



## Board of Directors Meeting

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**Friday, September 21, 2012**

10am - 3pm

### **The Grand 1401**

1401 Fulton Street  
Fresno CA 93721

## **MEETING MINUTES**

### **I. Convene Meeting and Introductory Remarks**

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The meeting of the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley (Partnership) was called to order at 10:10 am by Chair Ashley Swearengin who welcomed Partnership Board members and guests and initiated introductions around the table.

Board members and applicants present included, James Aleru, Darius Assemi, Tim Bakman, Scott Carney (representing Secretary Cate, CDCR), Judy Case, Vito Chiesa, DeeDee D'Adamo, Randy Dodd, Diana Dooley, Mike Dozier, Lee Ann Eager, Sharri Ehlert (representing Acting Secretary Brian Kelly, BTH), Carole Goldsmith, Pat Gordon, Corwin Harper, Glenda Humiston-Advisory USDA, Blake Konczal, Dorothy Leland, Dave Long, Brian McMahon (representing Secretary Morgenstern, LWD), Sunne McPeak, Luisa Medina, Michael Navarro, David Nelson, Joe Oliviera, Leroy Ornellas, Pete Parra, Larry Powell, Mary Renner, Ted Smalley, Ashley Swearengin, James Tague, Ray Watson, Peter Weber.

### **II. Recognition of Sponsors**

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Chair Swearengin thanked meeting sponsors Fresno County Workforce Investment Board and City of Fresno for providing lunch, and acknowledged the Tutelian Company for allowing use of the historic and beautifully renovated San Joaquin Light & Power Building now known as The Grand 1401<sup>1</sup>.

### **III. Public and Board Comment**

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Stephen Miller, Deputy Director with Strategic Innovations, commended the Board for its support of the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Rooftop Solar Challenge<sup>2</sup>. This nationwide effort engages diverse teams of local and state governments along with utilities, installers, nongovernmental organizations, and others to make solar energy more accessible and affordable.

The Southwest Solar Transformation Initiative<sup>3</sup> (SSTI) is part of that DOE funded Rooftop Solar Challenge program. The focus of this program is to drive solar market maturity via significant improvements in 5 key areas: Permitting, Interconnection, Net Metering, Planning and Zoning, and Financing. The SSTI is targeting locations in the Southwest where solar

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<sup>1</sup> <http://historicfresno.org/nrhp/sjlp.htm>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.eere.energy.gov/solarchallenge/#overview>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.seiinc.org/index.php/programs/sustainable-communities/item/548-southwest-solar-transformation-initiative>

potential is abundant but resources are scarce. At present, there are 20 teams working with cities and counties to address the soft costs of rooftop solar with the San Joaquin Valley providing a 13-city cluster ranging from Modesto to Arvin. The Central Valley (Fresno) Grid Alternatives office serves low-income families throughout the Valley's 12 counties, covering the SSTI cities of Atwater, Clovis, Hanford, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Visalia, Fresno and Mendota. Recent funding has allowed Grid to expand into Colorado, starting with 11 installations on Habitat for Humanity homes in metro Denver.

#### **IV. Consent Calendar**

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In the absence of comments or objections, the minutes, secretariat report and other items were approved as provided.

#### **V. Board Appointments Update**

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Chair Swearingin welcomed Board members who were appointed in July: Supervisor Vito Chiesa, Randy Dodd, Dr. Carole Goldsmith, David Long, Michael Navarro, Dr. Larry Powell and James Tague.

#### **VI. County Panel**

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##### Bus Rapid Transit

The Fresno County panel opened with a Bus Rapid Transit video presentation by Ken Hamm, Director of Transportation for the City of Fresno.

##### City of Fresno – Smart Valley Places<sup>4</sup>

Keith Bergthold from Fresno's Development and Resource Management Administration talked about the process by which Fresno's General Plan was updated, noting that, "Fresno planning work is representative of Smart Valley Places effort to link community leadership with City planning projects for Smart Growth outcomes."

Mr. Bergthold spoke of the key findings from the general plan update process:

Community members and leaders are a critical and necessary element for achieving Smart Growth and sustainability

Knowledgeable and engaged citizens whose interests are served by meaningful plans and policies will cross cultural, social, political, jurisdictional and other boundaries to achieve goals for the common good<sup>5</sup>

Ms. Medina thanked Mayor Swearingin and Mr. Bergthold for their vision of Fresno, with growth and improvement focusing inward rather than extending outward. Ms. Medina noted that she had never seen such an outpouring and engagement of community residents in a discussion about land use and community development.

