



CITY OF MORRO BAY

CITY HALL

595 Harbor Street
Morro Bay, CA 93442

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 1, 2015

At a combined City of Morro Bay, Cayucos Sanitary District (CSD) meeting last night, the Morro Bay City Council voted unanimously to continue to work cooperatively with the Cayucos Sanitary District toward a regional solution to replace the jurisdictions' 62-year-old, oceanfront, Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP).

At the meeting, which was planned for the parties to continue to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding detailing essential cooperation for a new WWTP and Water Reclamation Facility (WRF), Morro Bay approved a motion committing to establish common goals, share costs on a pro-rata basis, and complete construction on a new site in the five years remaining until permits at the existing site expire.

At the joint meeting in the Cayucos Veterans Hall, the CSD Board President announced that the Board had held a special meeting at 4:30 that afternoon to adopt a resolution withdrawing from the long-planned joint project. The CSD resolution repealed all previous commitments of cooperation with Morro Bay on developing a new WWTP to service both the City and CSD and resolved to pursue an independent alternative. When the time came for the CSD Board to consider the Morro Bay's motion to work cooperatively toward development of a new WWTP/WRF the Board chose neither to discuss nor vote on the Morro Bay motion.

The existing City of Morro Bay / CSD wastewater treatment plant is 62-years-old, sits on the oceanfront, lies within a 100-year flood plain, and, even with water conservation, discharges nearly 1 million gallons of highly treated water into the ocean every day.

For over two years, both independently and as partners, Morro Bay and Cayucos have been planning a "managed retreat" from the existing facility off of the California coastline - committing to construct a new facility with a significant water reclamation component at a location two miles from the beach.

The California Coastal Commission and Regional Water Quality Control Board have both recently affirmed this regional solution that effectively addresses both the serious concern of maintaining an aged facility on the coast, and the loss of a million gallons of water each day – enough to provide over 85% of the communities' clean-water requirements.

In the past two years, the City of Morro Bay has spent almost \$600,000 on multiple independent engineering studies to identify the most cost-effective and environmentally sound regional solution to our regional waste-water and water-reclamation challenges. Studies commissioned and funded by Morro Bay envisioned a regional partnership - incorporating Cayucos waste-water requirements into the engineering and cost-estimate research.

The City of Morro Bay remains committed to working cooperatively with all stakeholders to achieve a regional solution that addresses both wastewater treatment and water reclamation, in a sustainable approach that further strengthens the region's water supply requirements and protects our county's fragile coastal environment.

This commitment includes a continuing flexibility to find a single regional solution, while recognizing construction of a new WWTP must continue to move forward quickly on our five-year timeline, before the last discharge permit for the existing facility expires – and to capture, recycle and reuse the 1100 acre-feet of water wastefully dumped into the ocean each year.

Contacts

David Buckingham
City Manager

dbuckingham@morro-bay.ca.us

Rob Livick
Public Works Director

rlivick@morro-bay.ca.us

Jamie Irons
Mayor

jirons@morro-bay.ca.us