

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Administration & Finance Committee was called to order at 12:00 p.m. by Chair Kevin Bash on the Zoom virtual platform.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Bash welcomed Chris Barajas, City of Jurupa Valley, to the Committee. Committee member Barajas led members and guests in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. ROLL CALL

Members present:

Mike Lara, City of Beaumont
Chris Barajas, City of Jurupa Valley
Brian Tisdale, City of Lake Elsinore
Kevin Bash, City of Norco (Chair)
Rita Rogers, City of Perris
Crystal Ruiz, City of San Jacinto
Ben Benoit, City of Wildomar
Karen Spiegel, County of Riverside, District 2 (1:05 p.m. departure)
Chuck Washington, County of Riverside, District 3
Brenda Dennstedt, Western Municipal Water District (WMWD)

4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

5. CONSENT CALENDAR – (WMWD / Perris) 10 yes; 0 no; 0 abstention. Items 5.A through 5.G were approved.

A. Summary Minutes from the December 9, 2020, Administration & Finance Committee Meeting are Available for Consideration.

Action: 1. *Approved the Summary Minutes from the December 9, 2020, Administration & Finance Committee meeting.*

B. Finance Department Activities Update

Action: 1. *Received and filed.*

C. Single Signature Authority Report

Action: 1. *Received and filed.*

D. Housing Trust, Economic Development Corporation, and GIS Service Bureau Activities Update

Action: 1. *Received and filed.*

E. Approval of Memorandum of Understanding to Provide Continued Membership of the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools on WRCOG for a Period of One Year

Action: 1. *Recommended that the Executive Committee approve a one-year extension to the MOU between WRCOG and the Riverside County Superintendent of Schools for the Superintendent to serve as an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee.*

F. Adoption of 2020/2021 Legislative Platform

Action: 1. *Recommended that the Executive Committee adopt the 2020/2021 Legislative Platform.*

G. Communications and Media Outreach

Action: 1. *Received and filed.*

6. REPORTS / DISCUSSION (Note: Items were taken out of order.)

A. WRCOG Economic Development and Sustainability Framework

Chris Gray, WRCOG Director of Transportation & Planning, reported that WRCOG prepared an Economic Development and Sustainability Framework in 2012 and included 50 key indicators. In 2019, staff reviewed the Framework and consolidated the 50 key indicators into 14.

A 2020/2021 review has determined that there has been a lot of activity in the energy & environment, transportation, and economic development sectors, but little activity in the education sector. While the document is almost 10 years old, it is still fundamentally sound. Potential minor changes include the addition of the Riverside County Habitat Conservation Agency and Western Community Energy under WRCOG's umbrella. More substantive changes would include an update to the indicators, revising the focus areas, and potential updates to the actions.

Staff will return to this Committee with an update in February / March 2021.

Action: 1. *Received and filed.*

B. Agency Accomplishments for 2020 and Goals for 2021

Chris Gray highlighted a few successful programs during 2020, such as the transition of the Used Oil Program to an online format which included the use of digital billboards and online vouchers, the LED Streetlight Retrofit Program concluded, which saw \$3.6M in rebates for participating jurisdictions, \$200k was secured for a WRCOG Energy Resiliency Plan, the reclassification of the Stephens' Kangaroo Rat (SKR), the TUMF Program completed its 109th projects, 12 Fellows were placed in WRCOG's member agencies during the pandemic, and the Future Forward webinar series deployed.

Goals include the implementation of an Inland Regional Energy Network, continued exploration of an Economic Development Corporation, the formation of a GIS Service Bureau, further exploration of a Regional Housing Trust Fund, and the development of a range-wide Management and Monitoring Plan for SKR.

Action: 1. *Received and filed.*

C. Appointment of one WRCOG Alternate Representative to the CALCOG Board of Directors

Rick Bishop, WRCOG Executive Director, reported that in November 2020 the Executive Committee made a number of appointments to outside agencies. One of those individuals appointed was not successful in his bid for reelection, therefore, an alternate appointment still needs to be filled.

Action: 1. *Recommended that the Executive Committee appoint Chris Barajas, City of Jurupa Valley, for a term commencing January 1, 2021, through December 31, 2022.*

(Perris / District 2) 10 yes; 0 no; 0 abstention. Item 6.C was approved.

D. COVID-19 Relief and Utility Delinquency Update

Tyler Masters, Director of Western Community Energy (WCE), reported that at the onset of COVID-19, Governor Newsom issued orders placing moratoriums on utilities (water, electric, and community choice aggregators), prohibiting the disconnect of services due to non-payment by customers. Some moratoriums will end in April 2021, while others will not end until the State is no longer in a state of emergency.

COVID-19 is impacting all utilities very similarly in that customers are unable to pay their utility bill. Delinquency rates for all utilities have increased; a large number of delinquencies are with residential accounts.

There are long-term relief mechanisms for the utilities; however, they are a few and far in between, and some are limited to certain sectors and cannot be used to replace lost revenue. HR 773 could allocate a portion of COVID-19 relief funds to special districts that provide essential services. However, there has not been a lot of traction on this bill since introduction in June 2020.

Casey Dailey, WRCOG Director of Energy & Environmental, reported that all assistance identified by staff offer relief to customers, not utilities. There are various federal, state, and local opportunities to assist customers and small businesses in various forms – grants, one-time bill assistance, and debt forgiveness.

Options for WCE include, 1) doing nothing; 2) identify Southern California Edison (SCE) Arrearage Management Plan (AMP) customers; 3) fund a direct engagement effort for AMP customers and apply a one-time bill credit; and 4) in addition to numbers two and three, provide bill assistance to customers who apply for the Bill Assistance Credit Program.

Committee member Brenda Dennstedt indicated that the California Municipal Utilities Association is having state-wide discussions. WMWD has a low-income assistance program for those customers who have applied for the CARES Program through the Southern California Gas Company and/or SCE; however, WMWD's program allows for a max of \$150 annually.

Action: 1. *Received and filed.*

E. Commercial PACE Program Activities Update

Justin White, WRCOG Staff Analyst, shared the differences between residential PACE (R-PACE) and commercial PACE (C-PACE) Programs, such as lender consent, requirement of financial statements, and a minimum property value. Additionally, R-PACE projects are almost completely dependent on contractors / sales teams, whereas C-PACE projects can be determined by a project developer or

building owner, to name a few. In contrast to a residential project, a typical C-PACE project is a months-long process.

December 2020 was WRCOG's most active month for commercial projects since inception of the Program, with just over \$27M in financing being provided.

Action: 1. *Received and filed.*

7. REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Rick Bishop reported that the first 2021 Future Forward webinar will be on WRCOG's Programs and Agency goals for 2021.

8. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

There were no items for future agendas.

9. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no items for general announcements.

10. CLOSED SESSION

There were no reportable actions.

11. NEXT MEETING: **The next Administration & Finance Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 10, 2021, at 12:00 p.m., on the Zoom platform.**

12. ADJOURNMENT: **The meeting of the Administration & Finance Committee adjourned at 1:16 p.m.**