

# **South Bay Cities Council of Governments**

## **Briefing with Legislative District Staff- Minutes**

October 11, 2012

SBESC Theatre

20285 S. Western Ave, Torrance, CA 90501

**The meeting was called to order by Chair Franklin @ 8:20 am.**

### **Flag Salute & Call to Order & Introductions**

#### The following Elected Officials were in attendance

U.S. Congresswoman Maxine Waters  
CA State Senator Ted Lieu  
CA State Senator Roderick Wright  
CA Assemblymember Steven Bradford  
David Atkinson, El Segundo  
Suzanne Fuentes, El Segundo  
Dan Medina, Gardena  
Olivia Valentine, Hawthorne

Jeff Duclos, Hermosa Beach  
Ralph Franklin, Inglewood  
Robert Pullen-Miles, Lawndale  
Steve Diels, Redondo Beach  
Judy Mitchell, Rolling Hills Estates  
Pat Furey, Torrance  
Susan Rhilinger, Torrance

#### The following people were also in attendance

Stan Myles, AQMD  
Stephanie Molen, Assemblymember Butler  
Hamilton Cloud, Congresswoman Waters Linda  
Beam, El Camino College  
Katie Gleason, El Camino College  
Tom Bakaly, Hermosa Beach  
Darryl Brown, Inglewood  
Steve Mandoki, Lawndale  
Jeff Kiernan, League of CA Cities  
Michael Rock, Lomita  
Jacob Haik, Los Angeles 15<sup>th</sup> District

Patricia Donaldson, SBACC  
Jacki Bacharach, SBCCOG  
Marcy Hiratzka, SBCCOG  
Rosemary Lackow, SBCCOG  
Steve Lantz, SBCCOG  
Lisa Rodriguez, SBCCOG  
Catherine Showalter, SBCCOG  
Michael Davies, Senator Feinstein  
Mary Giordano, Torrance  
Eleanor Jones, Torrance  
Sidney Williams, Former Bahamas Amb.

### **SBCCOG Work Program Update**

Jacki Bacharach followed Chair Franklin's introduction with a brief update on the SBCCOG's recent activities:

- The SBCCOG supports the fight against sequestration; is concerned about another round of Base Realignment and Closures, as the Dept. of Defense announced new closures in May.
- Caltrans' relinquishment of the Harbor Gateway Transit Center's (formerly known as the Artesia Transit Center) park and ride lot to Metro has been a slow process, ridden with obstacles. This lot has been identified as hazardous and Caltrans is neither maintaining it, nor relinquishing it to Metro as agreed. Metro and the SBCCOG are trying to expedite the relinquishment process. Legislators were requested to help.
- The SBCCOG is holding its 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Volunteer Recognition Reception on November 15 from 4:30-5:45pm, before the Board meeting at the SBESC Theater in Torrance. RSVPs may be sent to [Martha@sbesc.com](mailto:Martha@sbesc.com)
- The SBCCOG's Environmental Services Center in Torrance is hosting a walk-in holiday light exchange for Southern California Edison customers on November 13, 15, and 16. Edison customers may bring up to 2 strands of working incandescent holiday lights in exchange for two boxes of multi-colored LED lights.

- The SBESC would be glad to attend any community events to talk about energy efficiency, water conservation, vanpooling, or the new transponders that are required for the ExpressLanes on sections of the 10 and 110 freeways.

### **City Issues Identified for Discussion & Dialogue**

The City Councilmembers and City Managers in attendance were given the chance to voice their concern for the issues that most affected their city and the South Bay:

