

USIBWC Citizens Forum
August 25, 2011
USIBWC Field Office
2225 Dairy Mart Road
San Diego, CA

Tentative Meeting Notes*

Board Members in Attendance:

Ben McCue
Paul Ganster
Aaron Allen
Scott Huth
Patrick McDonough
Jo Brooks
Mark West

Board Members Absent:

Robert Scott

USIBWC Staff in Attendance:

Edward Drusina
Russell Frisbie
Steve Smullen
Sally Spener

Members of the Public in Attendance:

Will Rells, Office of Assembly Member Ben Hueso
Gary Brown, City of Imperial Beach
Jim Nakagawa, City of Imperial Beach

A meeting was held for the purpose of conducting orientation for new Citizens Forum board members.

Welcome and Introductions

USIBWC Area Operations Manager Steve Smullen welcomed the board. Board members introduced themselves and described their interest in participating in the Citizens Forum.

Expectations of Board Members

Commissioner Edward Drusina welcomed the board and explained to them the importance the USIBWC places on hearing their perspectives, receiving information from them about activities related to the Commission's mission. He also expressed his appreciation for their willingness to serve as volunteer board members for the next two years. He presented each new board member with a framed certificate of appreciation to welcome them to the board.

Board Member Orientation

Public Affairs Officer Sally Spener gave an overview of Commission history, treaties, and projects boundary wide (see presentation at www.ibwc.state.gov/Citizens_forums/CF_SBIWTP.html). She presented an overview of the Citizens Forum program, noting that the Citizens Forum in San Diego County is one of five the U.S. Section has. She explained the purpose of the Citizens Forum is to promote the exchange of information with the public; it is not a federal advisory committee. She noted the value the USIBWC places on having a diversity of perspectives represented on the board.

She then facilitated board discussion on a number of organizational matters. The board indicated that it prefers to meet Thursday evenings, 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. The next meeting will be November 17. The board is interested in conducting meetings at the Dempsey Center at the City of Imperial Beach or the meeting room at the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve, if these facilities are available. The board is also interested in having a tour of the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant, Tijuana River Flood Control Project, the canyon collectors, and related border infrastructure. This will be scheduled for September 22 at 4:30 p.m., meeting at the USIBWC office at 2225 Dairy Mart Road.

The board discussed selection of a community co-chair. Several board members had expressed interest in serving in this capacity when they submitted their Citizens Forum applications. Based on additional discussion, a number of board members withdrew their names from consideration as co-chair. Ben McCue was then selected co-chair by the board. He will co-chair along with the USIBWC's Steve Smullen.

San Diego Area Projects

Steve Smullen gave a presentation about the USIBWC's activities in the San Diego area (see presentation at www.ibwc.state.gov/Citizens_forums/CF_SBIWTP.html), including the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant (SBIWTP), Tijuana River Flood Control Project, boundary demarcation, and the Tijuana River Valley Recovery Team.

The board expressed particular interest in plans for the USIBWC to remove sediment and trash from the Tijuana River Flood Control Project channel during fiscal year 2012, and in recent biological upset of the secondary plant due to changes in the influent waste stream. Additionally, as mitigation for the construction of the SBIWTP secondary plant, the USIBWC will remove sediment, remove invasive plants, and restore some habitat in Goat Canyon. This is not on USIBWC lands but was arranged as part of the environmental mitigation plan.

Suggested Future Agenda Items

- Status of sediment removal projects
- How the infrastructure in the U.S. relates to treatment plants in Mexico
- More information about Commission history
- Update on development of a new NPDES permit for the SBIWTP

- Online tools, such as river gages, how the public can use these tools to obtain water information
- Tijuana River Action Month
- Recycle Water Study by San Diego. The study may be out in October. The point of contact is Marci Steier from the water department.

*Meeting notes are tentative and summarize in draft the contents and discussion of Citizens Forum Meetings. While these notes are intended to provide a general overview of Citizens Forum Meetings, they may not necessarily be accurate or complete, and may not be representative of USIBWC policy or positions.