Ms. Case commented that cities want to expand just like businesses; to really shift the direction of growth really does take the big city to start there. When big cities are expanding their boundaries, the smaller cities get busy protecting their turf. The transition Fresno has gone through with new leadership has been significant; changes the thinking and lets the

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.smartvalleyplaces.org/>

<sup>5</sup> [www.fresno.gov/newplan](http://www.fresno.gov/newplan)

development community know they need to change their long term plans and investments. There is hope of bringing back the sense of community and vitality to down town.

Work Group Spotlight: Water Quality, Supply & Reliability

The Board agreed to Chair Swearingin's request to allow a change in agenda timing to accommodate Supervisor Watson's schedule.

Supervisor Watson provided a brief review and update on the progress made by the Water Work Group from its origins in the Strategic Action Plan. In late 2011, twelve counties from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta to the bottom of the San Joaquin Valley<sup>6</sup> settled on a carefully worded resolution of agreed-upon positions on water. This came as a direct result of two operating principles:

- Do no harm to another county or water district
- Avoid conflicts with the ongoing Delta Conservation process

Then in an effort at water diplomacy, those representatives put together a list over the past year of 18 projects related to flood-control, groundwater-recharge, environmental-restoration and other water-related projects that they all could support and to seek accelerated implementation.

These projects advance common agendas among diverse and often competing stakeholders while meeting the co-equal goals of improving water supply reliability and restoring the Delta ecosystem. The projects also avoid conflicts with long-term planning efforts such as the Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP).

Mr. Watson extended his appreciation to Sarge Green, Jim Tischer, DeeDee D'Adamo, Doug Brown, Elena Reyes and the many others who worked long and hard on this effort.

Mr. Watson commended and thanked the Partnership for its ongoing support of the Water Work Group and the efforts to develop a new, collaborative methodology of addressing water-related projects. Mr. Watson cited the power of collaboration, noting that in addition to defining common ground on what can be contentious issues, consensus on projects from multiple counties gives added clout when trying to secure state or federal funding to get those projects built.

Mr. Green presented to the Board a resolution for endorsement of the projects which are representative of the criteria and strategic framework of the Water Work Group; to advance the science and implementation of water management in the San Joaquin Valley. These are good strategic investments in environmental, water quality and flood control for the entire 12 counties.

Ms. D'Adamo noted that the beauty of this list is that it can evolve over time and the Partnership's endorsement would support the group's ability to continue to work together and bring a lot of state and fed attention due to the partnership of the members. Noting that the relationships built within the Partnership and constituent communities and counties are powerful and through the leadership of Mr. Ornellas and Mr. Watson developed trust and collaboration on a subject that had previously not had any.

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<sup>6</sup> The 12 counties are San Joaquin, Contra Costa, Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Sacramento, Solano, Stanislaus, Tulare and Yolo.

Commented Ms. McPeak, "Today is pretty historic; it is groundbreaking. The product from the work group is an immense piece of citizenship."

Said Mr. Weber, "I can't overstate the importance of what's been accomplished in light of the decades and generations of California water wars. We have to work toward common sense solutions for everyone and break out of our silos. We absolutely have to work together. This effort is doing that."

Mr. Ornellas thanked Ms. D'Adamo for her comments and leadership and urged the Partnership to provide a letter of support.

Mr. Weber moved to approved and was seconded by Mr. Harper. Secretary Dooley noted that her support does not prejudice any responsibly on behalf of her agency (DPH).

With the departure of Mr. Watson, the Board returned to the published agenda.

#### Orange Cove: A Rural Perspective

Sam Escobar, City Manager of the City of Orange Cove gave a presentation on the challenges and opportunities of small cities in the San Joaquin Valley, ranging from economic development to education and infrastructure.

Ms. Humiston noted that small communities such as Orange Cove are eligible for USDA rural development grants although there are challenges around the definition of rural which in 2013 will be based on communities of 2500 people. Secretariat staff took an action item to work with Congressman Costa's office to continue to address the evolving definition of rural.

### **VII. San Joaquin Valley Regional Policy Council Update**

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Mr. Smalley and Mr. Boren provided an update on the San Joaquin Valley Blueprint Integration Project, a Valley-wide program, funded through a Round 1 Prop 84 grant, to provide support to the 46 smaller Valley cities (populations under 50,000) in integrating Blueprint Smart Growth principles into their General Plans and planning policies. The valley's eight regional planning agencies have contracted with URS Corporation to lead the effort (with Fresno COG serving as the Project Manager). The URS Team includes three planning firms, all with excellent knowledge and experience working with and for communities throughout the Valley, to serve as Circuit Planners. These firms, Municipal Planning Services, Land Use Associates, and Collins & Schoettler, will be providing hands-on support to city representatives to integrate the appropriate Blueprint principles into local planning programs.

