

USIBWC Citizens' Forum Meeting
Imperial Beach Community Room
April 16, 2009 6:30-8:30 pm
***Tentative Meeting Notices**

Approximately 25 people in attendance.

Steve Smullen, USIBWC Area Operations Manager for the San Diego Field Office, welcomed all attendees and summarized the agenda items. Primary focus for this Citizens' Forum (CF) meeting was to introduce new CF Board members and provide an overview of the IBWC and its structure, functions and projects. Following the USIBWC overview, Eric Terrill of Scripps Institute of Oceanography would provide a summary of the Supplemental Monitoring Program for the South Bay Ocean Outfall.

New Board members sat in front of the room and were asked to self introduce and provide a brief summary of their individual background and experience.

The following was noted:

Jack Bransford – Mr. Bransford has active affiliation with several wildlife groups in San Diego - such as Otay Valley Regional Park Citizen's Advisory Committee, Quail Unlimited, and San Diego County Wildlife Federation. He would like to have the CF Board be a entity for recommending solutions to problems related to water quantity/quality and local flora and fauna protection.

Jo Brooks – Ms. Brooks an active member of San Diego Coastkeeper, is semi-retired and now living in San Diego. She is interested in water quality issues in the area as much of her leisure time is water focused. She formerly worked for the U.S. State Department Legal Advisor's Office on international environmental, trade and investment issues.

Scott Huth – Mr. Huth is a resident of Coronado and is Director of City of Coronado Public Services. He is also Chairman of the San Diego Metro Wastewater Technical Advisory Committee and an alternate Board member of the Metro Joint Powers Authority. He has a long history of recreation in the South Bay area. He is interested in IBWC South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant (SBIWTP) operations, and the effect of policy and operations on Tijuana River, the ocean and neighboring communities.

Ben McCue- Mr. McCue is Coastal Conservation Program Manager of Wildcoast in Imperial Beach; and is active in Tijuana River Valley and South Coast issues as they relate to water quality and ecosystem health.

Oscar Romo- Mr. Romo is Co-Chair of US EPA Border 2012 California/Baja California Water Task Force, and Co-Chair of the Binational Committee, Tijuana River Valley Recovery Team. He is a Lecturer of Urban Studies and Planning at the University of California at San Diego; and is currently employed at Tijuana National Estuarine Research Reserve (TNERR) as Coastal Training Program Coordinator. He is very active in environmental issues on both sides of the border and is interested in the binational decision making process.

Oscar Pombo – Mr. Pombo is a recognized specialist in water and sanitation issues on both sides of the border. Mr. Pombo served on the panel that produced the Environmental Management Plan for the Sea of Cortez.

Carlos Sanchez – Mr. Sanchez is a local South San Diego resident and board member of the Otay Mesa Community Planning Group; he is interested in water and sanitation issues in the South Bay Area.

Carolyn Powers - Ms. Powers has been involved with many task forces and citizen's committees for Tijuana River Valley issues such as water quality, flooding and trash capture since 1992. She was part of EPA-sponsored Public Outreach for the Parallel Conveyance Line in Mexico.

Mike Williams – Mr. Williams is a local resident and former Citizens' Forum Board member. He is chairman of a local homeowners' association in Imperial Beach; has served as City Council Representative for three different City Council members. His interest lies in water quality improvement and flooding mitigation.

Richard Tynan - Mr. Tynan is a long-time resident of the Tijuana River Valley. As a member of the Tijuana River Valley Equestrian Association he has established horse trails throughout the Valley. He is interested in establishment of a flood warning system for the Valley.

Steve Smullen then gave a brief slide presentation of the USIBWC – its structure, history and projects. There was extended discussion of the recent December 2008 flooding in the Valley. Citizens would appreciate a warning system of some type that could be used when flooding is imminent. Steve pointed out the difficulty because of the many entities involved and the nature of the flooding, which causes the river to rise very quickly. Trash was mentioned as being a contributor to flooding.

Several individuals were enthused about using the Forum as a means to affect change, by reviewing problems and providing recommendations or solutions to the IBWC. Mr. Smullen stated that the primary function of the Board is to provide a forum where issues can be identified by members of the public and brought to light and further discussed in a public meeting. The Board serves to facilitate exchange of information between the USIBWC and the public. Mr. McCue suggested that we may want to consider dedicating a short part of the meeting to statements from the public on issues they feel are important.

Following the presentation the Board was asked to select a Co-Chair. Mr. Smullen identified the individuals who had stated in application that they would like to be considered. Two of those individuals - Jack Bransford and Scott Huth – rescinded their interest. The remaining individuals interested in the Co - Chair position are Oscar Pombo, Dick Tynan and Oscar Romo. The members felt that they would like to see more information relative to the credentials of the co-chairs, through email or some other means. The Board expressed the need to have each other's email for correspondence and contact purposed. A date was tentatively set for the next CF meeting – July 16 at 6:30 pm. Suggestions for next agenda on July 16 at 6:30 pm include

- 1) SBIWTP Secondary Construction
- 2) Overall explanation of the Mexican and US systems for wastewater treatment and conveyance
- 3) Legal authority for USIBWC to remove trash in the Valley.
- 4) Continued maintenance of San Diego Coastal Ocean Observation System system for plume tracking, beach closure tool
- 5) Tijuana River Valley Recovery Team
- 6) Presentation with maps on the hydrology and aquifer of the Valley
- 7) Presentation on municipal land use policies of Tijuana – enforcement of water and sewage policy
- 8) Presentation on waste operations and enforcement of trash removal regulations in Tijuana
- 9) A review of the Bajagua project and why it was not completed.

Following, Eric Terrill of Scripps Institute of Oceanography gave a presentation on the Supplemental Monitoring Program for the South Bay Ocean Outfall – basically a summary of the program and the results. Following the presentation, Dr. Terrill took questions from the audience. One individual asked if there was money for continued operation of the program. Dr. Terrill responded that it may continue for a short time but without continued funding could not be supported fully. Several technical questions were addressed by Dr. Terrill including nature and surfacing tendency of the plume. Mr. Smullen mentioned that the IBWC would be meeting with the Regional Board in the near future to discuss possible changes in monitoring requirements based on newer technology which was part of the study. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

*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.