclables for the city and county), began working to identify a solution for waste transfer in northern Sacramento.

Mr. Hicks noted that the use of a transfer and processing facility in the north area will result in a significant savings of fuel, time, waste and recycling collection services, and greenhouse gases.

Mr. Hicks asked **Ms. Huun** to give her presentation on "Sacramento Recycling and Transfer Station - North." **Ms. Huun** noted that the city is evaluating three separate sites as possible locations for the proposed transfer station and various alternatives to the project, such as the use of Sacramento County's North Area Recovery Station.

Additionally, **Ms. Huun** reported that a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) was completed in March 2007. The report evaluated the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project and recommended mitigation measures. **Mr. Guttersen** noted that the DEIR is being recirculated because of the need to add an outdoor storage area.

Commissioner White expressed interest in having the SEC encourage city leadership to pursue the North Area Transfer Station project with reasonable consideration to joining with the county in combined use of their existing north area facility.

It was **moved (White), seconded (Bartholomy)** and **carried** to send a letter of support to the City of Sacramento supporting their efforts to locate a new transfer station and processing facility in the north area and to encourage joint use of the facilities with the county.

Action Item: Commissioner White volunteered to prepare a letter of support to the City of Sacramento.

5. **Update on Onsite Systems Program** - **Director Siebal** introduced **Cecilia Jensen**, Chief, and **Steve Kalvelage**, Supervising Environmental Specialist, EMD, Water Protection Division. **Mr. Kalvelage** explained that the Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (OWTS) is a system for the treatment and dispersal of wastewater, specifically sewage, designed to fit on an individual lot (aka septic system). Historical practice grants the county the authority to oversee the on-site permitting and inspection program.

Mr. Kalvelage discussed some of the ensuing changes that will effect this program. The changes are driven by a new state regulation with a proposed implementation date of November 2008.

Some of the changes that will impact current process in Sacramento County are listed below:

- Soils test required on each lot
- Required private well testing every five years
- Rule out shallow leaching systems prior to using deeper designs
- No option for local variance
- Required periodic inspections of tank

Mr. Kalvelage noted that the Water Protection Division is in the process of creating of a Wastewater Advisory Committee to develop an updated Sacramento County Ordinance that complies with the new State Regulations and he encouraged the Commissioners to become a member of the committee. Members **Clark** and **Fallon** volunteered to join the committee.

6. **Vote on Adoption of Strategic Plan:** - **Chair Fallon** asked members for their input on Versions 1 and 2 of the Strategic Plan. Members discussed deleting sentences from the environmental justice section of the document and adding information to the environmental justice area in the SEC areas of interest grid.

It was **moved (Bartholomy)**, **seconded (Fallon)** and **carried** to make agreed upon changes to the Strategic Plan.

Discussion ensued relative to additional changes to Version 1. Commission member **Clark** suggested striking the environmental justice system section entirely and including a reference to environmental justice in the SEC Mission Statement. It was the consensus of the Commission to delete the justice section; and add "environmental justice" to the SEC

Mission section and add for context reference the legislation SB115 in the areas of interest grid.

It was **moved (Clark), seconded (Fallon)** and **carried** to adopt the Strategic Plan as amended and to include the previously approved changes.

7. **Appointment of 2007 Environmental Excellence Awards Chair and Discussion on 2007 Awards** - Chair Fallon asked Commissioner Namba to continue as the Awards Chair; Commissioners Mendez and White volunteered to join the committee.
8. **Sacramento County Environmental Management Department Director's Report** - Members received a copy of the September 2007 *EMD Update*. Director Siebal shared information on: (1) Discussions he and EH Division Chief John Rogers held with CalExpo management regarding food inspections at the State Fair; and (2) Departmental cross training of staff on recycling inspections.
9. **Environmental News Review** - Vice Chair Clark will provide news articles at the October meeting.
10. **2007 Proposed Meeting Topics** - Chair Fallon and the members of the Commission undertook a discussion of potential meeting topics for the remainder of 2007 and January of 2008. Suggested topics are as follows:
 - October - overall look at waste management planning in the county. Commissioner White to secure a speaker.
 - November - update on water meter installation, how is the city doing it and how billing is being done.
 - January - ask county to address the possibility of using the county's north area facility for county and city and an update on GreenCycle.

Action Item: Commissioner White volunteered to secure a speaker from the Sacramento County Department of Waste Management and Recycling for the October meeting.

11. **Correspondence** - Secretary Nelson noted that no correspondence had been received.
12. **Adjournment** - The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m. The next SEC meeting will be held October 29, 2007 at 6:30 p.m. at the Board of Supervisors' Chambers, 700 H Street, Room 1450, Sacramento, California.