Item A

State Of California

ALFRED E. ALQUIST SEISMIC SAFETY COMMISSION

Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr.

Alfred E. Alquist Seismic Safety Commission
Minutes of Teleconference Meeting
June 9, 2011

Members Participating

Mark Church, Chairman
Kandiah "Arul" Arulmoli
Jay Elbettar
Ronald Garcia
Michael Gardner
Helen Knudson
Sharron Leaon (joined at 10:04 a.m.)
John McPartland
Emir Macari
Elizabeth Mathieson
Gary McGavin
Mathew Ortiz
Ali Sadre
Kathy Smith
Howard Smith (joined at 10:04 a.m.)

Members Absent

William Chubb, Vice Chairman
Christina Curry
John Littrell
Kathy Smith
Michael Stevens

Staff Present

Richard McCarthy, Executive Director
Karen Cogan, Administrative Manager
Henry Reyes, Structural Engineer
Fred Turner, Senior Structural Engineer

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Commission Chair March Church called the meeting of the Alfred E. Alquist Seismic Safety Commission to order at 10:02 a.m. Administrative Manager Karen Cogan called the roll and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

II. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Chairman Church reported that the state budget negotiations were ongoing, so the future was still uncertain. He noted that Governor Brown's revised May budget proposes elimination of 43 state boards and commissions, but the Seismic Safety Commission was lucky not to be one of them.

III. APPROVAL OF MAY 12, 2011 MINUTES

ACTION: Commissioner Michael Gardner made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Emir Macari that:

The Commission approve the May 12 minutes as presented.

* Motion carried, 14 - 0 - 1 (Commissioner Walls abstaining).

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Administrative Issues

Executive Director Richard McCarthy recalled that the Commission approved expenditures of $63,000 at the last meeting for 2011-12 accounting services, leaving about $124,000 left for other expenses. He said one of the proposals the Commission will be considering at this meeting is $34,380 for a building safety assessment project. He recommended that the Commission authorize the staff to replace one of the old copier machines in the office, and he estimated the cost at $14,000.

ACTION: Commissioner Helen Knudson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Macari, that:

The Commission authorize replacement of the copier as recommended.

* Motion carried, 15 - 0.

Budget Update

Mr. McCarthy reported that he met with the new Agency secretary to review the Commission's projects and activities, and the secretary was pleased with the Commission's performance, especially its outreach to the agricultural industry and businesses.

Meeting with Japanese Business Community

Mr. McCarthy said the Governor's Office is planning a meeting with Japanese businesses in Sacramento on June 22 which Commission staff will be attending. He noted the Governor is proposing a memorandum of understanding between California and a Japanese business council to explore possibilities of working together. He indicated he would send commissioners an agenda and a list of participants. Commissioner Ron Garcia asked if Suzuki International, a company headquartered in California, had been invited. Mr. McCarthy replied that he was not sure, but added that he would suggest including Suzuki.

V. UPDATE ON PROPOSITION 1D SEISMIC RETROFIT FOR SCHOOLS PROJECT REPORT

Commissioner Gary McGavin advised that he attended a meeting of the State Allocation Board on May 25 to consider revising the criteria for school districts eligible for Proposition 1D funding and was surprised at the outcome. He noted that the Seismic Safety Commission approved an additional $50,000 for the Office of Public School Construction (OPSC) to use the evaluation template for more candidate school buildings, and OPSC recommended modifying the criteria to lower the spectral acceleration threshold, add two more building types, and obtain concurrence of the Division of State Architect (DSA) as a condition of participation in the funding program. However, the State Allocation Board decided to open eligibility to all Category 2 buildings, limit candidate buildings to those designed to be occupied by students and staff, and require a structural engineering report to identify building deficiencies and confirm collapse potential. The State Allocation Board also broadened eligibility to geological hazards other than ground shaking, including liquefaction, landslides, and faulting.

Commissioner McGavin said that the Commission's intent was to facilitate evaluation of the most vulnerable school buildings subject to strong ground shaking by creating a template that could be used statewide and would be less expensive than having individual reports done by structural engineers. He observed that opening the program to other hazards means the template developed by OPSC would no longer apply, undermining the whole purpose of the Commission's effort to develop a uniform assessment methodology that would assist more schools in applying for Proposition 1D funding.

Commissioner McGavin reported that the State Allocation Board considered a motion to provide Proposition 1D funds for interim housing, but that motion failed, as did a motion to provide funding for voluntary incremental upgrades.

Commissioner McGavin commented that the State Allocation Board did not seem interested in the Commission's advice, so the Commission might want to reconsider the $50,000 augmentation approved at the last meeting to expand use of the evaluation template. He recommended that Mr. McCarthy speak with Scott Harvey, a State Allocation Board member, to find out more about the Board's position.

Commissioner Howard Smith reported that DSA and OPSC are working to make changes in the draft regulations and eligibility criteria for the State Allocation Board's subcommittee to consider. He added that the existing template would need to be modified significantly to include additional hazards. Mr. McCarthy pointed out that the two additional geological hazards are difficult to assess, and Commissioner McGavin added that mitigation of those hazards is also very expensive.

