

MINUTES
Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority
(LCWA)
Held On
Thursday, March 7, 2024 at 12:30 pm
At
CCLB Headquarters
340 Nieto Ave Long Beach, CA 90814
Conference Room

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

Chair Duggan called the meeting to order at approximately 12:34pm.

2. Roll Call

Voting Members Present

Kristina Duggan, Councilmember/ Long Beach, Chair

Joe Kalmick, Mayor/ Seal Beach (Designee)

Roberto Uranga, Councilmember/ Long Beach (arrived at approximately 12:51pm)

Amy Hutzel, State Coastal Conservancy

Staff Present

Mark Stanley, Executive Officer

Elizabeth St. John, Deputy Attorney General

Aimee Nguyen, Office Technician

Megan Woolf, Associate Restoration Ecologist/ Tidal Influence

Eric Zahn, Principal Restoration Ecologist/ Tidal Influence

Chad Oberly, Staff Services Manager I

Amanda Chan, Staff Services Analyst I

Salian Garcia, Budgets and Administration Officer

3. Public Comment

Anna Christensen, Sierra Club Los Cerritos Wetlands Taskforce representative, stated she had a couple concerns and questions. Christensen stated the taskforce is concerned for the workers injured on the Los Cerritos Wetlands and are hoping the LCWA will participate in helping them understand what happened. Christensen stated she went on site and is aware the wetlands are not dry. Christensen stated this incident occurred after very heavy rains. Christensen stated she talked to someone at Synergy who stated that had nothing to do with the incident. Christensen stated that as long as there are oil operations, the taskforce wants people to be safe on the wetlands. Christensen stated the California Coastal Conservancy voluntarily decided not to expand as much as was planned, so the taskforce is hoping other companies can be persuaded to not be on the wetlands.

4. Chair's Report

There was no Chair's Report.

5. **Approval of the Minutes, November 2, 2023.**

Board member Kalmick moved to approve. Board member Hutzel seconded. Approved. Roll call vote–Ayes= 3; Nays = 0; Abstentions =0.

Regular Calendar

6. **Status Report on Work Plan Implementation**

a. **Land Management Update**

Eric Zahn stated the Land Management report is from the last three months. Zahn stated everything has been running smoothly. Zahn stated the wetlands are very wet which is exciting but brings some additional management work. Zahn stated staff is busy with trail maintenance, but they are lucky to have Conservation Corps of Long Beach (CCLB) out each Friday. Zahn stated electric bike ramps are an ongoing issue, and staff continues to remove them and make the area less desirable for ramps.

Board member Kalmick thanked CCLB for the cleanup they did on 1st Street and PCH. Zahn stated CCLB and Tidal Influence are glad to keep the intersection clean. Chair Duggan asked how long CCLB has been coming out. Zahn stated since July. Duggan asked if there is a contract with CCLB. Zahn stated they are funded by AES. Zahn stated it is part of the Youth Workforce Program, but CCLB may be utilizing some of their other funding sources to come out every Friday. Duggan asked if AES fully funds CCLB. Zahn stated CCLB puts in some of their own funding. Duggan asked if CCLB takes out ice plants. Zahn stated that is one of many things they do, and they are integral to land management.

b. **Los Cerritos Wetlands Stewardship Program Coordinator Update**

Megan Woolf stated this report is from November 2023 to January 2024. Woolf stated the program engaged a grand total of 254 volunteers. Woolf stated 508 hours were worked by these volunteers which contributed \$14,732 of in-kind services. Woolf stated volunteers planted 469 plants and removed 150 pounds of invasive species and removed 260 pounds of trash and debris. Woolf stated the Stewardship Program team led 12 field trips for 368 grade school students from community centers located in disadvantaged communities. Woolf stated CCLB assisted with preparing hundreds of holes for these community plantings. Woolf stated the Stewardship Program team led 12 field trips for 368 grade school students from community centers located in disadvantaged communities. Woolf stated CCLB assisted with preparing hundreds of holes for these community plantings.

