

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
SOUTH BAY CITIES SANITATION DISTRICT
HELD AT THE TORRANCE CITY HALL

February 21, 2024
1:30 o'clock, P.M.

The Board of Directors of South Bay Cities Sanitation District of Los Angeles County met in regular session.

There were present: Dean Francois, Alternate Director from Hermosa Beach
Amy Howorth, Alternate Director from Manhattan Beach
Dawn Murdock, Director from Palos Verdes Estates
John Cruikshank, Director from Rancho Palos Verdes
Velveth Schmitz, Director from Rolling Hills Estates
Jon Kaji, Alternate Director from Torrance

Absent: Drew Boyles, Director from El Segundo
Todd Lowenstein, Alternate Director from Redondo Beach

Also present: Kimberly S. Christensen, Secretary to the Board
Jessica Lienau, District Counsel

Upon motion of Director Cruikshank, duly seconded and unanimously carried, Director Schmitz was elected Chairperson pro tem.

RE: PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments or questions to address the Board on any matters.

The Chairperson pro tem announced this was the time for any questions or comments by members of the public.

RE: DIRECTOR FROM
CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH

January 9, 2024, Mr. Joe Franklin was elected Mayor of the City of Manhattan Beach, which is the designation of the presiding officer of the governing body of that city and automatically places Mr. Franklin on this Board.

A certificate from the City Clerk of the City of Manhattan Beach was presented to the Secretary stating that at a meeting of the City Council held January

Upon motion of Director Cruikshank, duly seconded and unanimously carried, the certificate was accepted and ordered filed.

RE: ALTERNATE DIRECTOR
FROM CITY OF MANHATTAN BEACH

Howorth, a member of the City Council of the City of Manhattan Beach, was appointed to serve as alternate Director from the city.

A copy of an action taken by the City Council of the City of Manhattan Beach at a meeting held January 9, 2024, was presented to the Secretary stating that Ms. Amy

Upon motion of Director Cruikshank, duly seconded and unanimously carried, the action was accepted and ordered filed.

RE: DIRECTOR FROM
CITY OF PALOS VERDES ESTATES

2023, Ms. Dawn Murdock was elected Mayor of the City of Palos Verdes Estates, which is the designation of the presiding officer of the governing body of that city and automatically places Ms. Murdock on this Board.

A certificate from the City Manager of the City of Palos Verdes Estates was presented to the Secretary stating that at a meeting of the City Council held December 12,

Upon motion of Director Cruikshank, duly seconded and unanimously carried, the certificate was accepted and ordered filed.

RE: ALTERNATE DIRECTOR
FROM CITY OF PALOS VERDES ESTATES

Victoria Lozzi, a member of the City Council of the City of Palos Verdes Estates, was appointed to serve as alternate Director from the city.

A copy of an action taken by the City Council of the City of Palos Verdes Estates at a meeting held December 12, 2023, was presented to the Secretary stating that Ms.

Upon motion of Director Cruikshank, duly seconded and unanimously carried, the action was accepted and ordered filed.

RE: MINUTES
held January 17, 2024, were approved.

Upon motion of Director Cruikshank, duly seconded and unanimously carried, the minutes of the regular meeting

RE: DISTRICT EXPENSES
duly seconded and unanimously carried, were approved:

The following expenses for the month of November 2023 were presented and upon motion of Director Cruikshank,

Local District Expenses:	
Operations & Maintenance	\$ 3,249
Allocated Operations & Maintenance Expenses:	
Joint Administration	5,023,176
Allocated Capital Expenses:	
Joint Outfall	<u>857,261</u>
Total Expenses	<u>\$5,883,686</u>

RE: ANNUAL COMPREHENSIVE
FINANCIAL REPORT FOR FISCAL
YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2023
RECEIVE AND ORDER FILED

The Districts' *Annual Comprehensive Financial Report* (ACFR) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, which includes the annual audit required by state and federal laws, has been previously distributed to the Directors. This item is consistent with the Districts' Guiding

Principles of commitment to fiscal responsibility and prudent financial stewardship; and to protect financial and facility assets through prudent investment and maintenance programs. A recommendation was made to receive and order filed the Districts' ACFR for fiscal year ending June 30, 2023.

The Chief Engineer and General Manager advised that both agendas include an item to receive and file the ACFR (previously distributed to all Directors), which includes the annual audit required by state and federal laws. The ACFR was reviewed by an independent Certified Public Accounting firm and there were no findings of concern. The agency maintained a high credit rating, and the CalPERS pension is funded at 90 percent. The first several pages in the ACFR include a management summary that discusses the Districts' capital projects, goals, an overview of the Districts' wastewater and solid waste operations, and financial position.

