

Chair Bigley called the meeting of the RWA Federal Affairs Standing Committee to order at 3:00 p.m. as a teleconference meeting.

1. Roll Call

Individuals in attendance are listed below:

Committee Members in Attendance:

Sean Bigley, Chair, City of Roseville
Anne Sanger, Vice Chair, City of Sacramento
Jim Peifer, Regional Water Authority
Dan York, Sacramento Suburban Water District
Cathy Lee, Carmichael Water District
Eric Sapirstein, ENS Resources
Evan Jacobs, California-American Water
Marcus Yasutake, City of Folsom
Jeni Buckman, Bartkiewicz, Kronick & Shanahan, Legal Counsel

Others in Attendance:

Andy Fecko, Brian Sanders, Maurice Chaney, Tony Firenzi, Bill Roberts, Paul Helliker, Ryan Ojakian, Noelle Mattock, Kristi Moore, Greg Zlotnick, Rob Swartz and Cecilia Partridge

2. Public Comment

None

3. Report out on May 14 RWA Board Meeting

Mr. Peifer said that at the May 14th RWA board meeting an action was taken to create a standing committee. RWA Chair Schmitz will work with member agencies to make certain that any agency that wants to be participating on the Standing Committee can do so as long as the RWA policies and the foundational elements of the JPA are satisfied making sure that we are compliant with the Brown Act.

4. Overview of current federal infrastructure discussion in light of COVID-19 pandemic and economic impacts

- a. Outlook on State of California recovery efforts

Mr. Sapirstein said that the Heroes Act will be voted on tomorrow. The House of Representatives does not contain any real infrastructure funding assistance. It effectively provides ratepayer assistance to water and wastewater utilities and extends payroll tax credits for sick leave, paid medical sick leave and family medical

leave that you are required to provide during the current situation. There is no financial assistance for special districts but for communities under 50,000 there is money to be leveraged using a formula. It is possible that an infrastructure package will be developed to assist in repairing the economy. The Senate Committee on Environment and Public works moved a water bill for water infrastructure, clean water, program assistance and possibly groundwater.

Ms. More said that another thing that was included was a significant amount of funding for state and local governments that was included in the Heroes Act. Any type of activities related to coronavirus response and expense can be justified. Those expenses can be used to help offset the revenue loss impact for local government budgets. It does not cover special districts but there is legislation being worked on that would create a relief fund or provide access for special districts in the future. Depending on how the politics and negotiations turn out around the relief there is a potential for a public infrastructure package.

Mr. Bigley gave an update of the federal infrastructure discussion in light of the COVID 19 pandemic and the economic impacts. From state news conference there is less optimism that the administration is officially moving away from our resources bond. There may be conversations without a bond that have an infrastructure component but they are not looking at resiliency. What we were talking about in January and February are no longer being discussed from the administration perspective while the legislative vehicles are still there. This week the Senate, as part of their budget solution show a \$25 billion fund that taps into advance tax returns. Those funds have a potential to fund infrastructure projects, green economy wildfire and support for local government. There are questions about how feasible the \$25 billion would be. Another data point is the recovery bond with the Secretary of State not interested in pushing back the deadline. The Secretary of State is looking at a more complicated than usual election and that would mean the bond measure would have to pass by June 25th out of the legislature.

5. Report outs

- a. Advocacy Strategy Subcommittee
- b. Communications Subcommittee
 - i. White Paper writing group
- c. Other similar efforts and coordination
 - i. SACOG
 - ii. Placer County

Ms. Sanger reported that she had a conversation with Eric, to see what the path forward on advocacy looks like. One of the themes that came out of that was that our job is to demonstrate our need so the policymakers can create funding streams in the appropriate size and categories that would be helpful. One of the lessons from 2009 is that projects need to focus on creating jobs. Part of the infrastructure package is creating and describing how to build our infrastructure for the next hundred years. Once the white paper is in final draft it will be shared with the RWA members. The number of jobs lost in our region will be a good demonstration of our needs with new job numbers received monthly we can keep a living document to continue to demonstrate our need in the most current format.

Mr. Firenzi added that at the last meeting there was an action item to look into the discussion about funding buckets and where we should be advocating for developing and requesting those funds. That led to a meeting with our lobbyists where it was recommended that we focus on the needs and let the legislators decide how to address those needs.

Ms. More said that work will begin on a separate brief write up that describes how existing funding programs or new funding programs could be best used to get money to these projects quickly in a way that stimulates the economy. There is an action item from the lobbyists to prepare a recommendation. The list of programs we would recommend are on the list we are exploring. Looking at the white paper and the final projects we had and figuring out how to put it all together there are options for the next step.

Mr. Chaney said that the white paper looked good and we are contemplating using the white paper as a base to develop key messages with a fact sheet with detailed information to use with electronic distribution. It was discussed how to take the list of projects, pinpoint them on a map so they are easily identifiable and highlight the project benefits including job creation. The information will be posted on the RWA website to include a media outreach approach. There is a potential to work with ambassadors for a phone briefing to understand the intent and what are goals are related to this effort. We would like to have interaction with district offices to get them on board locally before we arrive in Washington D.C. That will help us prioritize what the deliverables are and have communication support to take with us as a congressional delegation.

