



Flood Control District of Maricopa County

Flood Control Advisory Board

Meeting Minutes for February 24, 2016

Board Members Present: Robert Dewayne Justice, Chairman; Melvin Martin, Vice Chairman & Chairman Elect; Richard Schaner; Gregg Monger; Robert Larchick, Ex Officio, Ray Dovalina, Ex Officio

Board Members Absent: Hemant Patel, Secretary

Staff Members Present: William D. Wiley, P.E., Chief Engineer and General Manager, Dan Brenden, MCAO Legal Counsel, Patti Thoenke, Executive Assistant to William Wiley, Chris Hall, Finance Manager, Kim Belt, CIP Program Supervisor, Doug Williams, Planning Branch Manager, Tom Renckly, P.E., Dam Safety Branch Manager; Cathy Regester, Hydrology/Hydraulics Branch Manager; Edward Raleigh, Deputy Chief Engineer

1) **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Justice called the meeting of the Flood Control Advisory Board (FCAB) to order at 2:02 p.m. on Wednesday, February 24, 2016

2) **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The assembly recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

3) **APPROVE THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 2, 2015**

ACTION: It was moved by Board Member Martin and seconded by Board Member Monger to approve the minutes of December 2, 2015. The motion carried unanimously.

4) **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

STAFF RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING ACTION: To determine whether the Advisory Board should elect officers as nominated for the period of February, 2016 to October, 2016, based on the slate recommended by staff.

Presented by William D. Wiley, P.E., Chief Engineer and General Manager

Mr. Wiley stated that new officers were supposed to have been elected during the October meeting. Based on precedent, he recommended a rotation of officers. He reviewed the current rotation schedule as follows: Chairman: Melvin Martin; Vice Chairman: Richard Schaner; Secretary: Gregg Monger.

ACTION: It was moved by Board Member Martin and seconded by Board Member Schaner to approve the election of officers as recommended. The motion carried unanimously. Chairman Martin assumed the Chair for the rest of the meeting.

5) APPOINTMENT OF FCAB STANDING COMMITTEES FOR FEBRUARY, 2016 TO OCTOBER, 2016.

STAFF RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING ACTION: To obtain the Advisory Board Chairman's approval for appointment of members to the FCAB Standing Committees.

Presented by William D. Wiley, P.E., Chief Engineer and General Manager

Mr. Wiley provided the recommendations, noting that the more experienced Board Members have been designated as the committee leads.

ACTION: It was moved by Board Member Justice and seconded by Board Member Larchick to approve the appointment of members to the FCAB Standing Committees as recommended. The motion carried unanimously.

6) FISCAL YEAR 2017 PROPOSED OPERATING BUDGET AND DECISION PACKAGE REVIEW

STAFF RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING ACTION: Endorse and recommend that Board of Directors of the Flood Control District of Maricopa County approve the Fiscal Year 2017 Proposed Operating Budget and Decision Package

Presented by Chris Hall, Finance Manager

Mr. Hall noted that the budget draft may be altered prior to adoption and this will occur in this instance. At the time of the submittal, staff had not yet received the risk management allocation for the District from the County and this number will be adjusted by OMB staff.

Anticipated revenues total \$92 million, primarily consisting of \$51 million from property taxes and \$49 million from intergovernmental funds. Property tax revenue has increased by \$2.4 million. While the tax rate has remained the same, property values have risen. By design, a drop in grants has occurred. The District entered into a couple of multi-year grants that are ending this year. Intergovernmental revenue is increasing by \$5.6 million, mostly originating from the NRCS for dam rehabilitation. Licensing and permitting revenues remain relatively flat. Miscellaneous income has increased, mainly because revenues were underestimated in the previous year. There is a directive from the Board to reduce the carry forward balance. As a result, there is less principal on deposit with the Treasury's office and less interest collected. The total anticipated increase in revenues is \$7.8 million.

The total operating budget is \$32 million, approximately 32 percent of the total budget of \$101 million. Considering that total revenue is \$92 million, the Department will be spending more than it is bringing in. This comports with the Board's directive to spend down the fund balance. Comparing this year with next year, the operating budget remains unchanged.

Operating expenditure types include: Personnel, capital, supplies and services. Expenditure categories include: operations and maintenance and planning and project management.

The secondary tax rate in 2015 was 13.92 cents per \$100 of assessed value. For 2016, it increased to 15.92 cents. For the submitted budget, the rate was kept at 15.92 cents. There is potential to put forward a request to increase the tax rate. A potential increase would not affect the operating budget. All additional funding would go into the capital budget.

