

GREATER LOS ANGELES COUNTY VECTOR CONTROL DISTRICT

MINUTES NO. 2008-04

A regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Greater Los Angeles County Vector Control District was held at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 10, 2008, at the District office at 12545 Florence Avenue, Santa Fe Springs, California.

TRUSTEES PRESENT

Sally Flowers, Sec.-Treasurer, *(City of Artesia)*
Ray T. Smith, *(City of Bellflower)*
Pedro Aceituno, *(City of Bell Gardens)*
Dr. Jeff D. Wassem, *(City of Burbank)*
Nikki Noushkam, *(City of Cerritos)*
Hugo Argumedo, *(City of Commerce)*
Mison Levi, President, *(City of Cudahy)*
Audrey Hamilton, *(City of Diamond Bar)*
Meredith Perkins, *(City of Downey)*
Rachel C. Johnson, *(City of Gardena)*
Armine Perian, *(City of Glendale)*
Victor Farfan, *(City of Hawaiian Gardens)*
Elba Romo, *(City of Huntington Park)*
Jim Remington, *(City of La Habra Heights)*
Joseph Esquivel, *(City of Lakewood)*

Jim Morton, *(City of Lynwood)*
Thomas Martin, *(City of Maywood)*
Cheri Kelley, Vice President, *(City of Norwalk)*
Henry Harkema, *(City of Paramount)*
Dr. James Lawson, *(City of San Fernando)*
Dr. SeYao Hsu, *(City of San Marino)*
Jan Heidt, *(City of Santa Clarita)*
Michael Madrigal, *(City of Santa Fe Springs)*
Dr. Hazel Wallace, *(City of Signal Hill)*
Blanca Figueroa, *(City of South El Monte)*
Owen Newcomer, *(City of Whittier)*

TRUSTEES ABSENT

Oscar Hernandez, *(City of Bell)*
Harold Williams, *(City of Carson)*
Bob Chotiner, *(City of La Mirada)*
Robert Urteaga, *(City of Montebello)*
Robert Campbell, *(City of Long Beach)*
Alma Martinez, *(City of Los Angeles)*
Vacant, *(County of Los Angeles)*
Bob Archuleta, *(City of Pico Rivera)*
Maria Davila, *(City of South Gate)*

OTHERS PRESENT

Kenneth L. Bayless, *District Manager*
Kevin Vargas, *Operations Supervisor*
Susanne Klueh, *Vector Ecologist*
Truc Dever, *Public Information Officer*
Karen Walker, *Education Program Specialist*
Robert Miller, *Director of Human Resources*
Carolyn Weeks, *Director of Fiscal Operations*
Luke DeNitto, *Maintenance Supervisor*
Bill Rudell, *Legal Counsel*

1. CALL TO ORDER

President Levi called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

2. QUORUM (ROLL) CALL

Following the roll call, it is recorded that 26 Trustees were present and 9 were absent.

3. INVOCATION

Trustee Flowers gave the invocation.

4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Trustee Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

Trustee Flowers read a letter written to Education Program Specialist Karen Walker by a student from the Business Academy at Santa Fe High School. The student, Nino Jose Flores, was at the District for a field trip on March 17th and wrote that he “really admires what all the people who work in vector control do.” From his point of view, “Vector Control and its workers have an important role in the safety of the residents of the Greater Los Angeles County.”

6. INTRODUCTIONS

The new representative from Lynwood, Jim Morton, introduced himself saying he has lived in Lynwood for over 50 years. Trustee Kelley informed him about the Trustee orientation on April 21st.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

Trustee Argumedo introduced Ed Vasquez and Robert Apodaca and thanked them for attending the Board meeting. Mr. Apodaca addressed the Board requesting the Board’s support and vote for election as LAFCO Special District representative. Mr. Apodaca represents about 66% of the constituents in the GLACVCD area.

Former District Board member Donald Dear was also present and addressed the Board requesting support for the LAFCO Board vote. He is the current LAFCO representative and is running for a second term. Mr. Dear represents about 6% of the constituents in the GLACVCD area.

8. CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES 2008-03 OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING HELD ON MARCH 13, 2008 (*Exhibit A*)

Trustee Harkema made the motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Trustee Perkins. The motion passed unanimously.

9. CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION 2008-06 OF ATTACHED REQUISITION SCHEDULE EXPENDITURES FOR MARCH 1, 2008 THROUGH MARCH 31, 2008. (*Exhibit B*)

Trustee Esquivel made the motion to approve the District’s expenditures. It was unclear from the recording who seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

10. CONSENT AGENDA (10.1-10.5)

10.1 Consideration of six County of Los Angeles Joint Property Tax Resolutions (JPTR), Petition No. 58-407, Tract Nos. 54367, 52829, 65157, L 054-99, and L-079-2002. (*Exhibit C*).

10.2 Consideration of the Santa Clarita Redevelopment Agency Subordination Notification Re: Subordination of Payments for Tax Allocation Subordinate Bonds. (*Exhibit D*)

10.3 Consideration of Resolution 2008-07 Discretionary Spending Authority for District Manager with a \$5,000 spending limit per occurrence. (*Exhibit E*)

- 10.4 Consideration of General Manager, Scientific-Technical Services Director, and Public Information Officer to attend the quarterly Mosquito & Vector Control Association of California conference May 1-2, 2008 in Monterey, CA. (*Exhibit F*)
- 10.5 Consideration of Director of Human Resources to attend the Society of Human Resources Management convention June 20-25, 2008 in Chicago, IL. (*Exhibit G*)

Trustee Lawson requested that items 10.4 and 10.5 be pulled for further discussion. Trustee Esquivel made the motion to approve consent agenda items 10.1 through 10.3. Trustee Hamilton seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Trustee Lawson discussed items 10.4 and 10.5, stating the Board on several occasions has talked about the necessity to look at the finances and the staff assigned to attend various conferences. There have been assurances by management that in the next budget year, there will be a different approach to scheduling staff for these conferences. In terms of looking at the cost and budget, he had some concerns about the overall cost as well as who is attending and the necessity to consider first and second line supervisors for potential growth and information purposes. He also had a concern regarding 10.5. While the item was not in the budget, there is a justification based on the sale of vehicles. Since he's been on the Board, he's heard that justification numerous times and has also heard a report from the former finance director that the District's actual revenue generated through the sale of vehicles has been less than what was projected. He's uncomfortable using this rationale every time there is an unbudgeted expense.

Trustees Hamilton and Wallace both requested that the costs and per diem amounts be explained in further detail for comparative purposes.

There was a question regarding the per diem allotment for staff. Carolyn explained that she implemented a policy requiring staff to submit receipts and return unused portion of per diem. Trustee Kelley advised staff to memorialize that policy in writing. President Levi requested that the policy committee be involved in the approval of a per diem policy.

Trustee Heidt made a motion to approve 10.4 and 10.5. Trustee Esquivel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

11. CONSIDERATION OF CANDIDATES SEEKING ELECTION AS LAFCO INDEPENDENT SPECIAL DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE

Trustee Figueroa nominated Mr. Robert Apodaca for LAFCO Special District Representative. Trustee Argumedo seconded the nomination. Trustee Esquivel nominated Mr. Donald Dear for LAFCO Representative. Trustee Wallace seconded the nomination. A roll call vote was taken to choose a candidate to support. **Following the roll call vote, it was determined that candidate Robert Apodaca received the most votes. Mr. Apodaca received 11 votes while Mr. Donald Dear received 8 votes. Seven Trustees abstained from voting. A ballot indicating the Board's selection will be mailed to the coordinating law firm.**

12. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSAL FOR NEW BOARDROOM PUSH-TO-TALK AND LIGHTING SYSTEM

Maintenance Supervisor Luke DeNitto provided all Trustees with a written proposal for a push-to-talk and lighting system. General Manager Ken Bayless reminded Trustees that three options were presented to the Board at the last meeting. The Board overwhelmingly selected the "hockey-puck" style voting system. The cost would average \$271 per station totaling approximately \$13,500 for the entire boardroom project. Mr. Bayless pointed out that the equipment will be installed by the District maintenance department reducing labor costs for the project. Trustee Heidt commented that a pre-packaged system purchased from an outside vendor would likely come with guarantees and warranties. Luke assured her that the components to the system are simple and easy to maintain. Trustee Argumedo commended staff for doing this in-house.

