

ODOR CONTROL ADVISORY BOARD

Foundation for the Junior Blind

5300 Angeles Vista Blvd.

December 16, 2002

MEETING #5 MINUTES

Attendees: See attached attendance list

Meeting Minutes Recorded by: Hyginus O. Mmeje, City of Los Angeles,
Bureau of Sanitation, Wastewater Engineering
Services Division

Handouts: various speakers explained the following handouts:

1. Meeting Agenda
2. Minutes of November 18, 2002 meeting.
3. Scope of Work for Bowker & Associates, Inc., Revised Date: December 13, 2002
4. Update on Independent Review of Odor Control Program that summarized Mr. Bowker's visit during November 18 – November 20, 2002.
5. Concerns About the Sewer Odors in South Los Angeles by Milton T. Bassett.
6. A mailer in Spanish and another in English entitled: Introducing the City of Los Angeles' New Odor Reporting Hotline 1-866-44SEWER
7. Sample sign entitled: Sewer Construction Project Underway, Report Sewer Odors, 866-44SEWER, www.lasewers.org
8. A list of 15 City Departments briefed by the Bureau of Sanitation on the Odor Hotline Project
9. November 2001 letter entitled: New City of Los Angeles Hotline to Report Sewer Odors that was sent to 33 churches by the Bureau of Sanitation
10. List of the 33 churches that received the November 2001 letter.
11. A copy of Feb 28 – March 6 Ad in Los Angeles Sentinel advertising the Odor hotline 866-44SEWER
12. A copy of the odor hotline web page and a copy of on-line web form for reporting sewer odor
13. Odor Reporting Hotline business card.

Introductory Issues

- John Saito chaired the meeting.
- Member Introductions – Board Members introduced themselves.

- Minutes of November 18, 2002 meeting was adopted. Both items 30 and 37 of the minutes were verified. For Item 30, the estimated time for wastewater to flow from the Valley to Hyperion is 12 to 18 hours. The City responded to item 37 by sending a letter addressing the issue to the party involved.

Changing Meeting Date: The issue of changing the meeting frequency was discussed. Brent indicated that it is up to the members to determine how often they would want to meet within a given month and that the City of Los Angeles has met its obligation of jump starting the meetings by aggressively scheduling twice a month meetings. A motion for once a month meeting schedule was introduced and all the members present agreed to it. Further the members agreed that the future monthly meetings would be on the second Monday of each month and will be held at the Foundation for the Junior Blind, unless otherwise stated.

Updates – Independent Review of Odor Program by Robert Bowker: Brent presented and discussed handout # 3 which contains the revised scope of work for Robert Bowker, the independent odor control consultant and handout #4 which contains what Mr. Bowker has done as well as information he has requested since his last visit in November.

General Discussion:

Ted : Has Mr. Bowker done anything regarding the testing? Brent responded that he was not aware of that. The City briefed Mr. Bowker on odor complaints, the hot spots and worst sewer which is the NOS. Lin Min added that Robert Bowker has reviewed the odor complaints and toured some of the affected areas but has not yet meet with the affected neighborhood groups, which according to her is the next logical step to expect for his January 2003 visit. Lin Min also stated that he has information about design of the collection system and that he has actually started work on tasks 1 through 5 of his scope of work, the results of which he would be expected to include in his interim report, due in March 2003.

The issue of mass mailing to inform of Mr. Bowker visit was raised for the areas bounded by La Brea to the East, Exposition Blvd to the North, La Cienega to the West, and Slauson Ave to the South. John and Brent shared the notion that instead of mass mailing, the more manageable thing to do may be to notify just the members and board members of each organization involved, an estimated total of 800 persons or less, who will then notify other members and residents of the area they represent, estimated at about 150,000 persons or more. Lin Min pointed out that it might be better or more meaningful to do the mass mailing, especially since the City has indicated willingness and ability to do so.

