



WEST BASIN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT
17140 S. Avalon Blvd., Suite 210
Carson, CA 90746

AGENDA NO. 27

JULY 6, 2009 – Administration

Kwan (Chair), Smith

JULY 27, 2009 – Board Meeting

Prepared by: Arlene Berman

Submitted by: Arlene Berman

Approved by: Rich Nagel

INFORMATION CALENDAR

LOS ANGELES CONSERVATION CORPS AGREEMENT

SUMMARY:

Two years ago, West Basin Municipal Water District (West Basin) established part-time tour guide positions to assist the Education Coordinator, Darryl Ramos-Young, in conducting school tours at the Edward C. Little Water Recycling Facility (Water Recycling Facility). Three tour guides were hired the first year and a fourth the following year. During the first year, two tour guides shared the teaching responsibility for one class, with a third tour guide serving as a substitute instructor, as needed. The second year, two tour guides shared the teaching responsibility for two classes as the school tour program doubled its student service numbers. The two additional tour guides also served as substitute instructors. Overall, the Tour Guide Program has been a successful endeavor, but has also required considerable time for training and supervising the program staff. Over the past year, the quality of the programs conducted by the tour guides was impacted by some physical and performance limitations.

The Los Angeles Conservation Corps employs young people to provide conservation services for government agencies and private contract sponsors throughout the greater Los Angeles area. The Corps has two decades of experience working with federal, state, local and private agencies, and a proven track record in executing large or small projects, providing technical expertise, and leveraging partner funding. The Corps offers at-risk young adults and school-aged youth to obtain job training, education, and work skills training opportunities with an emphasis on environmental and service projects that benefit the community.

One of the programs the Corps manages is SEA Lab. SEA Lab activities are operated by college students trained by the Corps, including guided tours. The Corps provides young instructors for West Basin's Splash Science Program that goes around to schools with their Tide Pool. The Public Affairs staff has been impressed with the professionalism of the SEA Lab tours, and is recommending that West Basin partner with the Corps as a job training site to provide guided tours at the Water Recycling Facility. This partnership would provide an additional job training work site for the Corps, and would demonstrate further West Basin's support and commitment to the community.

The Corps would recruit, supervise and evaluate a team of tour guides for the plant. West Basin staff will assist in the recruitment process and approve the selection of the tour guides. The staff at SEA Lab would recruit four tour guides to participate in the program (two active instructors per day, with two positions and the supervisor available for back up); provide a supervisor to coordinate, monitor and instruct the tour guide staff; provide training in basic job skills development, work safety, presentation skills, child development, and classroom and group management; conduct bi-annual,

formal tour guide staff evaluations; and conduct the two-hour Water Explorations School Tour Programs. West Basin staff will continue to provide tour guide training in the areas of hydrology, water supply and treatment, water conservation, and water industry careers; participate in the evaluation of the program and staff; coordinate the required logistics; and purchase the program equipment as needed.

The current tour guide part-time positions cost approximately \$15,000 and are funded through West Basin's Intern Program. The cost of the SEA Lab Program would be approximately \$20,000 per year and would be paid out of funds budgeted for intern positions.

The new program would start in fall 2009. The current tour guide staff would be used as back-up and at other West Basin events on an as-needed basis.

STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN IMPLEMENTATION:

Goal 6, Communications – Engage in effective two-way communication of West Basin's programs and policies with the customer agencies and communities we serve.

COMMITMENT STATEMENT:

Sound Financial and Resource Management – West Basin is committed to efficient business operations, financial planning and asset management.

FISCAL IMPACTS:

No additional costs would be incurred.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE:

Not applicable.

COMMITTEE STATUS:

This item was reviewed by the Administration Committee on July 6, 2009 and agendized to the July 27, 2009 Board meeting as information for discussion.

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

This item is for information only.

LIST OF EXHIBITS:

None