

LEGISLATIVE AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE NOTES

July 10, 2019

Attendees:

Committee members:	Oscar Gonzalez (Chair) and Kathy Tiegs
Staff members:	John Bosler, Carrie Corder, Chad Brantley, Robert Kalarsarinis, Eric Grubb and Erin Morales
Members of the Public:	Michael Boccadoro and Beth Olhasso, West Coast Advisors

Call to Order: 5:00 p.m.

Public Comment: None

Additions/Deletions to Agenda: None

I. Legislative Conference Call

- Michael Boccadoro and Beth Olhasso from West Coast Advisors called in and provided an update on state legislative and policy issues. The Legislature will observe their summer recess on July 12, 2019 and will reconvene on August 12, 2019.
- The Safe and Affordable Drinking Water bill, SB 200, is on the Governor's desk and is expected to be signed into law soon. Due to its urgency clause, the bill will take effect immediately.
- SB 1 (Atkins), the "no backsliding on environmental regulations" bill, would negatively affect voluntary settlements agreements. The Governor supports voluntary settlements so he may pressure the bill sponsor to amend the bill or he may veto it. The District continues to oppose this bill.
- PFAS AB 756 was sent to the Governor for signature and the District continues to oppose the bill. The State Water Board had recently taken action to preemptively set PFAS rules and without public input. In response, water industry groups opposed this action and the Board postponed their activity until the fall.
- A new bill, AB 315, would limit the activity of any association (e.g. ACWA, CSDA and SCWC) to interact with regulatory agencies. The bill would prohibit these associations to hold regulatory workshops or have discussions with regulatory agencies such as the state board, DWR, etc.
- The California Senate passed AB 1054 and is on the governor's desk for approval. This bill will assist utilities to cover wildfire damage liabilities through the creation of a new liquidity fund. Ratepayers will contribute to this fund along with electric utilities.

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- SB 414 (Caballero), which is co-sponsored by Eastern Municipal Water District and the California Municipal Utilities Association, would provide for the creation of small system water authorities and would help small failing public water systems that currently do not have the economies of scale to be sustainable. The District continues to support this bill.
- SB 307 (Roth), which the District is opposing, is still active; however, it recently received enough opposition to send it to the suspense file.
- Mr. Boccadoro and Ms. Olhasso exited the Committee call at 5:25 pm.

2. Water Use Efficiency Programs Updates (Verbal)

- Staff provided a detailed presentation to the Committee on the Water Use Efficiency Programs available to District customers. Regional programs include: (1) irrigation controller upgrade program, (2) pressure regulating valve program, (3) landscape evaluation audit program, (3) landscape design services, and (4) turf replacement rebate program.
- In addition, staff presented the current rebate programs available to our residential, commercial, industrial and institutional customers.

3. Monthly Billing Update (Verbal)

- Staff presented an update on the status of the transition from bimonthly billing to a monthly billing frequency. The project involved the collaboration of several departments. This complex project required a significant amount of planning and forethought. Some of the tasks included:
 - i. Reduce the number of meter routes and reorganize the District into four geographic quadrants.
 - ii. Develop a precise billing calendar one year into the future in order to make the billing process consistent so that customers know when to expect their monthly billing statement.
 - iii. Implement a comprehensive communication strategy that informed customers of this change.
- Staff described the transitional billing period during the month of June in order to prepare for monthly billing starting in July. Customer's bills were prorated anywhere from 30 to 60 days.