Carol and Ted wondered if surveying the affected people to determine their needs and issues for presentation to Robert Bowker may actually be more meaningful than to invite the community to meet with Robert Bowker. Ted expressed his belief that Robert Bowker may simply repeat his last presentation instead of focusing on the real issues and experiences of the people that actually experienced the odor problems. The two attorneys present (Lin Min and Bryan) expressed that a survey may not capture the descriptive aspects of the issues, something a face-to-face public meeting with Robert Bowker could

accomplish. John asked if anyone knows if the people who called the hotline would want to meet with Mr. Bowker and if Mr. Bowker would be able to address their issues at the meeting. In response, Chris indicated that she believe Robert Bowker can and will be able to address the type of issues that has been raised or called in to the hotline. Lin Min requested that the City provide a list of those who have called the hotline and the issues they raised, which would be addressed by Robert Bowker during his visit in Jan 2003.

City's Current Odor Control Effort: Brent indicated that some of the City's current odor control efforts include the following programs and/or activities, which were presented at past meetings:

- Overview of the City' Wastewater Collection System by Adel,
- A Primer on Sewer System Odors by Vlad,
- Summary of Odor Hotline Rollout by Adel,
- Collection System Odor Control Technologies by Vlad,
- Odor Control Facilities for the East Central Interceptor Sewer by Wayne, and
- Construction Schedule for the East Central Interceptor Sewer by Baron.

Brent reported that the City has taken action to improve odor conditions near Balloon Creek Pumping plant that was reported at the last meeting and that the City has sent a follow up communication to the party that made the report, outlining the action(s) being taken, which includes the installation of an odor scrubber, the increased cleaning, etc.

Ted asked if the small CIP projects are having any effect? In response, Brent said that they seem to be having some affect as one of the Odor Advisory Board member seemed to have pointed out earlier during the meeting. Brent indicated that he would provide a list of CIP project that will address odor issue. Brent also pointed out that improved design standards for isolating local line with trap maintenance holes is also helping in controlling odors. Brent pointed out that Alta Vista Street and another street in the Studio City have direct connections to the City's large sewers. However, Brent indicated that today, the City is getting away from the practice of connecting local sewers to the large one.

Chris stated that the last time City mass mailed to residents in Council Districts 8, 9 and 10, the City heard mainly from people who have direct connection to the large sewers.

Outreach Effort (Handout #s 6 - 13): Chris stated that in July 2001, the Judge issued an order requiring the City to establish, by August 2001, an odor hotline and to monitor its effectiveness. To implement the Judge's order, the City decided to start with Council Districts 8, 9, and 10 as a pilot program and as a result, mass mailed to residents of those Council Districts in August 2001. The City sent out 2000 mailers and as a result, received 23 calls that reported odors, which have been chronic, and so the mass mailing worked or was deemed effective (mailing samples were handed out during the meeting). During November and December 2001, the City distributed/hand delivered 25,000 magnets and posters. The City also prepared and sent odor hotline/odor control information to 33 churches in the area that were designed to be included in those churches' newsletter in order to help publicize the odor hotline to their church members

who would read the newsletters. This approach was deemed ineffective because none of the Churches included the City supplied odor hotline information in their newsletters.

Carol suggested the City to have supplied the information to the churches as handouts for their members as they depart from church after each service or for the City to have asked the church for a few minutes to speak/make announcements regarding the odor hotline during services. Additionally, Carol pointed out that for some of the large churches, their memberships extend beyond the immediate area that is impact by sewer odor.

Chris indicated that the City ran ads to advertise the odor hotline in local newspapers. The ads were placed in the local news sections and not in the ads section to avoid being lost in shuffle. The City received only one response that cited quoted the newspapers. However, people continued to call in based on the mailers. The City also placed signs to advertise the odor hotline at two primary locations, Rodeo Road at La Cienega Blvd and in the Maze area, at Martin Luther King Blvd and Crenshaw Blvd. The City received few calls as a result of placing the signs.

In March 2002, the City mailed out odor hotline info to 150,000 residents in the Council Districts 8, 9, 10 and received a lot of calls, though some of the calls were not related to sewer odors. The City received about 100 calls and it seemed the callers needed a place to call. Because some of the hotline calls were inadvertently referred by other City Departments, the Bureau of Sanitation then met with and provided 15 City Departments with proper information on how to properly refer odor complaints to the odor hotline and that has been found to be working out well. The Public Affairs Office of the Board of Public Works holds and/or attends three nightly community meetings every week through which wastewater issues are identified and resolved.

