

DEL MAR SAN DIEGUITO LAGOON COMMITTEE MINUTES

CITY OF DEL MAR

1050 CAMINO DEL MAR, DEL MAR

VIA TELECONFERENCE ONLY

March 17, 2021

1:00 PM

Council Liaisons: Deputy Mayor Dwight Worden and Council Member Dan Quirk

Members: Bradford Allison; Ellen Breen; Robert Chase; Geoff Criqui; Jill Gartman, Vice-Chair;

Lee Haydu; Julie Kawasaki, Chair; Carol Kerridge; Karen Lare, Secretary; Bill Michalsky

1) CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Jill let the meeting and called it to order at 1:02 pm. Jill, Carol, Ellen, Karen, Lee, Bill, Brad, Robert, Dwight and Dan were present. Geoff joined a little late. Julie was absent.

2) ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

Lee let the group know that she was resigning from the Lagoon Committee as she is on the Board of the San Dieguito River Valley Conservancy and so as soon as we can meet in person, she cannot do both meetings. Her resignation is effective today and she is sending in her letter notifying the City. Lee has been a part of the Lagoon Committee for many years and has seen many changes in her time. She will be working with the conservancy and working to support the completion of the trail through the valley. She will miss all and we will miss her! She signed off the call.

Carol let the group know that on Monday at 9:00am the Del Mar Garden Club has a speaker scheduled; Dr. Joanne Chory who is a Salk Professor and will present her research "Fighting Climate Change With Plants". She is the head of a large botanical project at Salk to see how plants can help prevent climate change. She will forward an invite to this group and it is open to the public.

Karen noted she had to leave at 3:40 and so she would need someone to take over minutes – Carol offered.

3) ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

None

4) APPROVAL OF MINUTES for December 16, 2020

Jill had minor comments on the minutes. Under committee questions on page 4 second paragraph CEQA is misspelled - under group discussion City of \_\_\_\_\_ should be City of Del Mar.

Motion to approve with corrections made by Jill, seconded by Bill. Motion unanimous to approve.

Karen makes a motion to move item 8 to after item number 4 and Carol seconds – all approve

8) NEW BUSINESS (taken out of order to support guest speaker):

A. Presentation from Sarah Giddings from SIO

Sarah is a professor of Marine Biology at SIO and studies water movement. How it moves from one point to another. She had presented to us several years ago and is going to focus this presentation on the local lagoon response to a changing climate. She will use the San Dieguito and Los Penasquitos Lagoons (as well as several others) for reference.

Lagoons are impacted by many factors, water resources upstream and the ocean water changes both influence them. Using the El Nino in 2015 and other storm events as examples will help us to see the impacts.

Estuaries are her focus but she works with others in the entire coastal zone. All types of factors impact the lagoons from high tides, beach erosion, cliff erosion, sea level, etc.

She reviewed the forecast changes in sea level along with the impacts of the tides during storm events. The impact from large waves associated with the storms and all of this (tides and waves) happening at the same time. Does this show us what could happen in the future?

She showed us the impact of wave direction as well and the resulting impacts on the coast and hence the estuaries. Impacts vary depending on where the estuaries are situated along the coast - relative to the wave direction and the orientation of the mouth of the lagoon.

Sarah referenced the impact, as it related to the tides and storms to water levels, in the lagoon and also off-shore. Her charts showed the impacts to the lagoon of a mean rise of about 20cm.

She then added waves to the mix and you could see how large offshore waves end up manifesting themselves in the lagoon. It is also important to note that wave direction matters to the impact on the water level in the lagoon. It modulates with the tides as well (as wave direction) which has been observed in several lagoons. Waves cannot propagate in the lagoon at low tide but can at high tide.

They (her team) did a comparison of all lagoons along the California coast. Split into 2 categories. 1. Those that close at times and 2. those that are always open. San Diego Bay is an example of a lagoon that is always open. They tend to be larger. Intermittently closed means they might close not that they definitely close every year. Smaller estuaries are grouped as intermittently.

Large estuaries mirror what the ocean does for tides and waves. Small estuaries do not go as low on tidal ebbs as the ocean. They have sills that impact them at low tide.

Higher waves drive a higher water level in the intermittently closed lagoons which is why there is an extra concern with rising sea levels and storm events. They drive more waves and water into the lagoon. There is another component to this as well – sand and rock movement around the mouths of the lagoons. Flooding was seen in many lagoons with the stronger waves and high tides. This was really seen in Los Penasquitos lagoon and the Tijuana Estuary which closed as did a few other lagoons. San Elijo and Batiquitos lagoons saw flooding. San Dieguito did not

close during this time but the lagoon mouth moved and the mouth migrated in such a way that it did not close.

On average, all of the lagoons showed net accretion at the same time as the beaches lost sand – all of this was driven by the larger waves.

