

CONTRA COSTA LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMMISSION

MINUTES OF MEETING

January 12, 2011

February 9, 2011
Agenda Item 6

Board of Supervisors Chambers - Martinez, CA

1. Chair McNair called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m.
2. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. Seating of New Commissioner (City Member)
Don Tatzin, former Alternate City Member, was elected by the Mayors' Conference on January 6, 2011 to fill the Regular seat vacated by Helen Allen. He was formally welcomed to the dais.
4. Roll was called. A quorum was present of the following Commissioners:
City Members Rob Schroder and Don Tatzin.
County Members Gayle Uilkema and Alternate Mary Piepho.
Public Members Martin McNair and Alternate Sharon Burke.
Special District Members Dwight Meadows and Alternate George Schmidt.
Present were Executive Officer Lou Ann Texeira, Legal Counsel Sharon Anderson, and Clerk Kate Sibley.
5. Approval of the Agenda
Upon motion of Uilkema, second by Tatzin, the agenda was adopted.
6. Recognition of Outgoing Commissioners
Helen Allen, outgoing City Member, and David Piepho, outgoing Special District Member, were presented with Resolutions of Detachment and compasses to guide them on their new journeys.
7. Selection of Chair and Vice Chair
The Executive Officer presented the options for the 2011 Chair and Vice Chair selection, including making the selections in accordance with the Commission's policies, modifying the current policy and making alternative selections, or deferring the selection until the new special district member is seated.
Upon motion of Tatzin, second by Uilkema, Commissioners voted unanimously to defer any decision until the February meeting and asked the current Chair, Martin McNair, to continue to serve as Chair until then.
8. Approval of November 10, 2010 Minutes
Upon motion of Uilkema, second by Schroder, the minutes for the November 10, 2010 meeting were approved unanimously.
9. Public Comments
There were no public comments.

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10. Fire Service Report

The Executive Officer provided an introduction and a brief synopsis of the progression of previous fire service discussions and activities by local fire service agencies, addressing critical needs and issues that were identified in the 2009 Fire Services MSR and in conjunction with the LAFCO fire workshops.

The Commission then received updates from fire and emergency medical service representatives.

Michelle Fitzer, City of Pinole, reported that the city has accepted a SAFER grant for the rehiring of an Assistant Chief position, and is using the funding to appoint one of their Captains as Interim Battalion Chief for the period of the grant (expires on December 17, 2012). The City is in discussion with Chief Charles Hanley of Rodeo-Hercules FPD to enter into a service agreement to share the Chief position; this will go to the City Council in February. Citygate Associates will present its findings from their current study on January 25, reviewing short- and long-term options.

Hugh Henderson, Fire Chief, ECCFPD, reported on the polling that the district conducted in November and December to determine the feasibility of an assessment election in June of 2011. The results indicated that while residents are overall satisfied with their fire service, they are not supportive of a special tax. The District will next look at the possibility of establishing a benefit assessment district affecting landowners only. On January 31, the district board will hold a special meeting to decide about going forward with a two-part vote for an elected board (first, to determine if voters want an elected board; second, to elect board members if first part passes).

Michael Banks, Fire Chief, City of Richmond, reported that he doesn't anticipate personnel cuts in the coming year's budget cuts. In response to a question from Commissioner Burke, the Chief noted that the department is working with other agencies, and is working on its dispatch issues.

Lance Maples, Fire Chief, Kensington FPD and City of El Cerrito, wished commissioners a happy new year and stated that the governor's budget could change things for them. He noted that El Cerrito residents passed a half-cent sales tax, and that belt-tightening would still be necessary.

Randy Bradley, Fire Chief, Moraga-Orinda Fire District, reported that John Wyro is the new president of the district's board, and that they face challenges in their budget. He reported that the Tri agencies continue to meet per the recommendation contained in the MSR report. Commissioner Piepho encouraged agencies to work together. He added that the fire chiefs meet regularly.