Project costs for the NRCS dams are increasing. The initial estimated budget was \$165 million with a cost share of approximately \$100 million from NRCS. As projects have moved forward, the revised estimated budget is closer to \$200 million. It is unlikely that NRCS will be contributing 65 percent of the additional \$35 million. In addition, there are some aspects in the planning process that NRCS does not reimburse for. This moves the project cost share closer to a 50-50 proportion. This is one of the factors in the consideration of a tax rate increase.

Chairman Martin asked about the effect of land sales on the budget. Mr. Hall stated that staff does not budget for land sales this far out.

Chairman Martin asked for clarification on grant revenues. Mr. Hall replied that the budget reflects grants that have been agreed to and awarded. The budget reflects a significant change involving the three year Gila River Indian Community Grant for salt cedar studies. This grant is ending in October of this year.

Board Member Schaner asked about the increased costs for NRCS projects. Mr. Hall stated that this reflects an inflationary component as well as archeological considerations. Tom Renckly, Dam Safety Branch Manager added that it is difficult to get an accurate estimate during the early planning phase. As a project moves through the phases of geotechnical investigation, final design, and meeting requirements for regulatory agencies, the numbers typically increase.

ACTION: It was moved by Board Member Justice and seconded by Board Member Monger to approve the Fiscal Year 2017 proposed operating budget and decision package. The motion carried unanimously.

7) FISCAL YEAR 2017 PROPOSED CAPITAL PROJECT BUDGET AND FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

STAFF RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING ACTION: Endorse and recommend that Board of Directors of the Flood Control District of Maricopa County approve the Fiscal Year 2017 Capital Project Budget

Presented by Kim Belt, CIP Program Supervisor

Ms. Belt stated that the proposed Fiscal Year 2017 CIP Capital Budget is \$69 million with \$1.7 million in the Small Projects Program. The budget is broken into categories of construction, labor and land. Projects consist of dams, channels, basins and storm drains. Current projects include the Powerline Channel, Vineyard FRS, Buckeye FRS No. 1, and White Tanks FRS No. 4. Vineyard FRS Phase 1 is under construction at this time and will continue through Fiscal Year 2017.

New construction starts include Vineyard FRS Phase 2. There are eight approved small projects which will benefit 28 properties prone to frequent flooding. The CIP budget moving forward is as follows: Fiscal Year 2017: \$69 million; Fiscal Year 2018: \$53 million; Fiscal Year 2019: \$36 million.

Board Member Schaner asked whether the small projects category represents a percentage of the overall budget. Mr. Wiley stated that staff reviewed the Small Project Assistance Program (SPAP) during the strategic planning process with the Board last year. The Board requested that staff set aside approximately \$2 million each year for this category.

Board Member Larchick noted that the major portion of the budget is for dam rehabilitation and asked why. Mr. Renckly stated that over previous years, the focus has been on planning for the structures. These projects have now progressed through design and are entering construction. The major costs begin during the construction phase. When the Farm Bill passed, the District received approximately \$80 million in funds. A requirement for receiving the funds is that the District must put forth its share. Mr. Wiley added that these funds became available at the time the economy was in a downturn; many of the cities at the time did not have cost share funds available to complete projects.

ACTION: It was moved by Board Member Justice and seconded by Board Member Schaner to approve the Fiscal Year 2017 proposed capital project budget and five-year capital improvement program. The motion carried unanimously.

8) FISCAL YEAR 2017 DAM SAFETY PROGRAM AND DECISION PACKAGE ELEMENTS

Presented by Tom Renckly, P.E., Dam Safety Branch Manager

PURPOSE: Information and discussion item only. No formal action is required.

Mr. Renckly stated that the District operates and maintains 22 flood control dams. Sixteen dams were built by Soil Conservation Services, five by the Corps of Engineers and one by the District. The Soil Conservation Services (NRCS) generally was building dams across desert washes primarily to protect agricultural areas. These areas have increasingly become urbanized. The program focus is on risk reduction and risk management, particularly in reference to public safety. Dam safety risks are reduced through dam safety rehabilitation. Other objectives include maintaining and improving the current level of flood protection.