Structural Engineer Henry Reyes proposed inviting Mr. Zian from OPSC to provide an update at the July meeting.

ACTION: Commissioner McGavin made a motion, second by Commissioner Gardner, that:

The Commission hold off on reconsidering its $50,000 augmentation to OPSC until it is clear that Proposition 1D funds will be used for the best possible value, and to reagendize this matter for discussion at the July meeting.

Commissioners expressed interest in finding out more about implementation timelines and having an update from Mr. Zian at the July meeting.

* Motion carried, 15 - 0.

VI. RESEARCH FUND PROJECTS

Projects Under Development

Improvements to the Building Safety Assessment Project

Mr. Turner proposed that the Commission allocate $34,380 for a six-month contract to investigate possible improvements to building safety assessment procedures in light of lessons learned in recent earthquakes. He reported that the Commission staff was negotiating a contract with CalEMA, and he requested authorization to proceed.

Mr. McCarthy advised that most of the funding will come from the Insurance Fund rather than the Research Fund. He recommended that the Commission authorize use of either fund for this project.

ACTION: Commissioner John McPartland made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Knudson, that:

The Commission authorize the staff to proceed with negotiations as proposed.

* Motion carried, 15 - 0.

Survey of Hospital Evacuations After Recent Earthquakes

Mr. Turner drew attention to the written project summary in the meeting packet. He said the scope of work is largely unchanged, but further adjustments need to be made because of the high overhead costs associated with oversight. He referred to the last page of his report, and noted that there are two academic institutions providing oversight: overhead for Johns Hopkins is estimated at $9,028, and PEER's overhead is estimated at $6,250, for total of $16,278, or 31 percent of the total cost. Mr. Turner explained that the Commission's gift agreement wit the Attorney General's Office limits the overhead for research projects to 25 percent. He added that this project has good technical merits and timeliness, and the research will produce important seismic safety benefits for the state. He added that he could provide more details about the project and the hospital survey form for commissioners interested in more information.

Mr. McCarthy noted that 25 percent of the Commission's $49,900 contribution would be $12,500. He recommended that the Commission authorize the staff to negotiate an agreement that would not exceed the 25 percent limit on overhead.

ACTION: Commissioner Arul Arulmoli made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Gardner, that:

The Commission authorize expenditure of $49,900 for this project, with the condition that the staff negotiate a maximum overhead cost of 25 percent.

* Motion carried, 14 - 0 (Commissioner Macari absent during voting).

Engaging Californians in a Shared Value for Resiliency: Practical Lessons Learned from the Great California ShakeOut

Mr. McCarthy recommended that the Commission authorize expenditure of $49,900 to help the Southern California Earthquake Center identify and apply lessons learned in the past three ShakeOut events. He said the Commission was one of the originators of this effort, which began in 2008 and expanded to a statewide activity in 2009 and 2010. Organizers want to expand industry participation in future years.

Commissioner Knudsen remarked that participation in the annual ShakeOut continues to grow each year, and the event is a worthwhile tool for enhancing awareness of seismic safety and earthquake preparedness. She expressed support for getting more businesses involved and evaluating lessons learned from past events.

ACTION: Commissioner Knudson made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Garcia, that:

The Commission approve expenditure of $49,900 as proposed.

* Motion carried, 14 - 0 (Commissioner Macari absent during voting).

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no members of the public who wished to address the Commission.

VIII. GOOD OF THE MEETING

Chairman Church asked the Nominating Committee chaired by Commissioner McGavin to reconvene and come back with recommendations for a new chair and vice chair at the July meeting.

Commissioner McGavin asked about the status of commissioner reappointments. Mr. McCarthy said he spoke with a representative of the Governor's Office who suggested that the Commission elect officers from its present composition. He noted that the Senate still needs to confirm commissioners appointed at the end of 2010. Commissioner Ali Sadre clarified that commissioners whose terms expired on May 15 can continue to serve until July 15 if they are not reappointed.

Commissioner Gardner reported that he received a letter from the Speaker's Office asking him to submit background information by June 1. Commissioners Elbettar, McPartland, Garcia, Knudson, and Arulmoli indicated they had received the same request. Commissioner Elbettar added that the Senate Rules Committee wants the newly appointed commissioners to submit conflict of interest statements as well.

Commissioner McGavin asked commissioners interested in serving as officers to let him know. He proposed that the Nominating Committee schedule a teleconference meeting to review the candidates and develop a recommended slate of officers. Mr. McCarthy advised that the committee should provide public notice of its teleconference meeting to comply with open meeting laws.

Commissioner Gardner announced that he had been re-elected on June 7, and other committees congratulated him on his re-election.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chairman Church adjourned the meeting at 10:57 a.m.

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Sue Celli
Office Manager

Approved by:

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Richard McCarthy
Executive Director