Trustee Perkins made a motion to approve the proposal for the new lighting system. Trustee Esquivel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

13. PRESENTATION BY DISTRICT ARBOVIRUS TASK FORCE REGARDING EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN AND CONTINGENCY FUNDS

A presentation was delivered on behalf of the District Arbovirus Task Force by Vector Ecologist Susanne Kluh regarding a revised District Emergency Response Plan. Last October, the Task Force reviewed the District response plan for an arbovirus emergency and found only a simple flow chart. The Task Force worked to revise that to make it more comprehensive with both a flow chart and narrative, and to bring it up to standards. To explain the plan, if the risk assessment model indicates an impending arbovirus emergency, the Task Force will convene to plan for the disease outbreak. Given the fact that West Nile virus is now endemic to California, it can be predicted that little state funding will be available in the future for West Nile virus outbreaks. In addition, research grants will decrease. The question is whether the District is ready with sufficient funds to deal with such an emergency. Susanne provided the Trustees with a comparative chart indicating the reserve amounts for comparable vector control districts in California. While most had between \$1-1.6 million in reserves, our District currently has \$50,000. A table outlining the minimum costs for emergency disease control, surveillance, and public education was provided which called for a reserve amount of more than \$500,000.

Trustee Kelley asked Ken Bayless about the legislative proposal (SB 1326) regarding excessive reserves for special districts. Ken reported that the reserves element of the bill has been removed by the proposing Senator. MVCAC was effective in lobbying the Senator and explaining the situation of the State's vector control districts. Ken further explained that bill was targeting unallocated reserves, whereas this emergency reserve would be necessary to deal with a disease crisis.

Trustee Figueroa expressed concern regarding the aerial spraying of chemicals and asked whether the chemicals used by the District are similar to malathion and have long-term health risks. Vector Ecologist Susanne Kluh explained that the District uses a pyrethrin called Scourge. It has very, very low mammalian toxicity. In addition, it is disbursed in very, very small droplets to ensure effective contact with the mosquitoes. She assured that Board that ground-based adulticiding has been conducted in areas such as Machado Lake every year to reduce mosquitoes and to break the disease cycle. Aerial adulticiding in a neighborhood would be considered only if the disease epidemic was of epic proportions and the benefit to public health would far outweigh any small risk of chemical exposure.

Trustee Wallace asked whether it was possible to develop several options for an emergency reserve budget considering different levels of a disease outbreak. Ken explained that the District should attempt to build in a reasonable reserve to ensure our readiness and capabilities in the event of an outbreak. Staff is trying to get the District back up to where it should be financially and operationally so the communities within the District do not suffer.

Trustee Hamilton asked whether the \$500,000 figure would be built into this upcoming budget and Ken answered that it would.

14. STAFF PROGRAM REPORTS: MARCH 2008

14.1 Manager's Report

Kenneth L. Bayless, District Manager

Ken stated he discussed most of his report in answering previous questions but would be happy to entertain any further questions. He did caution the Board that the State budget is still in crisis and they could still come after the District's funding. In addition, the current status of home foreclosures in the County increases workload for staff. Furthermore, assessments on properties have gone down and there are a lot more vacant homes where taxes are not being paid. What the District is currently attempting to project is what kind of revenue decrease it faces next year.