Most NRCS dams were built for a 50-year design life. With urbanization the District now strives to achieve a 100-year design life. The Dam Safety Program conducts recurrent dam safety activities, as well as structure assessment and repair. A number of dams are surveyed on an annual basis to address active land subsidence. Others are surveyed on a three-year cycle. Earth fissure monitoring systems have been installed where needed. Land subsidence is monitored and evaluated through surveys and other engineering tools. In addition, there are 37 outlets located throughout the dams. Some are too small to visually inspect and are monitored through video inspection. Issues are categorized for mitigation by risk.

The proposed Fiscal Year 2017 budget includes \$781,000 for recurrent maintenance activities. The budget had decreased over time. Most of the monitoring systems were purchased and installed in prior years. The Department has been systematically catching up on individual repairs based on priority.

Dam rehabilitation and modifications are included in the CIP portion of the program. Two dam rehabilitations have been completed, seven have been identified for rehabilitation or replacement based on dam safety reasons and two have been identified for modifications. Dams under current rehabilitation include White Tanks FRS No. 4, Buckeye FRS No. 1, Vineyard Road FRS and Powerline FRS, McMicken Dam and Cave Buttes Dam.

Future projects include Saddleback FRS, which requires overall rehabilitation, and Guadalupe FRS, which requires modifications. Rittenhouse FRS south of Vineyard has the lowest priority in this category, however all three are on hold pending future funding.

Board Member Schaner commented on a sinkhole in the Gilbert area which was identified on the news recently, and asked about any impact on District structures. Mr. Renckly stated that it was not in proximity to any existing dams; however the area of the Queen Creek has experienced land subsidence and earth fissures. The sinkhole could have developed from a fissure.

There was discussion regarding the potential benefits of drone technology for inspection efforts. Chairman Martin stated that he has invested in drones in conjunction with surveying commercial buildings. He commented on the ever increasing technological advances and ease of operation. Mr. Wiley stated that the District is currently in contract with the USGS on a pilot project on the use of drones along the El Rio Salt Cedar area. Thus far, the County has not authorized the use of drones.

In response to a question from Chairman Martin, Mr. Renckly stated that he has seven engineers and technicians on staff.

9) FISCAL YEAR 2017 PLANNING PROGRAM AND DECISION PACKAGE ELEMENTS

Presented by Doug Williams, Planning Branch Manager

PURPOSE: Information and discussion item only. No formal action is required.

Mr. Williams stated that the Flood Control District is required by law to identify flood hazards and prepare plans to mitigate these hazards. Priorities include: Identifying longstanding urban drainage issues; assisting developers with well supported drainage patterns and updates; evaluating structural and non-structural solutions; and looking at the potential for multiuse opportunities such as trails and natural enhancements. Most studies are in existing Area Drainage Master Study areas, which often require updated mapping. The District works with cities to identify top priority areas in these studies. Smaller scale solutions will be addressed by a Design Concept Reports (DCR) prior to moving to detailed design or construction of a project.

The Water Course Master Plan Program continues with significant work currently occurring in the Gila area through the El Rio Project and in the Agua Fria River. FLO-2D technology provides the ability to see reductions in flows. The District also works with small developers to

provide information on the direction of flows within a property. Through our web site the District assists the general public by providing information regarding flooding issues in their area. He identified current study areas and progress on the color coded map. The budget includes two new studies requested by the City of Scottsdale as well as a DCR for levy sections along the Gila River. The total proposed budget is \$3.2 million.

Board Member Schaner asked whether FEMA has agreed to revise floodplain mapping based on the FLO-2D mapping. Mr. Williams replied that FEMA has accepted floodplain adjustments based on FLO-2D, however they have not yet accepted adjustments for hydrology.

Board Member Schaner referred to areas of development that had experienced flooding and asked whether the developers had been required to pass flood control requirements prior to development. Mr. Williams stated that many of the cities do their own reviews. However, sometimes older model results or incomplete flow paths may be the best information available.

Chairman Martin asked how much of the budget is outsourced. Mr. Williams replied that most work is performed by consultants with fewer than ten employees in the branch.

In response to a further question from Chairman Martin, Mr. Williams stated that the El Rio Salt Cedar vegetation study is not performed in-house. Work is complicated by the presence of two endangered bird species. Mr. Wiley stated that late last year, the District submitted a change to the floodplain in the Gila River west of the Agua Fria to Gila Bend to FEMA. The primary change in the floodplain was between the Agua Fria and State Highway 85. Approximately 7.5 square miles were added to the floodplain in the area. The major cause was the growth of salt cedar in the river.

Chairman Martin recommended hiring more staff and utilizing fewer consultants.