Similar to the Smart Valley Places program, the Blueprint Integration project seeks to communicate the benefits of applying Blueprint principles throughout the San Joaquin Valley. The two programs combine to reach all cities in the Valley and will complement other local and regional planning initiatives, including the Greenprint project. The Circuit Planners will work directly and in-person with representatives of the small cities seeking assistance, an approach that responds directly to interests expressed by smaller local agencies. While involvement is completely voluntary, the project's objective is to achieve full participation.

The first phase of the Blueprint Integration program is scheduled to run through January of 2013, with outreach during 2011-12 accomplished through a variety of means, including the

Circuit Planner collaboration with local representatives, workshops in each of the eight counties, and a Valley-wide workshop. By the end of the first phase, each of the participating cities will have utilized and/or identified locally appropriate strategies for integration of the Blueprint principles into local practices. Phase one deliverables will consist of tangible products, as well as additional strategies identified by local communities to further integrate Blueprint Principles in future phases.

Mr. Smalley further announced the October 10-12, 2012 San Joaquin Valley Fall Policy Conference as the 8th annual gathering of the San Joaquin Valley (SJV) local and regional agencies.

## **VIII. Lunch**

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## **IX. Economic Development Discussion**

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### Regional Industry Cluster Analysis

Ms. Kelly reviewed the process and results of the Regional Industry Cluster (RIC) analysis. In August 2011 OCED was awarded an EDA Economic Adjustment Grant to conduct a Regional Industry Cluster Analysis to update the 2006 Strategic Action Proposal (SAP), to:

- Validate 5 key SAP clusters
- Identify potential high growth high innovation clusters, assets, resources, and business and job creation opportunities
- Position the Valley for the next stage of recovery and renewal
- Create Action Plan

Ms. Kelly's presentation covered the process and components of the analysis and determination of the role of the Partnership moving forward. With a goal of moving the Valley to the next stage of innovation and global leadership Ms. Kelly noted that the best way for the Partnership to add value on a regional scale is to continue what it has done: to network, convene, integrate, advocate and catalyze. Proactive engagement will increase awareness and impact of the Partnership, and advance shared priorities and Valley outcomes.

Specific next-step recommendations included:

- Maintain OCED as a critical "backbone" organization
- Reorganize the Work Groups to align with Cluster Action Plan opportunities; identify cluster leads and partners
- Convene Cluster Work Groups/Action Teams quarterly to focus on high impact action plans
- Facilitate increased linkages between workforce, education and economic development, across the clusters
- Develop a strategy to target leakage gaps; coordinate with TeamCalifornia
- Foster an entrepreneurial culture; leverage research institutes and incubators
- Coordinate with state, federal and other initiatives focused on regional cluster strategies and cluster foundations

Mr. Assemi asked if there was a housing or construction element to the clusters. As the economy begins to recover housing will resume its position. Housing is a critical foundation

element and as the economy begins to recover there will be a need, but is there a workforce skilled for the infrastructure tasks that are looming?

Ms. Medina recommended that OCED focus on supporting the new valley clusters and to bring coordination efforts back into the office. Addressing Mr. Dozier, Ms. Medina asked if doing so is financially sustainable or or would it overwhelm the office? Mr. Dozier advised that OCED has been gearing up with additional staff, looking at Health and Wellness to revitalize the cluster and developing good momentum internally. Mr. Dozier noted that OCED is looking for organizations that naturally align with the clusters and where we can't find one staff will step in to assist, as have been doing with the Housing Collaborative.

Copies of the final report were distributed to all members present.

### TeamCalifornia

Mike Amman and Tim Kelley introduced TeamCalifornia<sup>7</sup> as a private, nonprofit California membership-based corporation that brings together economic development organizations from across the state to market their communities for business investment and job creation in California. TeamCalifornia's members are important advocates and resources for business development in California; they know how to expedite projects and are invaluable sources of information for site location assistance anywhere in the state.

Citing the need for job creation and expansion across the state, Mr. Amman noted the importance of communication and collaboration across local and regional economic development organizations. Noting, "Industry drives the California economy. Our goal is to assist business with their location and expansion needs across the state." Working with local and regional EDC/EDA professionals throughout the state, Team California works with individual businesses seeking new opportunities.

Chair Swearengin asked what impact is seen from reduced funding for county EDCs. Mr. Kelley advised that all are still alive except Merced but the activity varies from county to county. People are getting more innovative and working better together which seems to be bringing in more money for all of us.