- Furey- Torrance: Thanks to Senator Feinstein for supporting ADA legislature, SB 1186, which amends California's disability access law to prevent predatory lawsuits against small business owners. This was chaptered by Governor Brown on Sept. 20.
- Rhilinger- Torrance: Please do not touch local control, but please do support our redevelopment successor agencies! Perhaps something at the State level to replace redevelopment? We must support small businesses the creation of jobs.
- Duclos- Hermosa Beach: would like to see more focus on small cities in relation to grants and funding. Smaller cities cannot compete with larger municipalities. With so much focus on transportation, we forget about the infrastructure that needs improvement. I would also like to see more State and Federal interaction with pilot projects in smaller cities. For example: Hermosa Beach worked with the EPA to implement working an infiltration storm drain system, which had never been done there before. The opportunity for this kind of efficiency is often ignored in smaller municipalities.
- Rock- Lomita: Similarly, Lomita has a lot of infrastructure and needs to be fairly considered against larger cities for grants. Also, there has been no movement since the 1990s on the state or federal excise tax on gasoline. This excise tax needs to be raised or we need to identify a different mechanism for funding street maintenance.
- Mandoki- Lawndale: Reductions in grant funding are affecting our declining infrastructure as well. Redevelopment is suffering (projects and affordable housing) major impacts.
- Atkinson- El Segundo: We are spending money on unnecessary things and ignoring things that need to be fixed. We support the retention of the Air Force Base.
- Fuentes- El Segundo: Sequestration is greatest concern and would like to know what the state intends to do about distributing the sales tax that Amazon is now charging.
- Mitchell- Rolling Hills Estates: Thanks to Senator Boxer for MAP-21 (a 2-year transportation bill.) It is the first long-term highway authorization enacted since 2005, but provisions for the movement of goods are not included in the bill. Federal legislators should develop a national freight policy. Sequestration will affect our economy and transportation funding as we move into different modes of fuel consumption.
- Medina- Gardena: Due to the fact that Gardena is 6 square miles, we cannot build out- we can only build up. We are in constant contact with our legislators and federal representatives- how else can they know what we need, and how else can we find out what they need from us? Encouraged close interaction with fed and state elected officials.
- Giordano- Torrance: Residents complain about street maintenance and there aren't the funds with which to address the issue. Tremendous amounts of money are spent procuring groundwater. It would be great to be able to identify federal funding for that. (North Torrance Well Field Project) At the State level, AB 109 (the realignment from the State to Local level regarding responsibility for people convicted of certain felony crimes) is overwhelming. Cities don't have the resources to deal with this responsibility properly – crime rates are rising as well as an increase in transients.
- Diels- Redondo Beach: Need support against the Department of Finance regarding redevelopment agencies. Thanks to those who contributed to the efforts made for local businesses (ADA.)
- Franklin- Inglewood: Concerned about storm water and rain runoff and the associated legal mandate from the RWQCB. Public hearings were held regarding the exposure of contaminants and who regulates and pays for the remediation. Cities involved in this issue do not think the RWQCB heard the cities who were there and we'd like the state to intervene. Inglewood is in need of funding for grade separations at 3 intersections, one of which divides a church parking lot from its sanctuary, impacting pedestrian safety.

- Jacki Bacharach commented that, as new legislation is written, there is very little consideration for COGs. She advocated for all COGs and said that policy makers need to incorporate such organizations and agencies for further consideration for funding and grant eligibility.

### **Federal – Congresswoman Maxine Waters & other congressional staff**

Congresswoman Waters made the following points:

- in DC we are all focused on the fiscal cliff we're about to fall off of - sequestration. When we entered into the fight against the debt ceiling, we had to agree to tremendous cuts (across the board) in Jan, 2013. It's unfortunate, but we need to get together and agree to not continue with sequestration in the formula we've made. The Senate is agreeable to compromise.
- Earmarked projects are great and I have gotten multiple projects in the South Bay that have benefitted from earmarks. We need to implore federal elected officials to discontinue tax breaks to the richest 1% (they need to sunset.)
- Dodd- Frank Wall Street Reform has caused a lot of concern. We are attempting to modify or kill parts of this legislation. Too-big-to-fail-institutions are unhappy because they are being dissolved if they pose a risk to the community. Community banks are safe.
- Fannie and Freddie debt will be reshaped but we do not know how yet. The private sector cannot handle this alone. Private and public sectors need to juggle the mortgage market together. I am in favor of 30-year mortgages, and I am not in favor of No-Document and Exotic loans, loans that reset, or the increasing of interest rates.
- I will be spending a great deal of time focusing on financial issues in DC as a member of the House Financial Services Committee - depending on the election outcome, either as ranking member or Chair.

Michael Davies, representing Senator Dianne Feinstein:

- The Senator is aware of everyone's sequestration concerns. She is in touch with local businesses that are in danger.
- She is also aware of the goods movement issues and how much our ports affect the rest of the nation.
- He stated that he will pass on everyone's comments to the Senator.

### **State – Senators Wright & Lieu, Assemblyman Bradford & other legislative staff**

Senator Lieu made the following remarks:

- Thanks to Congresswoman Waters for her efforts on Wall Street reform. Our offices now have more overlap, due to redistricting.
- Bad news: 10.6% unemployment still not good in CA, but we are fairing better than any other state.
- Pension reform, ADA reform on bipartisan basis, Prop 1B funds are disappearing. Need to look at new sources for transportation funding.
- Redevelopment: He voted for everything to help cities but the Governor vetoed all of the bills.
- He met with both parties involved in the water issues previously discussed and is aware of the issues.

Assemblymember Bradford made the following remarks:

- As policy makers, we often result in hurting local government, but not by design.
- CA's economic numbers are looking better.
- He chairs the Assembly Utilities and Commerce Committee and is shocked that the answer" to many of our economic and sustainability problems is "solar." Energy efficiency is the key, not solar. DO NOT BELIEVE THE HYPE. Do not forget that we need to be proactive with energy efficiency before we enhance our facilities with solar.

Senator Wright made the following remarks:

- He does not support cap and trade. The State cannot continue to price itself out of market places. Refineries in the South Bay are losing capacity. Our regulations for Winter and summer fuel blends create a problem if we ever experience a refinery shutdown, because we will not be able to procure gas from surrounding states since they do not use these different blends.

- The state should not bankrupt manufacturing companies with excessive cost and regulation or force them to move out of the state. They shouldn't have to compete in an environment where they won't survive. Planes and boats buy fuel outside of CA because it is too expensive here.
- The state is losing sales tax because of this. Why do something that makes life harder for us?
- He is wary of private post secondary schools (vocational) and their false advertising.
- He worked at SCAG before being elected and knows how important COGs are.

Stephanie Molen, representing Assemblymember Butler said that the Assemblymember concurs with local infrastructure, water issues and water funds, local control and redevelopment, and supports consumer protection.

### **Other Comments**

Valentine: need to raise excise tax for street maintenance

Lieu: transportation advocates are trying to changing the vehicle license fee.

Diels: we are so far from DC and Sacramento, and our 2 US Senators represent Northern California more.

If there is a means by which our Congressional and State Legislative delegation can work together to represent the state as a whole, that would be ideal.

Waters: Members of the Senate are elected from Northern California they both care about all of the state.

Franklin: for example, TIFIA was from Senator Boxer.

Fuentes: emergency preparedness and sequestration. Mexico and Japan have the best plans because their legislatures meet in locations where there are earthquakes and so they experience them. DC doesn't.

Waters: there is room for improvement in early detection. Focus needs to be on nursing homes and hospitals evacuation plans. CERT does a good job but teams need to share more. Everyone should take it.

Franklin: we just had a CERT training that was successful.

Wright: at the end of leg session, LARICS was passed. CEQA exemptions were needed to build new bandwidth towers. This will put LA County emergency agencies on the same bandwidth so they can communicate in emergencies. This issue comes before the Senate Government Operations Committee which he chairs.

Bradford: LARICS money received federal funds. LARICS was almost lost though due to opposition and fear of the towers.

Waters: Is there a local upcoming CERT conference? Answer: The Shakeout (earthquake drill) on Oct 18.

### **Next meeting – January 10, 2013 @ 8 am**

Jacki Bacharach encouraged those who had not yet seen the SBCCOG new offices to take a quick tour after the briefing. Meeting was adjourned at 9:44am.