10) FISCAL YEAR 2017 FLOODPLAIN DELINEATION PROGRAM AND DECISION PACKAGE ELEMENTS

Presented by Cathy Regester, Hydrology/Hydraulics Branch Manager

PURPOSE: Information and discussion item only. No formal action is required.

Ms. Regester stated that delineation studies are performed to comply with Arizona State Statutes as well as the National Flood Insurance Programs. Delineations are performed to minimize both the loss of life and property and to identify where to mitigate or remediate flood problems. Information collected for a floodplain delineation study can be used for development review and planning purposes. There are over 4,000 linear miles of delineated floodplains in Maricopa County. The District delineates approximately 100 miles of floodplains each year on average.

The Cotton Lane area west of Loop 303 from Indian School to Greenway includes nine miles of delineation. In addition to updated floodplains, more accurate water surface elevations will be established. Updated hydrology has been obtained for the area, with the anticipation that the floodplain will become smaller. Approximately 35 homes are in the floodplain.

Rock Springs Creek is a one mile study on the west side of New River in the vicinity of Pinnacle Peak Road north of the Loop 101. The study was requested by the City of Peoria.

Several years ago, the District attempted to get in front of development by conducting broad brush Zone A approximate delineations across the County. These were performed at relatively low cost. Now the District is moving through some of these areas to provide detailed delineations. Twelve miles have been identified in the Palo Verde area. Another detailed study will be performed in the Jackrabbit Wash area along 15 miles of delineation.

The operating budget for Fiscal Year 2017 includes new delineation studies and completion of 16 contracts. Several studies have been submitted to FEMA and several more are slated for submission this year. It is expected that the District will receive comments from FEMA during Fiscal Year 2017.

In the spring of 2017, the District anticipates that the FEMA will be issuing new flood insurance rate maps for the Wickenburg area as well as the Centennial Wash area. These studies were completed by the District over the past three years. In the past, the District has had a policy of offering elevation certificates to those homeowners that find themselves within a newly mapped floodplain. This would affect approximately 100 homes in the newly mapped areas.

Chairman Martin asked whether Peoria offered to pay for the requested study. Ms. Register stated that Peoria did not offer to pay the costs and was not asked to pay. Edward Raleigh, Deputy Chief Engineer said floodplain delineation is a service offered by the District.

Board Member Schaner referred to the five acre parcels in the Peoria study and asked whether they were vacant. Ms. Register stated that most are vacant; however there are a few homes.

Mr. Wiley stated that strategic planning was completed with the Board of Directors last year. This included discussions about all the various programs discussed today. The Board of Directors directed the District to not only focus on areas with problems but also to review areas identified for growth in the next five years.

11) COMMENTS FROM THE CHIEF ENGINEER AND GENERAL MANAGER

Presented by William D. Wiley, P.E., Chief Engineer and General Manager

PURPOSE: Information and discussion item only. No formal action is required.

Mr. Wiley stated that 23 roadways have been identified with flood hazards and needed cautionary signs. Work has proceeded in partnership with MCDOT with the District paying for the signs and MCDOT providing installation.

The District's FY' 17 budget has been submitted. Mr. Wiley noted that after the 2014 storms, there was a total of \$2.3 billion worth of requests for capital projects. Approximately half of these projects are in planning.

Preparations for El Nino have occurred and continue to be a focus.

Mr. Wiley reviewed that the five Board Members appointed by District also serve as the Board of Hearing Review, as well as the Floodplain Review Board. The last time the Board of Hearing Review met, they had concerns regarding their options under the procedures. Staff has worked with counsel for the Board of Hearing Review to develop changes in the procedures to allow more flexibility and provide consistency with State law. A presentation and action items will be provided to the Board at its next meeting.

Mr. Wiley referred to the Operations and Procedures manual and stated that it was last updated in 2002. Board Members will be provided with an updated manual at its next meeting.

Mr. Wiley discussed that the District is losing valuable staff to retirement and other reasons. Two retirees have come back to work as part-time staff.

12) SUMMARY OF RECENT ACTIONS BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Presented by William Wiley, P.E., Chief Engineer and General Manager

PURPOSE: Information and discussion item only. No formal action is required.

Mr. Wiley stated that the main items that the Board adopted included funding for dam projects. Most other actions were relatively minor. There is a new Chair of the Board of Directors, Mr. Clint Hickman.

13) OTHER BUSINESS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

PURPOSE: Information and discussion item only. No formal action is required.

There were no comments from the public.

The meeting adjourned at 3:36 p.m.