

Chair Sanger called the meeting of the RWA Federal Affairs Standing Committee to order at 11:00 a.m. as a teleconference meeting.

1. Roll Call

Individuals in attendance are listed below:

Committee Members in Attendance:

Anne Sanger, Chair, City of Sacramento
Evan Jacobs, California American Water
Cathy Lee, Carmichael Water District
Noelle Mattock, City of Roseville
Sean Bigley, City of Roseville
Brian Sanders, City of Sacramento
Grace Espindola, City of Yuba City
Forrest Williams, Sacramento County Water Agency
Greg Bundesen, Sacramento Suburban Water District

Committee Members Not in Attendance:

Tony Firenzi, Placer County Water Agency, Robert Dugan, Placer County Water Agency and Greg Zlotnick, San Juan Water District

Others in Attendance:

Ryan Ojakian, Eric Sapirstein, Kristi More, Michelle Banonis, Lane Dickson, William Roberts, Ross Branch, David French, Jim Peifer, Monica Garcia and Jeni Buckman, Bartkiewicz, Kronick & Shanahan, Legal Counsel

2. Public Comment

Chair Sanger opened the meeting for anyone who had anything that they would like to share with the Federal Affairs Committee.

3. Approval of previous meeting minutes

Minutes from the August 18, 2021, RWA Federal Affairs Standing Committee Meeting.

There was not a quorum present at the time the minutes were presented for approval. The August 18 2021 minutes will be included on the November 17, 2021 Federal Affairs meeting agenda for approval.

4. Disclosures and Regional Coordination

Chair Sanger offered an opportunity for committee members who wanted to share with the Federal Affairs Committee.

Mr. Peifer said that there has been outreach with SACOG and reported that they have some federal initiatives to move forward. RWA is looking at opportunities to support each other's initiatives. The water bank is a regional interest priority that requires funding as does the Green Means Go project.

Mr. Jacobs, California American Water, said that the California Water Association and the National Association of Water Companies has been concerned about the possible taxation of benefits under the State Waterboard rate payer assistance program. Federal Lobbyist are actively campaigning on the issue. John Garamendi sent a letter to the Treasury and IRS asking for a determination.

5. Federal Legislative Review

a) Wildfire Emergency Act (SB 2806)

An overview was given of Senator Feinstein's bill that authorizes funds for collaborative forest service projects and creates a new grant program to harden critical community facilities such as water and wastewater facilities in the region. This bill is in addition to the infrastructure act for wildfire and drought issues and the infrastructure bill.

b) FY 22 Budget timeline

There have been no changes since our last meeting. There is a reconciliation process for a "human" infrastructure bill. If the infrastructure bill goes to the house and is not amended, it will go to the President for signature. If that happens monies should be allocated to the federal agencies to push those dollars out to projects. The only complicating factor on the FY 22 budget is the debt limit.

c) Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill (HR 3684)

Reclamation is disinclined to make any comment on the Western Water provisions and Bipartisan bill until the language is finalized. Once the bill is finalized Reclamation will be engaged again.

It was reported that meetings have been scheduled and everything is in the works for agencies that have pending projects. Staff would like to provide descriptions of the proposed projects.

d) WRDA Section 219 Work Group status

The WRDA Section 219 Work Group with its cost share of 75/25 makes a good program. The next steps for the Sacramento region are funding that is included in both the House and Senate FY 22 appropriation bills with \$75,000 in each bill for projects in the Sacramento area.

e) Arrearage funding – LIHWAP

The arrearage funding for the Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP), need to be spent by September 2023. The program is run by state Community Services and Development (CSD) and are low-income focused. There is a non-profit organization that administers the LIHEAP Program assisting with heat for low-income households. The same organization could administer the water program.

f) WRDA 22

Project ideas have been accepted through the portal with projects mostly for USACE and flood control for the region. The process closes in December for member officers to make their requests to the committee. It was suggested that recommendations be considered to proceed to find avenues for agencies to get into the 219 funding.

6. WIIN Act Funding for Water Bank Status

There was an update on the WIIN Act Funding for the Water Bank. Staff met with a Reclamation planning group and walked through some language on the MOA. After the agreement has been finalized staff will work with local Reclamation on implementation of funding. A project management plan would be developed specific to the development of a feasibility study for the water bank with Reclamation.

7. Action Items

There will be a separate meeting with City of Yuba City about Section 219 funding.

The low-income household water program will remain on future agendas.

The Federal Affairs platform will be updated and recommended to the RWA Executive Committee.

The RWA Strategic Plan requires that an assessment of the Federal Affairs Program and the committee structure be evaluate in 18 months from the date it was began.

8. Public Comment

None.

9. Next Meeting November 17, 2021.

The Federal Affairs legislative tracker will be sent out with the agenda for the November 17, 2021 Federal Affairs meeting.

10. Adjournment

Chair Sanger adjourned the meeting at 10:47 a.m.

By:

Chairperson

Attest:
