

## Meeting of the South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce

The South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce had its monthly virtual meeting on July 7, 2020. Here are the highlights of that meeting:

1. Barker Meserlian represented the Metropolitan Water District and gave a presentation on the expansion of West Basin's recycled water infrastructure, to be expanded to Torrance and Palos Verdes Estates. This matter was expected to go before Torrance City Council. He stated that West Basin's mission is to provide a safe and reliable supply of high quality water. Recycled water is used for parks, cemeteries, refineries, and golf courses, to name a few uses. Over 25 years West Basin has built 25 miles of recycled water pipeline. This expansion will increase to 7 the number of sites for recycled water.
2. There was a discussion of the impact of the latest pullback by the County in response to the uptick in coronavirus cases. Some of the challenges chambers are facing are: the constant changing of the rules which make it hard to provide timely notice to the businesses; complaints from businesses who need to know how to respond to customers who refuse to wear masks; how to create consumer confidence again so patrons will return to the businesses; the challenge faced by the businesses as they see little or no revenue coming in and still have to pay fixed costs.
3. Asm. Muratsuchi was a guest speaker. He said that California has a projected deficit of \$54 billion. The number of bills have been dramatically cut down by Covid-19 and anything that would require funding not related to Covid-19 has been shelved for this year. There are proposals being debated to protect the businesses. He said AB 5 codified the Supreme Court decision in the *Dynamex* case and its real purpose was to protect the employees of Uber and Lyft. There is a bill which will exempt musicians and consider them independent contractors.
4. There was a presentation by Joe Nicchita and Asusena Favela from the County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs. Mr. Nicchita said the County recognizes the difficulty businesses are facing with mixed messaging from government entities. He said the County is working to develop a program that allows for consistency of messaging and re-opening guidelines. The disaster help center is a central portal through which businesses and consumers can have their questions answered. The website is: [disasterhelpcenter.org](http://disasterhelpcenter.org). They announced that the County opened an application process to give out \$5000.00 grants. Anyone interested should apply at [LACovidFund.org](http://LACovidFund.org).

Submitted by: Olivia Valentine

Dated July 15, 2020