

South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce
Meeting of October 4, 2022

The South Bay Association of Chambers of Commerce (SBACC) had its monthly hybrid meeting on October 4, 2022. Here are the highlights of that meeting:

1. Guest Speakers.

Tom Shortridge is a Political consultant in the South Bay, working for the California Target Book. He provided some insights about the 2022 general election, as follows:

- During COVID the legislature authorized mailing absentee ballots to all the voters in California. Since then, this was made law. Similar laws will be happening in all states for primaries and general elections. There will no longer be traditional polling places in neighborhoods. There will be a complete shifting to vote centers and drop off boxes.
- Does this change turnout? The turnout in the primary was only 33.2%, no real difference than any other gubernatorial election primary. We had 22 million registered voters in California and only 7.2 million actually voted. A lot of people think we will be lucky if we get 50% turnout this year.
- There is no real competition for any of the statewide elected officials. The Democrats are all solidly ahead. Probably the one race that will be interesting is the race for Controller. Lanhee Chen is a Republican who is running for Controller, and has a lot of crossover support.
- This year we have a historic low number of propositions on the ballot. Prop.1, about abortion rights was put on by the legislature. There is no opposition to it. The Democrats were looking to use it to drive out turnout. So far, the consultants agree that this has not turned out to be the case.
- As to the races, the Sheriff's race, and the LA Mayor's race will be the most interesting things on the ballot, and the rest will probably be "snoozers" to most voters.
- Mr. Shortridge's email is tomatcaliforniatargetbook.com.

Gregory Reed, General Manager of West Basin Municipal Water District (West Basin) gave an overview of the agency and an update of the state's drought condition. He gave a short history of the agency, and said the mission of West Basin is to provide safe and reliable, high-quality water to the 17 communities they serve.

- West Basin was formed 75 years ago to bring imported water into the region at a time when the groundwater resources that we relied upon became salty because of seawater intrusion. At the time, we needed to have an alternate source. West Basin was created to provide that alternate source in partnership with Metropolitan Water District.
- From there, West Basin also worked with its partners to implement a seawater intrusion barrier, putting imported water into the ground to prevent the ocean from continuing to pollute our groundwater basins.

- The sources of water have become less reliable because of the significant drawdown we have had to make in the face of the drought. It really is putting stress on water supplies. The states who share supply, including the country of Mexico, are looking at how we can share in the pain of cutting back take from the Colorado River.
- Mr. Reed illustrated, with a power point presentation, the significant stress on our water supplies. He showed the “bathtub rings” in the reservoir, which vividly illustrated how the water levels have drawn down over the course of this drought.
- Mr. Reed praised the communities for being environmentally conscious and responsive to West Basin’s conservation programs, such as the rain-barrel giveaways and rebate programs.

Charles Gale, of Metropolitan Water District (MWD), discussed the Pure Water plan of the MWD.

- Metropolitan is doing its first project in Southern California, in response to this long-term drought. Normally local projects are done by MWD’s member agencies but, at this time, Metropolitan is doing a major project with the sanitation districts of LA County at the Carson facility here in the South Bay.
- MWD is going to take the extra water that it’s cleaning and discharging into the Pacific Ocean and reuse that water to help us in the face of the drought and climate change.
- It is going to be a very big project. At the height of the project, when built out, it will produce 150 million gallons of water per day, enough for about half a million households.
- The Notice of Preparation for the EIR has been released and community input is requested through the scoping process to the final EIR in early 2024.

2. Government Affairs Report. Henry Rogers discussed the legislative timeline, tracking and annual scorecard, the details of which were in the Agenda package. He said the SBACC’s priorities in choosing the legislation to analyze, were economic recovery coming out of the pandemic, reasonable resources, and regional infrastructure. There were 10 bills that the SBACC supported that were signed into law. The South Bay’s Senate delegation averaged about 56% voting in the SBACC’s favor.

3. Agency Reports.

Jennifer LaMarque reported for Supervisor Janice Hahn’s office. She talked about homelessness as the number one crisis being addressed by the Supervisor. She’s really trying to expand the combination of the tiny home village concept with the homeless court. She is fully funding the homeless court that will be rolling out in Torrance in the next two months and that will go hand in hand with the tiny home village. This is based on the great success in Redondo Beach and the Supervisor is looking forward to that taking shape in the next two months.

Submitted by:

Olivia Valentine,

Councilmember, City of Hawthorne, Representing the South Bay Cities COG