



Agenda Report

TO: CCCSWA BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: PAUL MORSEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
JANNA MCKAY, SECRETARY TO THE BOARD
DATE: OCTOBER 12, 2009

SUBJECT: MINUTES OF CCCSWA BOARD MEETINGS

SUMMARY

At the September 24, 2009 Board Meeting, a Board Member requested a discussion of whether the Authority Staff should prepare more condensed meeting minutes for submission to the Board.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. Discuss and provide direction to Staff on the preparation of minutes of Authority Board Meetings.

DISCUSSION

Actions taken—or not taken, as the case may be—at CCCSWA Board Meetings, along with enough detail that explains the matters dealt with, are prepared and presented at the next Board Meeting for approval. The initial record is captured on tape and on notes taken by staff at the meeting. The built-in sound system available at our normal meeting place (3rd floor conference room at Walnut Creek city Hall) has deteriorated over the years and while it sometimes works as an amplification system, it is unusable as a recording device. Instead, two small digital devices—pocket-size recorders—are employed by the Board Secretary to get the dialogue recorded on tape for later staff use. On Friday mornings after the Board Meeting, Staff meets to “download” meeting actions and to insure that there is a consensus around what happened and the information imparted during Board discussions to provide a framework for the Board’s determinations.

Using the taped sound tracks, the Secretary of the Board then prepares a near word-for-word transcript of the meeting dialogue; this is often challenging as the small recorders placed at either end of the meeting room sometimes make it difficult to hear the exact words spoken. This word-for-word record comprises about 20 to 30 pages. Using this record, the Secretary creates a summary of the actions for each topic on the Agenda. This summary document averages about 10 to 12 pages.

Working from the summary, the Executive Director, relying on his own notes and the input from the staff download session, reviews and edits the minutes. Often on matters of complexity, legal counsel, or HF&H Consultants (or others as appropriate) will be asked to review the material to insure that accuracy is maintained. The completed set of minutes is then calendared for Board review and adoption at the next

meeting. Following adoption at the Board Meeting, the approved minutes are copied onto archival paper and placed in special binders, made for that purpose. These records are never destroyed and are kept on-hand as an official record and reference for the future.

The Authority's minutes are summarized but could be labeled a "detailed summary" as the rule-of-thumb for their preparation is to insure that enough detail is contained therein so that a researcher ten years in the future, unfamiliar with the events at issue, could understand the decision and the reasons for the determinations made. The minutes prepared for CCCSWA Standing Committees follows the above procedure except they are calendared for the next Committee meeting which could be several months in the future.

Clearly, staff could prepare more detailed and lengthier minutes or conversely more condensed and shorter minutes. Staff looks forward to discussion and direction from the Board.