

OPERATIONS & WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE SUMMARY MINUTES

August 5, 2020

4:15 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Directors: Judy Huang (Chair), John Weed

Staff: Robert Shaver, Kurt Arends, Mike Wickham, Dan Stevenson, Cris Pena, Robert Marsheck, Uriel Moreno Ortiz

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The monthly Operations & Water Quality Committee Meeting was held on August 5, 2020 at 4:15 PM. Due to COVID-19 and in accordance with Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-25-20 which suspends portions of the Brown Act, this meeting was conducted by Zoom Webinar and Teleconference and members of the public were invited to participate.

DISCUSSION TOPIC

1. Maintenance Projects and System Upgrades Status: Dan Stevenson, Facility Maintenance Manager, provided an overview of the Facilities Maintenance Division. Bob Marsheck, Facilities Engineering Supervisor, introduced Dennis Kong, who is a new mechanical engineer. Mr. Marsheck and Mr. Kong then presented information on several recent maintenance projects including work performed during the annual shutdown of Water Treatment Plant No.2 (TP2) and the Patterson Reservoir drain valve and liner repairs. Mr. Marsheck also provided an update on the Production Facilities Communication Project and explained the rationale for the Headquarters Roof Replacement Projects.

The work at TP2 included replacement of the hydraulic power unit on the dewatering filter press due to age, and replacement of piping and diffusers to correct corrosion and short circuiting within one of the ozone contactor cells. Repairs at Patterson Reservoir included replacement of the in-reservoir drain valve to comply with DSOD requirements, and inspection and repair of isolated cracks in the reservoir membrane liner. The Production Facilities Communication project has all microwave links installed and presently network configuration and testing is underway. Mr. Marsheck then presented information on the upcoming headquarters roof replacement which will be before the Board for consideration in August, and additional jobs planned for TP2 during the 2021 shutdown. Mr. Kong presented information on two gravity thickeners at TP2 which are part of the plant dewatering process. The rotating rake arms and gear drives are nearing the end of their service lives due to age and corrosion, and are due for replacement. The work is planned to be performed by MISCOWater which is the sole authorized representative in this area for the manufacturer of the gravity thickeners. Mr. Kong stated that this item will come before the Board for consideration in September and the replacement work is planned for March 2021.

Related to the headquarters roofing project, Director Weed asked about the potential for solar panels. Mr. Stevenson responded that this has been evaluated but the structure of the building roof was not designed to support the weight of solar panels. Director Huang noted that it would take significant effort to upgrade the building to accommodate roof-mounted solar panels.

2. Lead Service Line Inventory Update: Uriel Moreno-Ortiz, Environmental Engineer, provided an update on the status of the District's lead service line inventory (LSLI) and replacement schedule. Mr. Moreno-Ortiz explained that Senate Bills 1398 and 427 required the District to conduct an inventory of service line materials and to submit a timeline for replacement (replacement schedule) of known lead service lines, or service lines of an unknown material type.

Mr. Moreno-Ortiz summarized previous progress on the LSLI project, which identified no service lines containing lead in the District's service area, and described the submission process and replacement schedule for the remaining services of unknown material. On June 24, 2020, the district submitted the unknown service line replacement schedule to the State Water Resources Control Board Division of Drinking Water (DDW) as part of the Electronic Annual Report.

Mr. Moreno-Ortiz provided an overview of the replacement schedule, which addresses the 273 service lines of unknown material that are currently scheduled for replacement over the next 10 years as part of the District's Capital Improvement Program (CIP). None of the 273 services lines provide water to Licensed Child Care Centers and two provide water to James Logan High School in Union City. Mr. Moreno-Ortiz shared that following submission of the replacement schedule, DDW staff expressed concern with the two services providing water to the high school, which are currently programmed for replacement in 2024. Mr. Moreno-Ortiz further explained that although the replacement schedule was approved as submitted, the District will nevertheless proactively field verify the service line material for the two James Logan High School services within the next fiscal year, and will notify DDW of its findings.

The overall service line replacement schedule was approved by DDW on July 21, 2020. The District will provide replacement schedule updates to DDW annually via submission of the Electronic Annual Report.

Staff responded to questions from the committee.

3. Staffing Analysis and Optimization Project Update: Mike Wickham, Water Production Manager, provided an overview of the operator workgroup study completed in 2018 by EMA with the objective of reducing operator overtime hours while retaining sufficient staffing to reliably operate the District's water treatment facilities and distribution system. Mr. Wickham explained how the study had recommended improvements in workforce, workflow, and infrastructure to better optimize system operations. These recommendations include combining the separate operator classifications into a single classification and making facility and administrative improvements to reduce manual activities by the operators. Mr. Wickham described the three-phase transition plan developed to help overcome the challenges of

transitioning to a single operator classification and to build operator confidence and capabilities through a combination of structured training and infrastructure improvements.

The initial phase of the transition plan consists of pre-transition preparation and includes: implementing an appropriate staffing structure to support reliable and sustainable system operations; reviewing and updating or developing training materials; facility and administrative improvements to improve operator efficiency and system reliability; and adjustment of expectations regarding after hours operator response to facility and equipment failures.

Mr. Wickham explained that the focus has been on this initial phase and described the accomplishments made to date which include: the addition of an operator trainee position and re-balancing of the work groups; limited cross-training of newly hired staff; development of updated standard operating procedures; implementation of electronic logging software; improvements to the solids handling system; and some improvements to the SCADA system. Mr. Wickham also described some of the challenges discovered which include: the need to develop an updated training structure to support more flexible operations; a lack of available staff time to dedicate to developing a training structure and infrastructure improvements; and a lack of available operator time to utilize for the purposes of operator training. Mr. Wickham described the next steps in the optimization effort which include, dedicating a temporary engineer position to focus on completing key workflow, training, and infrastructure improvements necessary to move to the second phase of the transition plan and working with the Operator's Association during negotiations to make operator staff time available for cross-training. Mr. Wickham further explained that transitioning the operator work group to a single operator classification would be a long-term effort, and that it may take several years to fully realize a single operator classification. However, it was pointed out that there will be continuous benefit to the District as we move forward with this effort. The infrastructure improvements will improve system reliability and the training and documentation improvements will improve consistency of operator training and the ability to reliably operate our systems.

Director Weed inquired about operator staffing levels and the amount of operator overtime reduction realized so far. Director Huang observed that making the recommended system and administrative improvements would benefit the District's operations.

4. Public Comments: There were no public comments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Topics discussed by the Committee were informational only and no recommendations were made.