

WEST BASIN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT

AUGUST 14, 2003 - Jt. Communications
McDonald, Kwan

AUGUST 25, 2003 - Board Meeting

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ACTION CALENDAR

OCEAN-WATER DESALINATION SEAWATER BARRIER PUBLIC RELATIONS UPDATE

SUMMARY:

As part of the in-house public outreach campaign, the Public Affairs Department plans to utilize consultants to fulfill various components of the plan. In order to carry out the numerous aspects of the plan in the most cost-effective manner, staff will handle the majority of the responsibilities and employ consultants for specific projects. As approved by the Board, staff will be responsible for managing all outside services and overseeing all aspects of project development. Staff will monitor their progress and provide the Board with regular updates.

The listed consultants were selected based on their previous working relationship from fiscal year 2002-03. Preliminary discussions were held regarding the possibility of the District requesting their service. However, the details of their "Scope of Work" are pending the Board's approval to move forward with the recommended consultants and their respective estimated costs for service. Upon the Board's approval, staff will work with the consultants to develop specific outreach plans for each objective. The following is a summary of proposed outside services and their estimated costs.

Consultant	Description of service	Estimated cost	Benefits
John Ruetten	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of message points. • Follow-up on message points, branding. 	\$2,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developed the first set of message points. - Familiarity with staff & project.
MBI Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadcast media contact. • Video production. 	\$9,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expertise in the field & connection in the media. - Developed several production pieces for the District.
LPC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speakers Bureau promotion. • Multi-cultural outreach program. 	\$8,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working knowledge of the project. - Proven success in these two areas.
VMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-cultural outreach program. 	\$5,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connection in the local community. - Expertise in multi-cultural outreach efforts.

Go Pixel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To desalination page and link to speakers Bureau. Design of Web Page. 	\$1,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - exposure to related desal efforts. - stimulate public interest.
Katz & Associates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic counseling and presentation development for Seawater Barrier Water Conservation Program. 	\$20,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possesses strong understanding of the project. - Good industry reputation. - Familiarity with staff.
Water Education Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce a state-wide desalination video in conjunction with the U.S. Desalination Coalition. 	\$100,000 (funded by U.S. Desalination Coalition) <i>District share:</i> \$10,000- \$15,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extensive experience in working with various agencies in video production. - Recognized industry leader. - Excellent contacts. - Experienced in joint agency projects.

1. INTERNAL COMMUNICATION (Overall estimated cost: \$2,000)

Goal

Staff will review the established message points to determine what changes, if any, need to be made. Knowing what the District wants to communicate to the public about its projects will provide clear direction for staff. Established message points also promote consistency in the information delivered to the public. The message points will serve as the overriding goal of future outreach efforts.

Staff:

- Establish final set of message points and distribute internally:
 - Department memo;
- Regular in-house staff meeting to effectively coordinate outreach efforts; and
- Meet with representatives from other agencies promoting desalination:
 - Research what outreach efforts were used by other agencies,
 - Coordinate with U.S. Desalination Coalition.

Outside service: John Ruetten

Estimated cost: \$2,000

- Conduct workshop to review of the established message points for any modifications:
 - Use the same methodology as the initial brainstorming session,
 - Provide follow-up to initial session for additional planning.

2. PUBLIC AWARENESS (Overall estimated cost: \$10,000)

Goal

To gain public support for West Basin's projects, staff will work to inform and educate the public regarding water-related issues and the District's efforts to identify solutions. Staff will evaluate the findings from previous focus group sessions and public surveys to assess the level of awareness on topics such as water shortage and recycled water.

Staff:

- Evaluate results of the focus group to develop future strategy for public awareness
Estimated cost: \$7,000 (in-house cost for collateral and promotional material):
 - Use the information to modify PowerPoint presentations,
 - Update & develop promotional material,
 - Incorporate findings to adult education programs and/or tours;
- Identify current programs/efforts where we can incorporate the message points:
 - WET (Water Education Tours), special events, promotional items; and
- Work with customer development section to explore the possibility of forming partnerships with existing customers (i.e. National Training Center, Toyota, Chevron) to promote public awareness:
 - Contact their public information or relations person,
 - Discuss ideas and mutual benefits.

Outside service: MBI Group
Estimated cost: \$1,500

- Contact local cable stations to gain exposure:
 - Duplicate and distribute the completed desalination video to local cable stations,
 - Conduct follow-ups and track outcome,
 - Provide regular updates on progress,

Outside service: GoPixel
Estimated cost: \$1,500

- Add a link to a desalination page on the District's current web site,
- Design of the web page,
- Add a web link to Speakers Bureau request form.

3. MEDIA COVERAGE (Overall estimated cost: \$10,000)

Goal

The goal of media exposure is to stimulate public interest and familiarize them with the District's programs. Competing with a myriad of newsworthy stories requires a persistent and aggressive approach. Media outreach will be a two-pronged approach: print and broadcast.

Staff:

- Update current listing of contact information for each of the following: newspaper, city and/or civic group newsletters:
 - Establish priorities and strategies;
- Develop story topics and establish a quarterly press release schedule:
 - Identify possible topics,
 - Bi-weekly releases,
 - Maintain a log containing copies of all press releases;
- Contact reporters/editors of newspapers:
 - Cold calls and follow-up,
 - Research if paper has reporters specifically assigned to water/environment issues; and
- Develop a database of contact, date of release, and result;

Outside service: MBI Group

Estimated cost: \$2,500

- Contact television and radio stations:
 - Develop a listing of contact information and strategy for each medium,
 - Identify specific shows that may be interested in the story,
 - Duplicate and distribute the completed video news releases,
 - Initial phone calls and follow-ups,
 - Work with staff to develop press materials, and
 - Maintain a database of contact and outcome.