Daryl Louder, Fire Chief, Contra Costa County FPD, reported that the district is using its reserve funds; if everything remains the same, the reserve will be depleted by the third quarter of Fiscal Year 2011-12. He noted some of the cost measures including removing personnel from one shift at the Walnut Creek station; and applying for a SAFER grant for 21 positions (\$6.3 million); he is awaiting confirmation of that.

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In response to Commissioners' questions, Louder stated that the District currently loses about \$12 million per year to redevelopment agencies. The District is also conducting a poll to determine the feasibility of a special tax; and while it is too early to determine the outcome, he is not disheartened. If there is a decision to put a special tax on the ballot, they would prefer to wait till the 2012 election, as it will cost less, but it leaves the District in an unstable state for one or two years.

Bryan Collins, Assistant Fire Chief, San Ramon Valley FPD, reported that the District continues to face budget reductions and loss of property tax revenue, which they have bridged with reserve funds and not filling some positions; the future looks challenging. He reported that with CCCERA depooling of funds, they have discovered that they were overpaying into the retirement account.

Pat Frost, Assistant County Emergency Medical Services Director, reported that they are watching the fire district situation closely and looking for opportunities to cooperate.

Randy Bradley commented that the Governor is looking at the possibility of transferring state responsibility areas to local responsibility; this could have positive and negative effects.

Following the agency updates, Stewart (Stu) Gary, of Citygate Associates, spoke. After providing some personal and professional background, he laid out some of the problems fire districts throughout the State face. Every agency is struggling with personnel and operational costs and restructuring is needed. Mr. Gary then provided some ideas and possible actions. Citygate could conduct a detailed fiscal capacity study and help elected officials understand the current level of service in their districts, as well as their future options. Study costs could be controlled by using agency staffs and consultants/coaches.

In response to Commissioners' questions, Gary stated that the cost of this work would depend on the number of agencies involved and other factors and could be in the low six-figure range. He could come up with a more definite figure after meeting with the fire chiefs and the LAFCO Executive Officer.

The Executive Officer, in response to the Commissioners, suggested that funds to hire Citygate Associates could either come from the LAFCO contingency fund or be included in the FY 2011-12 budget, which will be presented to the Commission in March.

Following discussion, Commissioner Piepho moved that staff work with Citygate and local stakeholders to prepare a proposal for the February or March LAFCO meeting. With a second by Schroder, Commissioners unanimously approved the motion.

11. Second Quarter Budget Report for FY 2010-2011

The Executive Officer noted that with 50% of the fiscal year elapsed, the Commission's second quarter total expenses are at about 29% of approved expenditures, with salaries/benefits at 41%, and services/supplies at 24% of budgeted amounts. Total revenues for the first quarter are at about 97% of projected revenues. All local agencies have paid their prorated contributions to the LAFCO budget, with the exception of Rollingwood-Wilart Park Recreation and Park District (RWPRPD). Commissioners discussed options for securing RWPRPD's contribution.

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Upon motion of Uilkema, second by Tatzin, Commissioners unanimously moved that formal action be taken on collection of funds from RWPRPD at the February meeting.

12. Correspondence from Contra Costa County Employees' Retirement Association (CCCERA)

The Executive Officer presented recent correspondence from CCCERA. Commissioner Tatzin asked staff to determine if the fund depooling affects LAFCO in any way. LAFCO staff will follow-up.

13. Expiring Commissioner Terms in 2011

The Executive Officer listed Commissioners whose terms will expire in 2011. Commissioner Schroder stated that he will run again for his seat. Commissioner McNair asked about the City Alternate Member; staff reported that the election for that seat will be held at the March or April Mayors' Conference meeting.

14. Commissioner Comments and Announcements

Commissioner Schroder stated that Martinez parking passes will be provided prior to the February meeting.

15. Staff Announcements and Pending Projects

The Executive Officer updated Commissioners on upcoming CALAFCO activities and pending proposals.

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

Final Minutes Approved by the Commission on February 9, 2011.

AYES:

NOES:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

By _____
Executive Officer

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