Director Howorth reported that the City of Manhattan Beach voted in favor of increasing stormwater fees for a \$4 million storm drain project.

Upon motion of Director Cruikshank, duly seconded and unanimously carried, the *Annual Comprehensive Financial Report* for fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, which includes the annual audit required by state and federal laws, and was previously distributed to the Directors, was accepted and ordered filed.

RE: DISTRICTS' OPERATIONS DURING
RECENT STORMS - DISCUSS

The Chief Engineer and General Manager stated that he is providing a detailed report on the February storms discussed in a recent email that included details of

various Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSOs) and a press release regarding the cause of the SSOs.

He gave some background on the Districts' sewer system. The Districts operates and owns treatment plants and a large, interconnected sewer system, also known as the Joint Outfall System (JOS). All local sewer lines (city and county) connect to the JOS, as was shown on a map. There were unprecedented storms that occurred in early February 2024. The Districts can tie into Los Angeles County Department of Public Works Rain Gauge Data. The cumulative rainfall from February 1-8, 2024, was shown on a map of the JOS. The foothills in the San Gabriel Valley saw rainfall of over 11 inches.

During two storms that occurred on February 1 and 4-6, staff saw significant increases in flow to treatment plants. The Districts' treatment plants remained online 100 percent, handled record flows, and experienced only minor issues. The treatment plants took all incoming flow from the cities and the County of Los Angeles. All pumping plants were online 100 percent with no pumping limitations. There were no blockages or structural failures, as had occurred with the spill in Carson in 2021, that caused issues. He stated that the SSOs were caused by stormwater entering the sewer system, not equipment or structural failure.

SSOs occurred in nine locations, as was shown on a map. Most of the overflows were relatively small at 20-60,000 gallons. One SSO located in Rancho Dominguez spilled a total of 8 million gallons, and wastewater ran into the Dominguez Channel, Los Angeles River, and the harbor and ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles.

The storms caused region-wide street flooding, as was shown in photos. There were advisories to the public against driving during street flooding. When street flooding occurs, staff sees a direct impact to sewer flows. He showed a photo of a service worker from the City of Los Angeles relieving a flooded street during this last storm by opening the manhole cover to allow water to drain into the sanitary sewer. While it may have relieved the problem of flooded streets, it only pushes the problem further downstream and can lead to SSOs. He showed a photo of a flooded street in the City of Long Beach. It is important to keep storm drains clear of debris to avoid flooding. The stormwater inflow impacts on the Rancho Dominguez Sewer, shown on a line graph, revealed a pattern of increased rain levels and concurrent significant increases in sewer flow on February 1 and 4-6. On February 4, the intense rain caused the sewer level to “skyrocket,” which caused pressure to build in the sewer that pushed out water from the manhole and junction structure covers and damaged the surrounding asphalt, as was shown in a photo.

He showed a photo of a typical manhole cover. A manhole cover is designed to provide access to a sewer and can withstand roadway traffic. A manhole has a metal rim and holes to allow for a crowbar to lift the cover. Manholes are not watertight. Ideally, the stormwater and sanitary sewer systems stay separated, as was shown in a photo. Storm drains are located at the edge of the roadway. Some cities install screens to storm drains to filter debris. Sewer manholes are located at the crown or center of the roads. The two systems are completely separate, although there is always incidental water that enters the sewer system. The heavy rainfall and street flooding causes the manholes in many locations to be completely submerged in water, allowing the rainwater to enter the sewer system from the lip or holes of the manhole.

In response to Chairperson Cerda, City of Gardena, the Chief Engineer and General Manager advised that the Districts’ system has level monitors and pressure covers. Cities and the county would need to invest in their own infrastructure upgrades.

He discussed a bar graph showing the stormwater impacts to peak and average daily flows to JOS treatment plants. In the days preceding the storms of February 1 and February 4-6, the typical peak and average flows were 500 and 380 million gallons per day. However, during the storms, peak and average daily flows to the JOS significantly increased and doubled during the second storm that hit Los Angeles County from February 4-6. When the rainfall subsided then the flows returned to normal.