Ms. McPeak asked about the biggest concerns of the people doing deals (expanding or locating) in the Valley. Mr. Amman responded that TeamCalifornia is a marketing organization so have no lobby or policy activities, but many of the perceptions outside is of the negative economy of California. Two points come up over and over again:

- Economic uncertainty of the state; disbanding economic development was a big impact as is CEQA; the process is ungainly and untimely
- Access to capital is a challenge; priority should be based on projects that CAN be done rather than projects that SHOULD be done

Mr. Weber suggested at an upcoming Board meeting having a CEQA discussion to get behind some of the reform proposals.

In conclusion Mr. Kelley stated that attraction without retention/expansion efforts doesn't work; the two need to work in tandem.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.teamca.org/index.php>

### Panel Discussion

California Central Valley Economic Development Corporation<sup>8</sup> (CCVEDC) is a regional marketing group with a mission to promote job creation in the valley, mountain, and desert communities located within Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Tulare. This program supplements the existing efforts of individual agencies throughout the area.

Ms. Eager noted the importance of the collaborative attitude of TeamCalifornia's perspective of cross-organization and cross-geographic communication. This kind of effort can help ensure that a business considering expansion in or relocation to California ends up here, even if it isn't in the original target area.

Diane Howerton of the California SBDC spoke about the effectiveness of Small Business Development Centers in the Valley, especially the impact on sales growth and employment growth.



Mr. Tse launched a discussion about job growth due to new agricultural technologies when combined with broadband open numerous possibilities for new industries. Working in concert with California's historically powerful agriculture base, new technologies ranging from computerized water management to broadband communications for distance learning, public safety, telehealth and telemedicine, along with innovations in transportation and logistics can position California, and especially the San Joaquin Valley, for significant job and industry growth.

Mr. Tse's slide presentation detailing Broadband as a platform for growth across the San Joaquin Valley resulted in a spirited discussion.

Mr. Dozier asked Board members which elements in Mr. Tse's presentation captured their attention and where they see their organizations fitting in.

Mr. Konczal responded that the limited resources in the Valley preclude leeway to be imprecise in rolling out any plan. There needs to be a high degree of coordination across WIBs, educational institutions, economic development organizations and the public and private sectors.

Ms. Eager stated that we need to educate business and the public on what clusters are and why we need them; people don't understand the concept.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.centralcalifornia.org/About.aspx>

Chair Swearingin commented that the Regional Jobs Initiative was able to articulate the cluster as being a local and more connected version of your trade association.

Ms. Howerton asked if the Partnership is really focused on what the clusters or if we need to look further and deeper into the needs of the businesses within the clusters.

Mr. Weber noted that the discussion, while exciting, lacked tangibility regarding specific initiatives and champions. Mr. Weber suggested setting up a special meeting of the Partnership, EDCs, WIBs and education to come away with very tangible initiatives, roles and responsibilities.

Mr. Dozier stated that all of the participants in the cluster analysis have been receptive to taking a lead role. The CCVEDC has historically been a marketing only organization but has recently taken on the role of putting together the regional CEDS. Ms. Eager commented that the CCVEDC is considering formation as an economic development district to qualify for and pursue grants.

Mr. Harper commented that this has been a tremendous end-of- meeting conversation but the topic warrants a few more steps before diving down to the details. Mr. Harper suggested a meeting of the Partnership Executive Committee with TeamCalifornia and the economic development folks to determine roles and not compete for resources.

Chair Swearingin noted that the only good thing about not having resources is that there is much less contention. Mr. Powell urged the Board to remember there are resources available through the county offices and offices of education.

Mr. McMahon reminded the board that the state level employment training panel is available to assist with attraction, retention and expansion of business. Noting there is a new statewide workforce plan coming in October<sup>9</sup>; Mr. McMahon advised that the governor's office of business investment has come close to doubling its staff with very senior and experienced personnel.

## **X. Work Group Spotlight: Water Quality, Supply & Reliability**

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See notes above

## **XI. Public and Board Comment**

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Mr. Dozier reminded the Board of the annual Exemplary Practices in Education Leadership Conference: Leading World Class Learning for our Valley Schools slated for January 29, 2013.<sup>10</sup>

## **XII. Adjournment**

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In the absence of any further public or Board comments, the meeting was adjourned at 3:11 pm.

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<sup>9</sup> [http://www.labor.ca.gov/pdf/November\\_ETP\\_Press\\_Release.pdf](http://www.labor.ca.gov/pdf/November_ETP_Press_Release.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> <http://fresno.k12oms.org/eventdetail.php?gid=1033&id=65102>