Chair Duggan stated she has a group of youth who wants to volunteer. Duggan stated they are really interested in becoming part of the program and asked if they can do that. Woolf stated absolutely, and they can email her.

c. **Homeless Relocation Program Update**

Lenny Arkinstall, CEO of Los Cerritos Wetlands Stewards, stated there are not a lot of homeless on the wetlands. Arkinstall stated that across the street from the Bryant property, a fire started from an encampment cooking breakfast. Arkinstall stated this is an ongoing issue. Chair Duggan

asked which location this is at. Arkinstall stated it is at Second Street before the San Gabriel River. Arkinstall stated the city has an easement. Arkinstall stated it is a lot of work to keep the site clean, and it is a lot of the same individuals. Arkinstall stated the San Gabriel River is kept clear with persistence. Arkinstall stated the Loynes property had an individual he helped move. Arkinstall stated he always offers services. Arkinstall highlighted an individual from Ohio who he attempted to help by getting a ticket home, but the individual disappeared. Arkinstall stated there are areas that have been sandbagged for years. Arkinstall noted that one day the entire area can be wetlands. Arkinstall stated he has been working to restore part of Marketplace Marsh. Arkinstall stated this is the third year working with the California Coastal Commission to restore the area. Arkinstall stated there are little spots on the Bryant property overflowing like a lake. Arkinstall stated part of his work with Coastal Commission is to capture debris. Arkinstall stated the marsh is healthy and has yellow hares and great blue birds. Arkinstall noted there was a pelican buried in a sheet of plastic which he rescued.

d. El Dorado Audubon Update

Mary Parsell, President of the El Dorado Audubon, stated the wetlands are wet with a perfect mixture of salt water. Parsell stated highlights included Bufflehead, American Widgeon, Cinnamon Teal, Northern Harrier and Belted Kingfisher. Parsell stated white crown sparrows are migratory. Parsell stated the people who come on walks are from places like Covina and South Pasadena. Parsell stated they come because they are interested. Parsell stated ages start from elementary school.

e. Expenditures Report

Salian Garcia stated the report is the FY 2023/2024 Budget with balances as of February 29, 2024. Garcia stated that the Authority is approximately 43% through the current fiscal year, activity has been slightly below budget overall with Revenue and Expense. • Outstanding Annual JPA contributions are expected to be received this quarter. Garcia stated that due to the recently executed Memorandum of Understanding between AES Alamitos, LLC and LCWA, the Revenue and Expense budget line items are updated, respectively. Garcia stated that the Directors & Officers Insurance expense item is higher than budgeted at this time of the year; however, no additional expenses will occur to the line item. Garcia stated that administration has minimal activity. However, several expenditures in this category, such as Audit Services, generally do not occur until the third or last quarter of the current fiscal year. Garcia stated that though the Security expense item reflects zero expenditures, the Authority expects invoices from the consultant will be received by the end of the year. Garcia stated that overall Capital Outlay Expenses in relation to grant funding sources are in line with projections. As contracts related to the Southern Area Restoration Project are currently being negotiated, expenses will not be reflected until after the third quarter. Garcia stated that for transparency, a new Capital Outlay Expense budget line, "Appraisal & Due Diligence Activities" has been created. Activities include appraisal reports, negotiations, and other due diligence activities related to the acquisition of lands specified in the Los Cerritos Wetlands' Conceptual Restoration Plan. Garcia stated staff are awaiting reimbursement from several grants and contracts. Garcia stated the revenue will be reflected when submitted costs expended under the grant have been approved for reimbursement and the reimbursement is received.

7. Status report for Southern LCW Restoration Project

Eric Zahn stated this item is informational only. Zahn stated some background is the mitigation negative declaration was certified by the Board in 2023. Zahn stated that \$31.8 million was awarded to the Authority by the Coastal Conservancy. Zahn stated \$6 million will come from the Ocean Protection Council. Zahn stated the work programs are near complete which will allow funding to be spent. Zahn stated the City of Seal Beach has 103.5 acres with 65% level engineering design and permit applications complete. Zahn stated more work is needed for final construction documents. Zahn stated the Authority released a Request for Proposal and received a response from Moffat & Nicol which is in negotiations. Zahn stated he anticipates a \$1.5 million contract. Zahn stated the Board in November approved this contract to negotiate and award, so there will be no additional action taken. Zahn stated in order to acquire the necessary consultants, the Authority released a Request for Qualifications last year for various services. Zahn stated this is happening now and is still in planning. Zahn stated they are in the process for 100% design and hope to be completed May of next year and break ground September next year. Zahn stated permits are likely to have limited windows and September first is agreed to be the likely end of nesting season. Zahn stated they anticipate an 18 month construction process.