Outside service: MBI Group

Estimated cost: \$3,500 (not including duplication & shipping fee)

- 30-minute cable program about desalination Filming and production:
 - Contact cable stations to air the show,
 - Conduct follow-ups,
 - Track distribution and outcome.

Media Day: Staff will be responsible for the overall planning. MBI Group will be used for logistical support and additional promotion if necessary.

Staff:

- Coordinate a Media Day at the West Basin Plant with desalination as the focus topic;
- Send out invitation and conduct follow-up;
- Work with Furman Group & U.S. Desalination Coalition to assess the feasibility of conducting a news conference; and
- Invite customers such as Toyota, Goodyear, BP refinery, Chevron, National Training Center to participate; attract wide media attention.

Outside service: MBI Group
Estimated cost: \$1,500

- (Logistics) Running of TV & VCR with a 60-minute loop reel and 10 Betacam tapes to hand out to media outlets; and
- Still photography and video production of the event are also available for additional cost (photography: \$1,200; video production: \$1,800).

4. INDUSTRY OUTREACH (Overall estimated cost: \$10,000 ~ \$15,000)

Goal

The purpose of the industry outreach is to gain recognition for the District and West Basin's projects among its peers in the water industry. With industry support and partnerships with other agencies, West Basin will remain in the forefront of desalination and recycled water quality.

Staff:

- Work with various departments to develop major articles with various versions and insert quotes;
- Utilize a listing of various industry publications to contact editors for article submissions:
 - Research topic interest, submission guidelines, deadlines, etc.,
 - Public Affairs will work with senior managers to make contacts,
 - Develop articles for submission; and
- Seek opportunities to make presentations and speak at various conferences:
 - Contact agencies to research future opportunities, programs, conferences, etc.,
 - Identify Directors and/or senior staff members who will give the presentations;

Outside service: Water Education Foundation - Rita Sudman

Estimated cost: \$100,000 (Cost to be shared with members of the U.S. Desalination Coalition; Estimated District cost: \$10,000-\$15,000)

- Produce a state-wide video on desalination; and

- Collect funding for the project from the U.S. Desalination Coalition members and jointly produce the video.

5. COMMUNITY OUTREACH (Overall estimated cost: \$13,000)

Goal

With an aggressive outreach campaign, West Basin will seek to gain the support of the communities in its service areas. Staff will work diligently to inform the public about the benefits of desalination and the quality of recycled water. By utilizing current opportunities as well as exploring new approaches, staff will reach a large audience with the District's message points.

Staff:

- Work with LPC to promote Speakers Bureau:
 - Develop PowerPoint presentations and talking points,
 - Provide direction and support to LPC and David Cobb as needed,
 - David Cobb will work with staff to make contacts and conduct follow-ups (the cost for service is covered in the existing contract);
- Participate in community events to provide information:
 - Provide literature and information,
 - Work with event sponsors to discuss possibilities of inserting District information into the programs or other materials,
 - Identify any opportunities to present;
- Research feasibility of bill inserts:
 - Develop and design inserts in utility bills,
 - Work with retail agencies and cities to promote public awareness; and
- Incorporate desalination and recycled water information as part of the tours at the West Basin Water Recycling Plant:
 - WET Tours,
 - Incorporate into other visitor tours.

Outside service: VMA

Estimated cost: \$5,000

- Develop a contact listing of local print media and organizations for multi-cultural outreach:
 - Establish contacts with newspapers that write for specific ethnic groups
 - Write press releases and distribute,
 - Maintain a database of contacts and outcome; and
- Contact community-based organizations to identify opportunities for promotion.

Outside service: LPC
Estimated cost: \$8,000

- Work with staff to promote Speakers Bureau for community/civic organizations and local chambers of commerce:
 - Attend chamber events and network.

6. GOVERNMENT OUTREACH (Overall estimated cost: \$10,000 - cost for collateral development and promotion of the Speakers Bureau)

Goal

Staff will work with lobbyists to garner support from local, state, and federal levels. As West Basin looks to secure funds from Proposition 50, an effective government outreach campaign is critical.

Staff:

- Evaluate previous government outreach efforts; and
- Coordinate with lobbyists to gain legislative support:
 - David Cobb will work with local legislators and cities to identify opportunities for presentations and to promote the Speakers Bureau,
 - Develop additional collaterals and information packets.

7. SEAWATER BARRIER WATER CONSERVATION PROJECT (Overall estimated cost: \$20,000)

Outside service: Katz & Associates
Estimated cost: \$20,000

Staff will work with Katz & Associates to receive strategic counseling on the seawater barrier outreach plan. Promotion of various uses and benefits of recycled water will be pursued aggressively in all of the outreach efforts.

- Develop strategies and plans for industry presentations:
 - Identify conferences and/or forums for presentation,
 - Assist staff in presentations; and
- Provide ongoing strategic counseling throughout the fiscal year.

FISCAL IMPACTS:

Funding for this project has been budgeted in the fiscal year 2003-04.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE:

Not applicable.

COMMITTEE STATUS:

This item was reviewed by the Joint Communications Committee on August 14, 2003 and approved to the August 25, 2003 Board meeting.

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board approves the recommended consultants and estimated costs listed below for the Ocean-Desalination Seawater barrier Outreach Program:

1. John Ruetten, message points - \$2,000
2. MBI Group, Broadcast Media - \$9,000
3. LPC, Multi Cultural Outreach Speakers Bureau Promotion - \$8,000
4. VMA, Multi Cultural Outreach - \$5,000
5. Go-Pixel, District Web site Links - \$1,500
6. Katz & Associates, Strategic Counseling and Presentation development - \$20,000
7. Water Education Foundation, (Cost to be shared with several desalination proponents to be determined) (\$100,000) - \$15,000

LIST OF EXHIBITS:

None.

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