Trustee Kelley asked for an update to a discussion from the last meeting regarding notifying lenders about vacant homes and green swimming pools and passing the District's cost along to the lender or owner. Ken explained that a task force has been established to deal with the operational issues related to green pools and foreclosures.

14.2 Operations: (*Staff Report A*)

M. Hall, Operations Supervisor

Operations Supervisor Kevin Vargas reported that the season is upon us. The Operations staff is gearing up and will be hiring extra-help staff for the season in mid-May.

Trustee Figueroa added that in her own city, she has worked with code enforcement to inspect these foreclosed homes. She urged all other Trustees to work with their city code enforcement personnel to inspect these homes and notify vector control if there are issues.

Trustee Wassem pointed out that many cities are implementing water conservation measures. In a mandatory level of conservation, homeowners are not allowed to add water to their pools but the City of Burbank provides no instructions as to what to do with the pools to avoid accumulating stagnant water. Operations Supervisor Kevin Vargas explained that the District does not encourage residents to drain their swimming pools due to liability but the residents can continue to maintain their pools using chlorine and filters, etc.

Trustee Kelley believed it may be beneficial for the District to write letters to the cities requesting the cities provide outreach and education to pool owners. Ken assured the Board that the District plans an aggressive education program to address the swimming pool issue.

14.3 Scientific-Technical: (*Staff Report B*)

M. Madon, Scientific-Tech Serv. Dir.

NONE

14.4 Community Outreach: (*Staff Report C*)

T. Dever, Public Information Officer
K. Walker, Ed. Program Specialist

Public Information Officer Truc Dever provided an update on the development of a new District website. She also reminded the Trustees about the orientation and open house scheduled for April 21, 2008 and asked how many Trustees planned to attend.

Trustee Perkins congratulated Karen Walker and the Community Outreach department on the positive rating for the educational fieldtrips.

14.5 Fiscal: (*Staff Report D*)

C. Weeks, Finance Director

Trustee Flowers had questions for Carolyn Weeks regarding the Expense Statement on Staff Report D. She asked why the accounts for Professional Services and Special Expenses were over budget. Carolyn explained that Professional Services includes the auditors and legal fees. The District had not budgeted enough to cover legal fees for the year. What is in the Special Expenses account is the administrative fees the County charges the District to implement the benefit assessment. They charge \$0.20 per parcel and it is expected to increase to \$0.25 per parcel.

Trustee Flowers asked whether the County administrative fees were increased in the middle of the fiscal year. Otherwise, how did the District not budget for an increase in such fees? Carolyn explained that in order to create a budget with no increases in assessment, the former district administration cut budget items to make the budget work. Trustee Flowers asked that the "Special Expense" label for that line item be renamed to reflect "County administrative fees."

Trustee Kelley suggested that staff contact some of the other districts within the County to determine what their fees are. She noted that some of the cities within the California Contract Cities Association are challenging the County on the administrative fees.

14.6 Human Resources: (Staff Report E)

R. Miller, Human Resources Dir.

Robert Miller reported that he conducted a training session for the managers. In addition, he provided an update on the District's safety compliance efforts. All of the old chemicals formerly found upon inspection of the District have been removed.

14.7 Legal Counsel Report

Bill Rudell, Legal Counsel

NONE

15. BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS

15.1 Policy Committee Report

O. Newcomer, Chairperson

Trustee Newcomer reported that the committee has reviewed the District bylaws regarding Board committee assignments and will provide the Trustees with a written policy recommendation next month for review. The Board will not vote to approve the policy until the June Board meeting.

16. OTHER

The Board may consider items not on the agenda providing it complies with the Government Code (*Brown Act*) §54954.2 (b).

Trustee Madrigal congratulated Trustee Newcomer on his re-election. Trustee Newcomer said he was re-elected to a third term on the City Council.

17. ADJOURNMENT

The next scheduled Board of Trustees meeting will be on Thursday, May 8, 2008 at the District Headquarters office at 12545 Florence Avenue, Santa Fe Springs, CA.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

President

Secretary-Treasurer