Board member Kalmick if this is still roughly for 50 acres. Zahn stated the design is for the whole 103.5 area and Phase 1 is for approximately 50 acres. Zahn stated the remainder will be restored once they can access the Hanes cooling channel. Chair Duggan asked if they only received a proposal from Moffat and Nicole. Zahn stated this was to be expected, as Moffat and Nicole completed 65% of the work. Zahn stated the request was sent to a long list of people. Board member Hutzel asked if permits are being submitted. Zahn stated they are at various levels, and they already have the Water Board 401 Certification. Chair Duggan asked for further clarification. Zahn stated the State Water Board provides a permit for work where you are dredging. Zahn stated the Army Corps is the federal side of that, and staff is pursuing a nationwide permit which would allow them to do work in federal waters. Zahn stated this permit is moving the least, but they have time. Zahn stated the permits are lined up nicely, and staff is trying to avoid getting permits too early. Duggan asked if Zahn expects to get the Army Corps permit in a timely manner. Zahn stated yes. Board member Hutzel stated this item is super exciting, and she is glad the item was able to get to the Coastal Conservancy Board in time. Hutzel noted there are budget cuts, so she is glad this item got to the Board beforehand. Hutzel asked if Zahn is keeping an eye on expiration dates. Zahn stated yes. Kalmick asked if there had been any messaging. Zahn stated part of the funding will be to acquire public engagement services.

8. Consideration of a resolution authorizing the Executive Officer, or designee, to negotiate and award enter one or more contracts for project management, tribal engagement, public engagement, and pre-construction, construction, and post-construction monitoring of the Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Project

Chad Oberly stated that on December 8, 2023, the Authority released a Request for Qualifications Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Project Support Service, seeking professional consultant services for project management, tribal engagement, public engagement, and pre-construction, construction, and post-construction monitoring of the Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Project. Oberly stated the project management consultant would provide technical advising and manage large public grants. Oberly stated the tribal engagement consultant would engage tribes through the Tribal Advisory Group and one-on-one meetings. Oberly stated the public outreach consultant would plan and facilitate events throughout Final Design and Construction Phases and outreach to traditionally underserved communities in the vicinity of the Project area. Oberly stated the Environmental Compliance for Restoration Implementation consultant would manage the Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan and coordinate Physical Monitoring Tasks. Oberly stated the RFQ was open from December 8, 2023 to January 10, 2024, and four submissions from qualified firms were received. Oberly stated it is likely the

Authority will negotiate with Tidal Influence, Cogstone, Hans Bauman, and Catalyst. Oberly stated the LCWA may award multiple contracts to complete the services above. Contract durations will range but may be negotiated for five years for certain services as needed. Oberly stated staff is seeking approval to negotiate and enter a contract with Tidal Influence for Project Management services, for an amount not to exceed \$770,000 for five years, through June 2029. Oberly stated Tidal Influence ranked first overall and possesses the required qualifications to provide the Project Management services requested in the RFQ. Oberly stated staff is also seeking approval to negotiate multiple contracts for all other services as outlined above and described in more detail in the RFQ for amounts not to exceed \$500,000 for each task. Oberly stated staff recommends the Board authorize the Executive Officer, or designee, to negotiate and enter one or more contracts for project management, tribal engagement, public engagement, and pre-construction, construction, and post-construction monitoring of the Southern Los Cerritos Wetlands Restoration Project.

Chair Duggan asked if Tidal Influence had any comments for what their work will entail. Eric Zahn stated much of the work will be the same as what they are already doing in addition to a multidisciplinary effort.

Board member Hutzel moved to approve. Board member Kalmick seconded. Approved. Roll call vote–
Ayes= 4; Nays = 0; Abstentions =0.

9. **Closed Session: Pursuant to Government Code section 54956.8, LCWA may hold a closed session to consider the Draft Appraisal Report and the Draft Land Transfer Agreement, and related items, between Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority and Los Cerritos Wetlands, LLC for the APN 7237-019-809; 7237-017-010 thru 014; 018; 019; LCWA Negotiators: Mark Stanley and Property Owner Negotiator: John McKeown. Under Consideration: Price and Terms.**

The Board held closed session. Elizabeth St. John stated that pursuant to Government Code section 54956.8, LCWA held a closed session to consider the Draft Appraisal Report and the Draft Land Transfer Agreement, and related items, between Los Cerritos Wetlands Authority and Los Cerritos Wetlands, LLC for the APN 7237-019-809; 7237-017-010 thru 014; 018; 019; LCWA Negotiators: Mark Stanley and Property Owner Negotiator: John McKeown. Under Consideration: Price and Terms. No action was taken.

10. Oral Communications

- a. **Statements, responses, questions or directions to staff pursuant to Section 54954.2(a) of the Government Code.**
- b. **Future agenda items.**

11. Adjournment upon completion of business.

Chair Duggan adjourned the meeting at approximately 1:42pm.