

Measure W – Safe, Clean Water Program Administrative Oversight Committee (AOC) Minutes

Thursday, March 28, 2024

Members Present: Patricia Huber, City Administrative Officer, Chair (CAO)
Matias Farfan, Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA)
Ryan Jackson, Office of the Mayor (Mayor)

Staff Present: Jacqueline Wagner, CAO
Jessica Quach, CAO
Blayne Sutton-Wills, CLA

The meeting was called to order at 11:05 AM.

Public Comment – Held

1. Minutes of the November 16, 2023 Special Meeting

Disposition: Approved 3-0

2. Verbal update from the Bureau of Sanitation on the status of Measure W – Safe, Clean Water Regional Program Round 5 projects including project modification requests, possible Round 6 projects, Watershed Investment Strategic Plan, and Community Outreach Plan.

Michael Scaduto (LASAN) presented updates on the following:

Regional Round 4 Transfer Agreements – The agreements have yet to be received from the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (County).

Municipal Program – Five low-flow diversion projects have been completed and the program audit will be submitted to the County in June 2024.

Watershed Investment Strategic Plan (WISP) – LASAN will submit the plan for Committee consideration in May. Updates include a new section with projects for the Los Angeles Unified School District, Non-governmental Organizations and Community Based Organizations as well as Regional Program administrative items such as the project modification requests (PMRs) and biannual report. The WISP also has an update on items included in last year's document such as design-build and projects with leveraged funding.

Community Outreach and Engagement Plan – LASAN will submit the plan for Committee consideration in May.

Regional Round 5 PMRs – The PMRs allow for existing project applicants to request an updated schedule budget, schedule and additional funding. Countywide, there were 43 PMRs submitted for a total request of \$201 million. On an annual basis, the County receives an estimated \$185 million for use in the Regional Program. Of this amount, \$133 million is allocated for existing projects. Despite a decline in project applications, \$53 million in funding for new projects was requested throughout the nine watersheds.

The City submitted 16 PMRs for an additional \$194 million in funding: 10 PMRs with an additional request of \$164 million over the next three to five years in the Upper Los Angeles River Watershed; two PMRs totaling \$18 million in the Central Santa Monica Bay

Watershed; and two PMRs totaling \$12 million in the South Santa Monica Bay Watershed. Deliberations by the Watershed Area Steering Committee on funding for Regional Round 5 requests should finish by June 2024.

Regional Round 6 – The Regional Oversight Committee completed its biannual review report. The report has recommendations to streamline the process of application review and to allow for biannual reports from project applicants instead of the current quarterly report. The County has requested a soft pause in the regional program due to constrained funding availability in certain watersheds. It is unknown if this pause would affect only infrastructure projects. Any changes to the program from either the biannual report or the request for a soft pause requires approval by the LA County Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Scaduto presented the projects that LASAN would request approval to submit applications for, should the County allow for infrastructure project applications. This included funding for operations and maintenance (O&M) of the Ballona Creek project. Neither the Department of Water and Power (DWP) nor the Bureau of Street Services plans on submitting any projects for consideration.

Patricia Huber (CAO/Chair) noted that of the 43 projects submitted, 13 were for the City. She also noted that of the \$201 million additional funding request Countywide, \$194 million in requests was for the City. She asked why the City's projects were underfunded. Mr. Scaduto responded that the high requests are the result of issues in Rounds 1 and 2 as well as impacts from the pandemic and inflation.

Matias Farfan (CLA) asked if funding for the audit was provided by DWP. Mr. Scaduto responded that the audit is for the municipal program and the City's municipal fund provided the funding. He noted that the regional program transfer agreements require project applicants to perform an audit once a project is complete.

The Committee discussed the timing of O&M for projects and whether costs are included as part of construction. Mr. Farfan also asked whether there have been multiple bids received for projects. Mr. Scaduto responded that the first project that would need funding is the Ballona Creek project and that if there is a soft pause in the program, the pause will affect how the operations and maintenance of the project will be funded. He also noted that O&M costs were included in many of the Round 1 and Round 2 projects, but that construction cost needs are affecting overall funding. In response to the question regarding competition, Mr. Scaduto said that there is interest in the projects and that they have received multiple bids.

Mr. Jackson (Mayor) asked if the WISP is incorporating elements mentioned in a motion that was submitted by Council District 5 (C.F. 23-0656), including school projects and larger, visible projects. Mr. Scaduto responded that yes, the WISP does include some projects that match the vision mentioned in the motion. He also mentioned that many projects have yet to be identified and will require coordination with DWP and other agencies. Mr. Jackson mentioned the Community Schools Parks Projects as a potential area to explore.

Action: No action.

3. Other Committee organizational matters, as necessary

Action: No action.

Meeting adjourned at 11:35 AM.