



SUMMARY MINUTES
Delta Protection Commission Meeting
Thursday, September 17, 2020

Meeting conducted via Zoom and telephone as authorized by Governor's Executive Orders N-29-20 and N-33-20 during the COVID-19 emergency

ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA

1. Call to Order

Chair Villegas called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. and invited Commissioner Thomson to lead the meeting participants in a flag salute.

2. Welcome and Roll Call

Commission Clerk Sis Hendrix called the roll. Present at roll call: Chair Villegas, Vice-Chair Nottoli, Commissioners Winn, Burgis, Thomson, Krieg, Nakanishi, Paroli, Slater (for van Loben Sels), Bugsch, Agar (for Kim), Vogel (for Crowfoot), and ex-officio member Assemblyman Jim Frazier. Commissioners Cabaldon, Ross and Mussi were absent with no alternate present.

Chair Villegas welcomed new Commission Clerk Sis Hendrix and new Commission member Dennis Agar (representing California State Transportation Agency and interim Caltrans District 10 Director).

3. Public Comment- Opportunity for the Public to Address the Commission Regarding Items Not on the Agenda

Chair Villegas asked for public comment. Barbara Daly, Vice-Chair of the Delta Protection Advisory Committee, requested that a report on the Delta's transportation issues be on all meeting agendas. Executive Director Vink indicated he provided a brief update in his Executive Director's report.

4. Chair's Report on Delta Stewardship Council Activities

Chair Villegas reported on items from recent meetings of the Delta Stewardship Council, including the approval of a federal cooperative agreement with the US Bureau of Reclamation, a presentation by the Delta Watermaster on actions related to water use efficiency standards and reporting requirements for agricultural use, and an update on the Delta Conveyance project, including notification that Chair Tatayon will be recusing herself from any further participation on the Council's consideration of the project because her husband works for a firm that is advising on the project. There were no comments or questions following the report.

5. Commissioner comments/announcements

There were no Commission comments or announcements.

CONSENT AGENDA

6. Consider Approval of July 16, 2020 Meeting Minutes

MOTION: It was moved by Vice-Chair Nottoli and seconded by Commissioner Thomson to approve the July 16, 2020 meeting minutes. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 9-0-3 with Commissioners Villegas, Nottoli, Winn, Thomson, Burgis, Krieg, Nakanishi, Paroli, and Bugsch voting aye; Commissioners Slater, Agar, and Vogel abstained.

REGULAR AGENDA

7. Receive Executive Director Report

Executive Director Vink reported on recent Commission activities related to the Delta Conveyance Project, including DWR's release of a scoping summary report and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' announcement that it would be preparing an environmental impact statement under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); the Commission will submit scoping comments. Commission staff continue to meet with the DWR Conveyance Office staff, and the Design and Construction Authority and Stakeholder Engagement Committee continue to meet on a monthly basis. He also reported on the August 14 Delta Independent Science Board presentation on how the Independent Science Board could incorporate best available science for Delta as Place into its comments on the Delta Conveyance Project.

The Governor's water resilience portfolio was finalized on July 28, with a continued mention of a single tunnel project, but also positive language regarding levee improvements and developing a California equivalent to the National Flood Insurance Program. The Delta Leadership Program will be postponed this year due to likely COVID-19 restrictions on in-person meetings, but there will be a focus on alumni of the program including continuing education opportunities and developing the alumni as an organized group. Commission staff intend to initiate a review of Vision 2030 (the Commission's strategic plan), and the Delta Heritage Forum will be held November 6 (via Zoom). Plans are proceeding for a Delta transportation challenges forum in the fall, and Best of the Delta voting concluded in July with winners listed in the Executive Director's Report. The Delta Waterway Cleanup will be a physically-distanced event this year, with participants encouraged to clean up on their own and the Commission providing supplies as needed. The Commission's current fiscal year budget is a baseline budget but does include a seven percent reduction for staff furloughs. The Commission welcomes Sis Hendrix as our new Commission Clerk and student assistant Kevin Murphy; we are also advertising for a Program Manager to fill a vacancy. There are no land use comments and very few upcoming events. There were no comments or questions following this report.

8. Receive Delta Protection Advisory Committee (DPAC) Report

DPAC Chair Mark Pruner reported that the Delta Protection Advisory Committee met via Zoom on September 2 and received updates on the DCA Stakeholder Engagement Committee, the National Heritage Area Management Plan Advisory Committee charter, Commission staff projects, and an announcement by U.S. Bureau of Reclamation of a new Delta Cross-Channel Gate overhaul

project. The Committee also continued discussion of its work plan. There were no comments or questions following this report.

9. Receive Report on Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD), Delta Island (Bacon Island, Webb Tract, Bouldin Island and Part of Holland Tract) - Stephen Arakawa (MWD)

Stephen Arakawa of Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) provided a report on MWD's Delta islands. He recapped the initial conversations around MWD's purchase of the islands, including the prior proposed use of the islands for storage of water and for tidal habitat, payment of property taxes and assessments, and the concern that agriculture remains viable in the Delta. MWD is currently continuing the lease to farmers for agricultural production, continues to make levee improvements, and works with nearby reclamation districts on an emergency supply distribution plan. Mr. Arakawa also discussed a recent grant from California Department of Fish and Wildlife to evaluate island-wide opportunities for agricultural sustainability, reducing land subsidence, improving water quality, and habitat restoration. There were no comments or questions following this report.

10. Receive Report on Delta Watermaster Activities – Michael George, Delta Watermaster

Delta Watermaster Michael George reported on 2020 workplan initiatives, including water use measurement and reporting, Term 91 administration, Delta channel maintenance and the accelerated deterioration of the Southern Delta, and emerging challenges like implementing the water quality control plan, advancing the Governor's water resilience portfolio amid budget constraints, and encouraging adaptive management and multi-benefit projects. Vice-Chair Nottoli asked for clarification on the enforcement actions and the Tanaka decision; Mr. George indicated the cease and desist orders alleged unlawful diversions in portions of central and south Delta focused on Roberts Island. The Tanaka decision clarified riparian water use in the Delta region.

11. Receive Report on 2020 Delta Flood Preparedness Week and Consider Approval of Delta Flood Preparedness Week Resolution – Stacy Hayden

Commission Information Officer Stacy Hayden reported on Delta Flood Preparedness Week (October 17 through 24) and flood preparedness efforts, including the 2021 flood preparedness calendar, a partnership with River-Delta Unified School District to distribute information and preparedness kits to families and provide shareable curriculum for students, and working with Latino Times to spread the word in English and Spanish. She also asked the Commission to adopt resolution 20-01 declaring October 17 through 24 as Delta Flood Preparedness Week. There were no comments or questions following this report.

MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Burgis and seconded by Commissioner Vogel to adopt resolution 20-01 declaring October 17 through October 24, 2020 as Delta Flood Preparedness Week. In a roll call vote, the motion passed with 11 – 0 with Chair Villegas, Vice Chair Nottoli, and Commissioners Winn, Burgis, Thomson, Krieg, Nakanishi, Paroli, Slater, Agar, and Vogel voting aye.

12. Receive Report on Delta Heritage Area Management Plan Advisory Committee Charter – Dr. Blake Roberts

Commission Planner Dr. Blake Roberts provided an update on recent National Heritage Area (NHA) efforts, including a recap of the Management Plan requirements and recent activities of the Commission’s consulting team. The Commission was asked to review and approve the creation of an NHA Management Plan Advisory Committee and a proposed charter. There were no comments or questions following this report.

MOTION: It was moved by Commissioner Thomson and seconded by Commissioner Burgis to approve the Delta National Heritage Area Management Plan Advisory Committee Charter. In a roll call vote, the motion passed with 11 – 0 with Chair Villegas, Vice Chair Nottoli, and Commissioners Winn, Burgis, Thomson, Krieg, Nakanishi, Paroli, Slater, Agar, and Vogel voting aye.

13. Adjourn

Chair Villegas adjourned the meeting at 6:04 p.m.