When a lagoon closes – water quality can become an issue. Phyto plankton blooms can impact the oxygen levels in the lagoon especially when they die off and are consumed by organisms that consume oxygen and this can lead to lower oxygen levels. This was seen in 2014 as well. When a Lagoon closes the oxygen can plummet very rapidly leading to a hypoxic condition which is of issue to the lagoon and the creatures that live there.

She suggested we look at the Urban Tides Initiatives – it asks citizens to take photos of the tides and beaches.

Jill asked about what monitoring is being done by her team in our lagoon right now. Sarah replied that she is not currently monitoring the lagoon. The work she is showing us was part of a grant for that study. She had worked with Steve Schroeder on this.

Dwight – wondered about the more natural lagoons like the one just south of Santa Barbara, in Carpinteria and also asked about sand replenishment projects. Sarah noted that this compares to Tijuana as it is a very natural lagoon from a constraint basis although they have issues with water quality. The time Tijuana closed was right after a sand replenishment.

Precipitation and strong ebb tides can open a lagoon and large waves can close a lagoon. Natural lagoons are able to migrate and avoid closure. In terms of sand replacement – tricky and an important one for more studies.

A large sand replacement was done north of Tijuana and tracked for several years and it looks like it might be part of the close of that lagoon mouth which does not usually do so.

Dwight suggested that we would call on her before her we make a sand replenishment.

Ellen asked about the waves coming into the lagoon and does it not go out at the same level? Where does it go? Sarah said, just one wave goes in and out but when you have large waves the breaking waves lead to a net water level rise inside the estuary which will subside once the large waves have finished and at the next low tide.

Carol asked about what steps we might take when we know we might have both an El Nino and large waves? Sarah noted that several people are looking at this and that while yes, we can predict within a time frame an El Nino and large waves but translating this to an understanding on coastal flooding is needed. She has a colleague who is working on Coastal Flooding as part of the Seal level Rise initiative at SIO. They take predictions of both (waves and El Nino) and use the topography under water as well as the type of waves and angle of the waves to predict how much flooding might be experienced.

Karen asked if there was a recent update to the potential flooding levels of our lagoon. Sarah noted that the California Climate Assessment is a good one to look at for that.

Dan asked about the comment of seven inches of sea level rise. Is that for the region or San Diego? Sarah answered that no that is not just for here.

Sarah gave us her contact information if we had additional questions. Sarah N. Giddings [sgiddings@ucse.edu](mailto:sgiddings@ucse.edu) and [giddingslab.ucse.edu](http://giddingslab.ucse.edu)

#### 5) CITY COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT: (Dan, Dwight)

Dwight – gave us good news. We will receive \$818k out of the Federal Covid Relief Bill. City Council is working to understand what we can spend it on. Dwight had also noted that they are reviewing the committee system.

Dan nothing to note.

#### 6) REPORTS FROM OTHER AGENCIES:

##### A. Joint Powers Authority (Carol, Dwight)

Carol – last meeting Shawna reviewed that undergrounding permits have been approved along Via de la Valle - by the new ranger station and along the road which is slated to be widened. When complete, the site will be returned to its current state after the work is done.

There was lots of discussion about ShowPark. It is owned by the 22<sup>nd</sup> Ag and is out of compliance for water run-off. It has been temporarily closed. There is a volunteer group that has stepped up to help with this. The JPA wants to be involved as it is close to the Lagoon.

Carol mentioned that there is a proposed senior center across from the Dust Devil trail. They think it is still under review by the city of San Diego. It would be built next to the church.

##### B. Citizens Advisory Committee (Carol, Bill)

Nothing new to add on this

##### C. W-19 Restoration Project (Bill, Carol, Shawna)

No updates

##### D. NCTD & City of Del Mar (Railroad & Hwy 101 Bridges) (Dan, Bill)

Work on the Camino Del Mar bridge over the lagoon is on-going. The city is looking for additional state funding on this.

Second, the railroad bridge needs to be replaced – plans are approved to replace this bridge but the money has not been appropriated.

##### E. SANDAG/ Railroad Track Relocation (Karen, Bill, Julie)

No update at this point but they have started doing some samples in several areas of Del Mar for soil testing. Bill is questioning where the money will be found to complete this as a double train track project.

#### 7) SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. Events (Lagoon Day) (Carol/Bill/Robert/Julie)

The group will get together and meet as a group – need to determine dates. They will set up a meeting.

B. Education (Brad, Jill, Robert)

No updates at this point – no public work in this area

C. Blue Carbon (Brad, Carol, Bill, Geoff)

Carol noted that Wildcoast is taking over what they were planning. The group will reach out to Zach and see what next steps are.

D. Trails (Trails Maintenance Status/Crest Canyon Extension) (Geoff, Karen, Bill)

Nothing except update on Crest that we had previously.

E. Penasquitos Lagoon (Karen, Ellen, Julie, Robert)

Karen to take the lead to get the sub-committee together.