The latitude and longitude information has been input into the infrastructure spreadsheet for all projects with preparations for a map. Categorization of projects will include work with the agencies that submitted the projects. We will need to align with agencies, supporters, allies and organizations to develop the projects.

Mr. Peifer suggested we do some outreach to the environmental community and align with them on a nationwide basis. He will make contact with Mr. Ojakian and Mr. Firenzi as candidates for this outreach.

Mr. Bigley commented that as members of the Sacramento Chamber of Commerce and participants in their government groups and committees we can share any materials we develop with them. It is possible with our relationships with local delegations and chambers that they may be willing to include this into some of the work they are doing

Mr. Peifer said that there is a homework assignment from our last trip to D.C. that needs to be completed. A staffer from Senator Harris's office was interested in groundwater, conjunctive use and things of that nature. A meeting needs to be scheduled with Rob Swartz to go over those types of things to allow us to make presentations and gain support.

It was suggested that a white paper writing group be formed to include Mr. Peifer, Ms. Buckman, Mr. Ojakian, Mr. Zlotnick and Mr. Firenzi with any volunteers who would like to participate and anyone else identified by the group.

Mr. Bigley said that the next homework assignment is for a group that are willing to start planning the next DC trip and sketch the particulars out including Ms. Kohn to coordinate efforts.

Mr. Firenzi said that the white paper is not written as something that we plan to hand over to delegates or anyone that we are advocating to expecting them to read the document. The point of the white paper is to keep everyone on the same page and create a baseline to work from. The white paper is an open document to be read by this group. The white paper tells a story of economics and water infrastructure needs in the Sacramento region and how that creates opportunities. It makes the case that the RWA members have been recipients of federal dollars in the past. It was agreed that the white paper will be turned over to Mr. Peifer to put on RWA letterhead that indicates an RWA document that speaks to a broad audience. Mr. Peifer will consult with Ms. Kohn to review the document prior to finalizing.

Mr. Peifer said that Mr. Swartz has been working with the SACOG planning director talking with James Corless who indicated they are moving forward. They are still trying to get projects from their membership and have delayed the due date to May 22nd for members to include projects on the list. Mr. Corless has spoken directly to Congresswoman Matsui and Congressman Berra or their staff. They are putting together a list of projects that would be helpful for stimulus funding and job creation. The congressional offices that he spoke with said that the idea was good. Mr. Corless will have a list of projects and ideas and he wanted to know if we are prioritizing the infrastructure list. We are not doing that at his time. SACOG is identifying project categories and things that may be helpful for the agencies within our region. Mr. Swartz said that his intent is basically to upload the table to their database with plans to prioritize later.

Mr. Firenzi said that Placer County has prepared a document to a higher-level audience. It is intended to be handed over to agencies congressional delegations to paint the picture of infrastructure in Placer County. The point of this effort is to bring together all of the public infrastructure sectors. There are three categories, transportation, utilities, and health care that would include more than just water, it includes wastewater. It ended up being \$400 million worth of infrastructure for Placer County, the paper summarizes \$3 billion in infrastructure because of the addition of transportation and health care. Placer county is less focused on a list of projects and more focused on a regional cause for economic stimulus. The plan is to make the infrastructure paper an economic recovery report for Placer County that is going to cover everything from no mitigation through to stimulus and recovery. The plan will be refined, shared with a group of city and county managers and CEOs and rolled out to congressional delegates. Mr. Firenzi noted that what is important is to not compete with each other but rather to compliment the efforts of each other with continued communication to move in the same direction.

6. Overview of Infrastructure Spreadsheet

- b. Accompanying GIS map
- c. Integration of Regional Water Reliability Plan projects
- d. Complete and call final

Mr. Bigley said that Ms. Kohn has sent him information on the new market tax zones. He said that they also want to include information on disadvantaged communities. The GIS map can be utilized to show geographically where the projects are as well as having other capabilities where the data can be modified to show a categorization of projects within the list. The major infrastructures are included. Mr. Bigley will work with Mr. Swartz to finalize the spreadsheet. The list will then be shared with the group, the document will then be sent to Mr. Peifer as final. It will then be decided if there are additional uses for the document or to keep to work through the advocacy strategy.

7. Action items

Mr. Bigley said that he will send an email to the group summarizing the information.

8. Next meeting

Mr. Bigley said that the Federal Affairs Ad Hoc Committee will transition to a Federal Affairs Ad Hoc standing committee as an open meeting posting the agenda on the RWA website. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 27th at 3:00 p.m.

9. Public comment

None.

10. Adjournment

Chair Bigley adjourned the meeting at 4:32 p.m.

By:

Chairperson

Attest:
