

Measure M2 Environmental Oversight Committee

December 7, 2011

Meeting Minutes

Committee Members Present:

Chair Patricia Bates, OCTA Board of Directors
Vice-Chair Melanie Schlotterbeck, Measure M Support Groups
Veronica Chan, US Army Corps of Engineers
Shannon Crossen, for Sylvia Vega, Caltrans
Nancy Jimeno, California State University, Fullerton
James Kelly, Measure M2 Taxpayers Oversight Committee
David Mayer, CA Department of Fish and Game
Dan Silver, Endangered Habitats League
Jonathan Snyder, US Fish and Wildlife Services
Greg Winterbottom, OCTA Board of Directors

Committee Members Absent:

Chris Flynn, Caltrans
Dave Means, California Wildlife Conservation Board
Adam Probolsky, Probolsky Research

Orange County Transportation Authority Staff Present:

Marissa Espino, Senior Community Relations Specialist
Lesley Hill, Planning Department Project Manager
Janice Kadlec, Public Reporter
Dan Phu, Project Development Section Manager

Members of the Public

Kristine Preston, Nature Reserve of Orange County
Robert Staples, City of Costa Mesa

1. Welcome

Chair Patricia Bates welcomed everyone to the meeting at 10:10 a.m. and asked Nancy Jimeno to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of November 2, 2011 Minutes

Chair Patricia Bates asked if there were any additions or corrections to the November 2, 2011 Environmental Oversight Committee (EOC) meeting minutes. A motion was made by Melanie Schlotterbeck, seconded by Greg Winterbottom and passed unanimously to approve the November 2, 2011 EOC meeting minutes as presented. The motion was carried unanimously.

3. Acquisition Properties

- A. Appraisal Status (Aliso Canyon, Irvine-Mesa, and Shell-Aera): Dan Phu gave an update on the Aliso Canyon, Irvine Mesa, and Shell-Aera appraisal status. The Aliso Canyon and Irvine Mesa appraisals will be completed by January 2012. Depending on the outcome of discussions in Closed Session, the Shell-Aera appraisal may not be completed until February 2012.

4. Restoration Properties

- A. Overview of Restoration Tours: Lesley Hill gave an overview of the Restoration Properties tour. On November 11 seven sites were toured and on November 15 six sites were toured. Lesley Hill also presented pictures of the sites.

Melanie Schlotterbeck thanked OCTA staff for the good job they did coordinating the tours. Everything went off without a hitch.

Dan Silver observed there are currently more applicants than money available. What process is OCTA going to use to determine which projects are funded? Dan Phu said, in the current round of funding, OCTA has brought in the Army Corps of Engineers because issues regarding the Clean Water Act (Sections 401 and 404) are being addressed. Because of this, the process will take longer than the last time. The evaluation process this time around will be similar to the previous round. Staff from OCTA, Caltrans, Army Corps of Engineers, and the wildlife agencies have done the preliminary assessment of these proposals. These new projects need to be combined with the unfunded projects from the first round of funding and then grouped accordingly. Also, because the Army Corps of Engineers and the state water resources control board have been added to the process, some additional analysis may be needed by the project sponsors and the restoration properties guidelines may need to be updated. The working group will convene to review all the data collected and will then report their findings to the EOC.

Nancy Jimeno said she asked the project sponsor of the steelhead trout project where the fish would get into San Juan Creek and went to look at the area and could see no way the fish could get in. Observations like this need to be conveyed to the working group and she was wondering when there would be a forum for the committee members to convey their observations. Dan Phu said any of the committee members can become part of the working group and give their input.

Dan Phu said the next step would be to get a better idea what the costs would be. These costs cannot be compared to the first round of funding because during the first round, the Army Corps and the Water Board were not included in the process. The cost per acre will not be an apples-to-apples comparison. The cost per acre will be higher than the first round because of the additional components being added.

Chair Patricia Bates asked how the working group was formed in the first round of funding. Dan Phu said he believed the EOC was asked if anyone was interested in being on the working group. The next working group will probably include the wildlife agencies, Army Corps, Caltrans, and OCTA. Anyone else from the EOC is welcome to join.

Chair Patricia Bates said she considers the EOC as the policy committee; it is waiting to hear from the experts. Any member can provide the working group with their concerns, but the EOC is the policy committee to send everything to the OCTA Board, never forgetting the group that needs to be satisfied are the resource agencies.

Dan Phu said Marissa Espino will be sending out an email to the committee members asking if anyone would like to be on the working group.

- B. Restoration Projects Status Update: Dan Phu gave a Restoration Projects Status Update.

5. 2010 Funded Restoration Projects Presentations

- A. Fairview Park (City of Costa Mesa): Robert Staples, City of Costa Mesa gave a presentation on the progress of the Fairview Park project. The presentation included pictures of the property and examples of the restored areas.
- B. UCI Ecological Reserve (Irvine/Nature Reserve of Orange County): Kristine Preston, Nature Reserve of Orange County gave a presentation on the progress of the UCI Ecological Reserve project. The computer presentation included pictures of the property and examples of the restored areas.

6. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

7. Committee Member Reports

Melanie Schlotterbeck gave an update on Regional Transportation Plan Environmental Component. In June 2011, the Orange County Community Strategy adopted an open space strategy that complemented the M2 Program. In the Draft Regional Transportation Plan there is now an advanced mitigation component which will focus on strategic planning for conservation areas. It will set up a program, determine the priority area, and hopefully get adopted in April 2012 resulting in the 2016 Regional Transportation Plan having an implementation component. Melanie Schlotterbeck reported the Southern California Association of Governments staff said the environmental mitigation program will be one of their priorities.

Chair Patricia Bates said the example of Melanie Schlotterbeck's group (Measure M Support Groups) in partnership with OCTA and the development community shows

that they can work cooperatively together and create great things. The hope is Orange County becomes a national model.

Marissa Espino reported the Hafen property was purchased this week making it the fifth property purchased.

8. Next Meeting – January 4, 2012

The next meeting of the EOC will be in January 4, 2012 in the OCTA offices.

9. Closed Session

The regular meeting of the EOC was adjourned at 10:50 a.m. and the EOC went into Closed Session.

10. Adjournment

There were no further actions reported in public session. The meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.