

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE
PERSONNEL COMMITTEE OF THE
COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICTS
OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

April 24, 2024
11:00 o'clock, A.M.

Pursuant to the call of the Chairperson and upon written notice of the Secretary setting the time and place of a special meeting and mailed to each Director at least 24 hours before the meeting, a special meeting of the Personnel Committee of the County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County was held in person at the Joint Administration Office, 1955 Workman Mill Road, Whittier, California, on April 24, 2024, at 11:00 a.m., for the purpose of:

1. Public Comment
2. Approve Minutes of Special Meeting Held March 27, 2024
3. CLOSED SESSION – Personnel Related Matters
4. Re: Tulare Lake Compost Facility
 - (a) CLOSED SESSION – *Conference with Legal Counsel Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(1) Three Existing Cases* – Westlake Farms, Inc. v. County Sanitation District No. 2, San Luis Obispo County Superior Court Case No. 16CV-0244; Ceil Howe Jr. v. County Sanitation District No. 2, San Luis Obispo County Superior Court Case No. 16CV-0283; and County Sanitation District No. 2 v. Westlake Farms et al., Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District, Case No. B322095
 - (b) CLOSED SESSION - *Conference with Legal Counsel Pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(1) One Existing Case* – Sandridge Partners, L.P. v. County Sanitation District No. 2, Kings County Superior Court Case No. 23CU-0484
5. Re: Update on Districts' Post-Storm Activities Following February 1st and 4th – 6th Storms

There were present: Chris Pimentel, South Bay Cities
Ali Saleh, District No. 1
Suely Saro, District No. 3
Tasha Cerda, District No. 5
Lula Davis-Holmes, Districts No. 8
Kathryn Barger, District No. 17
Ali Sajjad Taj, Districts Nos. 18 and 19
Cory Moss, District No. 21
Margaret E. Finlay, District No. 22
Judith Merlo, District No. 23
Lindsey Horvath, Districts No.27 and Newhall Ranch
Michael T. Davitt, District No. 28
Lori Woods, District No. 29
Cathy Warner, Chairperson, District No. 2

Absent: Tim McOsker, District No. 4
Janice Hahn, Districts No. 9
Rex Parris, District No. 14
Richard Barakat, District No. 15
Victor Gordo, District No. 16
Austin Bishop, District No. 20
Laurene Weste, Santa Clarita Valley

Also present: Robert Ferrante, Chief Engineer and General Manager
Jessica Lienau, Committee Counsel
Kimberly S. Christensen, Secretary of the Committee

RE: PUBLIC COMMENT

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

were no public comments or questions to address the Board on any matters not listed on the agenda. Public comments on items listed on the agenda are included in the item below.

RE: MINUTES

held March 27, 2024, were approved.

Upon motion of Director Taj, duly seconded and unanimously carried, the minutes of the special meeting

RE: PERSONNEL RELATED MATTERS
DISCUSS

employee units.

The Chief Engineer and General Manager will update the Committee on matters concerning the union-represented, self-represented and non-represented

The Secretary called on the following speaker:

Mr. Luis Schmidt, an American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 18 representative, addressed the Committee regarding personnel related matters. He stated that great progress has been made in labor negotiations. There are a couple of outstanding items, which he expects to be resolved at the next meeting. He requested that the Committee give authorization to the negotiation team to meet AFSCME half-way. The biggest request is to reduce the probationary period from one year for hourly classifications that will be converted to monthly. There are three to four outstanding important main items, which are expected to be resolved by Monday.

District Counsel advised that it would be in the interest of the District to meet in closed session pursuant to Section 54957.6 of the California Government Code *Conference with Labor Negotiators. Agency Designated Representatives: Robert Ferrante, Chief Engineer and General Manager; Martha Tremblay, Assistant Chief Engineer and Assistant General Manager; Matt Eaton, Deputy Assistant Chief Engineer; and Jennifer Allen, Human Resources Director*, to confer on the matter concerning the union-represented, self-represented and non-represented employee units.

The Chairperson took the Committee into closed session at 11:17 a.m. pursuant to Section 54957.6 of the California Government Code, *Conference with Labor Negotiators. Agency Designated Representatives: Robert Ferrante, Chief Engineer and General Manager; Martha Tremblay, Assistant Chief Engineer and Assistant General Manager; Matt Eaton, Deputy Assistant Chief Engineer; and Jennifer Allen, Human Resources Director*, to discuss the matters referred to by District Counsel.

The Chairperson reconvened the meeting in regular session at 12:40 p.m. District Counsel advised that no action was taken of a nature that requires disclosure pursuant to Government Code Section 54957.1.

RE: TULARE LAKE COMPOST FACILITY
WESTLAKE FARMS, INC. V. COUNTY
SANITATION DISTRICT NO. 2, SAN LUIS
OBISPO COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT CASE
NO. 16CV-0244; CEIL HOWE JR. V. COUNTY
SANITATION DISTRICT NO. 2, SAN LUIS
OBISPO COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT CASE
NO. 16CV-0283; AND COUNTY SANITATION
DISTRICT NO. 2 V. WESTLAKE FARMS ET AL.,
COURT OF APPEAL, SECOND APPELLATE
DISTRICT, CASE NO. B322095 AND SANDRIDGE
PARTNERS, L.P. V. COUNTY SANITATION
DISTRICT NO. 2, KINGS COUNTY SUPERIOR
COURT CASE NO. 23CU-0484 - CONFERENCE
WITH LEGAL COUNSEL-EXISTING LITIGATION
DISCUSS

District Counsel advised that it would be in the interest of the District to meet in closed session pursuant to Section 54956.9(d)(1) of the California Government Code *Conference with Legal Counsel-Existing Litigation* to confer on the matter of Westlake Farms, Inc. v. County Sanitation District No. 2, San Luis Obispo County Superior Court Case No. 16CV-0244; Ceil Howe Jr. v. County Sanitation District No. 2, San Luis Obispo County Superior Court Case No. 16CV-0283; and County Sanitation District No. 2 v. Westlake Farms et al., Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District, Case No. B322095 and Sandridge Partners, L.P. v. County Sanitation District No. 2, Kings County Superior Court Case No. 23CU-0484.