F. Review Water Quality/Sand Replenishment Reports (Jill, Bill, Ellen, Carol)

The report was included with the agenda. Ellen said that they have set up a sub-committee that met on Jan 13<sup>th</sup> to review. Bill, Carol, Jill, Ellen and Dwight as well as several experts attended. They reviewed the report.

G. Website (Julie) - update from Julie by e-mail. She met with Ed and Hal Mirsky regarding the San Dieguito Lagoon Website. It is still under construction but is looking quite amazing. Julie has invited Ed and Hal and will also invite Terry Kopanski to the next meeting in June to present the website and discuss how to move forward. There are a few issues we should start looking into in order to move forward from here:

1) How will the web site be hosted? Will the city be able to host the website or will we need use/raise funds to host it ourselves? Does anyone have other ideas of how this can be done? Were there any ideas when the website project was started? Can Dan or Dwight bring this issue to the city staff to get more information about what would be needed to have the website hosted through the city? We should start gathering information now for what our options may be.

2) They are needing more photos of the lagoon. If anyone has ideas of people who might have nice photos that “pop”, Hal Mirsky is looking for more pictures on sunny days that highlight the beauty of the lagoon. Julie is contacting James Coffee about the photo we used for our banner, but if anyone else has ideas, Julie is willing to follow-up.

8) NEW BUSINESS (continued)

B. Funding from Del Mar Foundation

Betty was under the weather so Dwight let us know that it looks like the Del Mar Foundation will fund the additional time for the committees to continue to meet into the next fiscal year.

Yes, they are willing. We will need to complete a grant application. Bill asked how much money we really need? Money is needed to fund the staff to gather and post agendas and minutes and post and process applications for open positions. The new fiscal year starts in July. Jill to take that back to Julie and to come up with a plan to make this happen.

Ellen asked about timing to be able to meet in person (re-opening) Dwight and Tracy will be looking at all committees and to timing.

Jill asked if that would be for quarterly meetings or monthly? Or would the City take it over at some point? Yes, quarterly for now. But we could ask for more money at our next meeting. Bill was concerned with quarterly meetings. Dan noted that it was probably best to keep at quarterly for now as most committees are not meeting. It will be on the agenda for the next meeting.

#### C. Update on Riverpath Trail Phase 3 (Dwight)

Dwight noted that the money is in place and the environmental work is underway and on-going. After this it will be the design and development. Although the preliminary design may be done, we will need permits and construction drawings, etc. The work will have to be done around the breeding season as well. At best it is a year away but potentially it may be two years away.

#### D. Update on Crest Canyon

Julie received the following email update from Edward Christensen, Senior Park Ranger, regarding the Crest Canyon Pipeline Repair:

“The contractors are working through some issues with a few of the drain basins in the south part of the project; they aren’t draining as well as the soils people had hoped. That being said, the pipe work is over and the restoration phase has begun with those contractors tying up the erosion control measures, planting potted plants, hydroseed mix has been sprayed etc. The trail system has been re-imagined and is being lined out. So, I believe things are pretty much moving along as planned. In terms of the dredging component, no changes there. Early on removing the sediments that had blown out in the lagoon was considered, but then rejected due to the extreme hardship involved in removing them and peripheral impacts of doing that. State agencies had apparently weighed in on this and agreed that the results were not worth impacts of the process.”

Are there any further questions regarding the pipeline repair, restoration or the sediment blown into the lagoon? Edward is willing to put us in touch with the right people regarding the biology side of things or construction if we have further questions. Julie will happily follow up.

Questions –

Dwight notes Gill Wilkinson had some film the first time that the canyon washed out – it is quite dramatic and he hope it can be posted as a u-tube video.

#### E. Participation in Reopening of City of Del Mar?

Dwight – he and Dave Druker have talked about it and DMVA is working on what to do as we celebrate the re-opening of Del Mar – maybe something in the Fall and they know we would like to a part of it when it happens.

F. Subcommittee re: Clean Up Project

This is the group to look at options for getting the railroad triangle area cleaned up – it is by the tracks - Zach Popper did not have the funds to re-store this area and fundraising would have to be done. They have plans which were done as part of the grant funding but not the restoration project. Ellen thought the conservancy also had money to do this work. Wildcoast is coordinating with the Conservancy on this. How to best go about it? Anyone want to serve on a sub-committee on this? Dan said he had reached out to NCTD on this but they did not comment yet.

9) OTHER BUSINESS (Non-action item): Discussion items not on agenda/items for next agenda.

- A. Watermark? Still being reviewed by Coastal Commission...Dwight will keep us informed
- B. La Atalaya? Resolved for now but keep on agenda
- C. Fairground East Lot- dirt parking lot possibly restore to wetlands...keep on agenda
- D. Discuss guidelines for planting in sensitive areas near the lagoon. Jill and Carol were contacted by a resident concerned about proposed landscaping for a house being remodeled and re-landscaped on San Dieguito Rd. He thought the proposed plan was not appropriate due to the proximity and likely drainage from watering so close to the lagoon.

10) ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned shortly after 4:00pm