He showed more photos of street flooding and advised of the importance of preventing flooding, by allowing catch basins to flow unimpeded. He further advised of the importance of the corking and sealing manholes to prevent stormwater inflow. It’s a practice that the Districts implement in the JOS, and the Districts would offer supplies to the cities and county free of charge for their sanitary sewer systems. He then advised of two different commonly used methods to identifying sources of stormwater inflow to sanitary sewer systems, which included smoke testing and/or dye testing. Smoke testing involves introducing smoke into the sewer system to see where it may daylight out of the system through connections, while dye testing involves the release of an inert/non-reactive dye to the drain to trace whether it is connected to the sewer system. Districts’ staff would be available to support cities and the county in identifying areas of high stormwater inflow for further study. Lastly, he advised that the Districts has sent a letter to City Managers and Public Works Directors regarding action requested to prevent sewer overflows during storms. Hardcopies of the letter were also attached to the Directors’ agendas. He summarized the specific actions as follows:

- Prevent – Keep stormwater catch basins cleared to minimize street flooding.
- Train – Train staff (e.g., Public Works, Police, Fire Department) not to remove a sanitary sewer manhole cover to drain a flooded street.
- Prepare – Seal manhole covers that may become submerged. The Districts will provide caulk or silicone and corks free of charge upon request for sealing manhole covers.
- Tell Us – If you are aware of any areas that are subject to flooding during rain events, provide the Districts with the location and approximate boundaries so that staff can determine if there is potential for inflow of storm flows.

He reiterated that staff could provide support to cities and the county for inflow and infiltration studies that involve smoke or dye tests to show illegal connections. These actions are requested to prepare for this wet

season and beyond. This letter to the cities and the county is an important resource for management issues. The Districts can assist cities and the county to identify problem areas.

In response to Director Howorth, the Chief Engineer and General Manager stated that pressure is released from the small holes on the manhole cover.

The Chief Engineer and General Manager reminded the Directors that as a result of a third-party audit (following the 2021 Carson spill), the Districts initiated the development of a sewer flow model and monitoring system. He showed a map of the flow meters recently authorized by the Board for a portion of the JOS. While the monitoring system is necessary for the ongoing development of the sewer flow model, it has already paid dividends by identifying stormwater inflow issues in real-time. The Districts will add more meters in the north portion of the system next year to support the expansion of the sewer model. In its entirety, the sewer model and monitoring system will allow the Districts to better manage the sewer system during rainy seasons, and it will be a great tool for staff to identify stormwater inflow hotspots and/or provide cities with information on where to focus their efforts to control inflow. He plans to discuss the matter with the Personnel Committee to determine the best way to assist cities and the county to get ahead of this problem.

In response to Director Uphoff, City of Lomita, the Chief Engineer and General Manager advised that the Districts does not have any hotspot data for the cities' sewer systems, although Districts' staff can look at the levels in the JOS and alert city/county staff on a particular connection for further investigation.


In response to Director Hahn, County of Los Angeles, the Chief Engineer and General Manager stated that the Districts will work with the Regional Board regarding these SSOs. Districts' staff will inform them that the JOS service area was impacted by storm/floodwater which entered the sewer system. The 2021 Carson SSO was a result of structural failure of the sewer and manhole. Furthermore, he advised that the Districts has the ability to control who connects to the JOS and regulate connections. The Districts can place a requirement for connections to keep out stormwater through ordinances.

In response to Director Howorth, the Chief Engineer and General Manager advised that the Districts recently settled the Carson SSO matter with the Regional Board at \$6 million. \$5.999 million will be used to fund a stormwater project in the City of Carson. At the upcoming Personnel Committee meeting, he plans to discuss other options to assist cities and the county to keep out stormwater from the JOS.


In response to Director Cruikshank, the Chief Engineer and General Manager stated that Districts' staff runs a closed-circuit television (CCTV) camera within the sewers and/or manhole structures to monitor and assess the condition of these assets. Artificial intelligence is used to identify voids, erosion, or cracks for staff to investigate further and act upon. The Districts' Sewer Maintenance Program consists of up to five category levels of repair (some are added to the next two years in the Capital Improvement Program or emergency repairs).

In response to Director Murdock, the Chief Engineer and General Manager stated that emergency response work is internal, although some standard work is contracted. Following the Carson spill, the Districts invested in two trucks that have high-definition CCTV to provide sharper vision/images. Most city/county sewers are smaller lines, which are not subject to corrosion like the Districts' sewers. The cities' sewer maintenance staff should perform routine maintenance on their system. The sewers in Palos Verdes are above ground, due to the nature of the land. Districts' staff monitors those sewers on a regular basis.

Upon motion of Director Cruikshank, duly seconded and unanimously carried, the was meeting adjourned in memory of Director Bill Brand, City of Redondo Beach.


VELVETH SCHMITZ
Chairperson pro tem

ATTEST:


KIMBERLY S. CHRISTENSEN
Secretary

/ee