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RE: UPDATE ON DISTRICTS' POST-STORM
ACTIVITIES FOLLOWING FEBRUARY 1ST
AND 4TH – 6TH STORMS - DISCUSS

The Chief Engineer and General Manager provided a report on the Districts' post-storm activities following the recent storms in early February. As previously reported, the Districts' sewer system experienced significant inflow in early February due to widespread street flooding and illegal discharges. One Sanitary Sewer Overflow (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.

Districts' field staff sealed manholes upstream of one of the spill locations and observed the locations in the subsequent smaller storms, as was shown on photos. Corking and sealing all manhole covers could prevent future SSOs, although the issue of street flooding remains. City staff would need to mitigate issues related to storm drains by clearing filters, which reduces capacity. Additionally, Industrial Waste inspection staff inspected businesses and industries with sewer connections upstream of specific spill locations to locate any illegal connections and discharges.

He introduced Mr. Brian Louie, Department Head of Wastewater Management, and Ms. Kristen Ruffell, Assistant Department Head of Wastewater Management. They reviewed flow meter data and are available to answer any questions regarding this matter.

As inflow hotspots are identified, staff is performing field inspections to look for potential sources. A map, as was shown on a slide, showed the tributary area to a spill in Palos Verdes. Field staff found a damaged manhole and contacted the Los Angeles County Public Works to get it repaired. In some cases where the source isn't obvious on the surface, the flow at junction manholes can be observed during a storm to point toward the source. Inspections of industrial facilities that discharge their industrial sewage to our system have resulted in 50 rain related enforcement actions, including 31 written Notices of Violations and 19 verbal warnings. Districts' staff is also working with several cities (Commerce, La Mirada, Long Beach, Rancho Palos Verdes, Rolling Hills Estates, Vernon, and Whittier) to identify inflow hot spots based on the flow monitoring data recently collected. With the flow monitoring data, Districts' staff can review the peaking factors (the ratio of peak flow to average daily flow) from these flow monitors in certain sewer lines. When peak flows are more than two times the dry weather average flow, there is significant cause for concern that will trigger an investigation to identify and control stormwater inflow.

Inflow from flooding is controlled by corking and sealing manhole covers that are subject to flooding, and by finding and stopping illegal discharges. Staff is utilizing flood maps published by the University of California, Irvine (UCI), to determine areas in our member cities where street flooding potentially occurs. The UCI-published flood map (as was shown on a slide) showed areas in Los Angeles County with a 100-year Composite Flood Hazard rating. Flood mapping, such as this one published by UCI, gives a good indication of high-risk areas, like Commerce, as was shown on a map, where corking and sealing of manholes should be prioritized.

A map of the Districts' service area including local sewers (shown in green) that are tributary to the Districts' sewers (shown in blue) and managed by member cities and/or the County Sewer Maintenance Division of Los Angeles County Department of Public Works was shown on a slide. A letter was previously sent to City Managers and Public Works Directors regarding action requested to prevent sewer overflows during storms. The Districts is seeking countywide approval to cork and seal all local city sewer manholes that appear to be subject to flooding. Furthermore, the Districts are requesting the cities' assistance to reseal any manhole they find sealed as a result of Districts' inflow investigations. Public Works Directors will be contacted about this new inflow prevention program being initiated by the Districts, following concurrence from the Committee. In some cases, the source of inflow is not apparent by canvassing the surface. In these cases, Districts' staff would need assistance from the cities to plan a smoke/dye test to locate the sources. Finally, all local city staff should be reminded that the sewer (whether Districts or local city sewer) should never be used to drain stormwater. This should only be allowed under limited circumstances with a permit from the Districts and proper controls to delay the discharge until capacity is available.

One Director requested a video recording of the presentation providing a report on the impact in Districts' operations from the February 1st and 4th – 6th storms.

The Committee concurred with staff's recommendation to seek countywide approval to cork and seal all local manholes that appear to be subject to flooding, request the cities' assistance to reseal any manhole they find sealed as a result of this program, and support Districts' staff on the implementation of follow-on investigation such as smoke/dye tests to locate sources of inflow, as necessary.

In response to Director Saro, the Chief Engineer and General Manger stated that the letter to the City Managers and Public Works Directors is scheduled to be distributed in May. The work will be planned through summer and fall. All local Directors will be copied to ensure that the cities follow through. He plans to report on the status of this matter in the fall.

RE: DIRECTOR COMMENTS

Director Woods requested that the item regarding Director compensation be added to the next agenda.

The Chief Engineer and General Manager stated that at the March 27, 2024, meeting the Committee recommended to institute a cost-of-living adjustment (percent increase based on CPI for LA-Long Beach, not to exceed 5 percent), and bring the matter before the District Boards in fall with the effective date of January 2025.

The Chairperson requested a vote to bring the matter back at the next meeting. A majority of the Directors present voted in favor to bring the item back to the Committee for discussion and possible further recommendations.

Upon motion of Director Saleh, duly seconded and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned.

Cathy Warner

CATHY WARNER
Chairperson

ATTEST:

Kimberly S. Christensen

KIMBERLY S. CHRISTENSEN
Secretary

/ee