Carol suggested that the City should include public service announcements in its public outreach effort. Ted added that the public announcements, if used should be continuous to make it more receptive and interesting, a suggestion to which the City agreed. Lin Min said that people tend to like one-on-one meeting, or door-to-door meetings, particularly, in the areas where large odor calls are received. Ted asked if there is a lot of buttons to push when calling the Hotline. Chris responded that about a month ago, based on the recommendation of the Odor Control Advisory Board, the Hotline has been streamlined to only 2 buttons.

John and Carol said that they never saw the odor hotline signs at the locations indicated. Chris responded that the signs have been removed because the construction projects at the locations have been completed. Carol suggested the City should advertise the odor hotline on a billboard located at the intersection of La Cienega and Rodeo, next to Carls Jr. in order to get calls from the people driving by. Ted suggested that the billboard sign should be explained in context with the purpose for the sign.

Lin Min asked if the City follows up with the customer service requests to determine if the requesters are satisfied. Chris indicated that callers reporting odor or requesting wastewater services meet with City crews that respond to the service request. At times,

the callers meet with other City personnel such as Vlad, who understands odor issues and that during these meetings, the callers can personally express their satisfaction with City's response. Sam Hart requested for a more way of following up with callers requests and getting feedback on their level of satisfaction. Ted asked if businesses have called the odor hotline to report odor and Chris's response was that no business entity has called the odor hotline. Lin Min, then, suggested that City contact the businesses.

Setting Goal/Objectives

The City's goal is to make the sewer odor to go away, thereby eliminating or significantly reducing the odor complains and making the odor hotline unnecessary, said Brent. Lin Min asked Brent, what are the steps to achieve the goal you have stated? Simultaneously, John and Brent pointed to Robert Bowker's scope of work as the answer. Ted suggested that the goal should be to eliminate sewer odor completely. Carol asked, can we advise beyond what the City submits and other Bureau of sanitation odor related efforts? Carol asked the Board members, whether they agree with her view that the Board should be a watchdog group on behalf of area residents affected by sewer odor, to hold the Bureau of Sanitation accountable and a Board that can rally the people if not satisfied with the Bureau of Sanitation's effort to control sewer odor. Ted clarified the scope of activities for and the purpose of the Odor Advisory Board by reading out what has been stipulated in a court order. Then, Chris suggested that may be the City can provide progress report of major collection system projects to the Board, on a regular basis.

Questions, Answers and Action Items: The following are some of the questions or issues, and the answers or comments, as well as action items that I was able to capture.

	QUESTIONS/ISSUES	RESPONSES/ COMMENTS	ACTION ITEMS
1.	Changing Meeting Date	Introduce Motion for monthly meeting.	Members agreed to meet every second Monday of each month at Foundation for the Junior Blind, unless otherwise stated.
2.	Lin Min requested that the City provide a list of those who have called the hotline and the issues they raised, which would be addressed by Robert Bowker during his visit in Jan 2003. The list would be provided to Odor Advisory Board members in advance of the meeting to give the members time to	The City will provide the list of the hotline callers and issues they have raised.	The list will be attached to the mailing of the Meeting # 6 Invitation letter

	identify or address remaining issues before the meeting.		
3.	Public Service Announcements should be included in the public outreach effort	Agree.	The City will consider Public Service announcement in its public outreach effort.
4.	Will there be a mass mailing to individuals in the areas represented by various organizations?	Brent indicated that the City would probably prefer to notify the organization or groups instead of mass mailing to all residents in the area. However, the City can mass mail it if it is requested.	The City will assist in mass mailing upon request.
5.	The City should advertise the odor hotline on a billboard located at the intersection of La Cienega and Rodeo, next to Carls Jr.	The City will consider billboard advertise.	The City will consider billboard advertise.
6.	Request a list of small City CIP projects that will address odor conditions.	Agree.	List of CIP projects that will address odor condition will be provided at meeting # 6
7.	Mr. Milton handed out a copy stated his concerns about the sewer odors in South Los Angeles.	A copy will be provided to those who are absent.	This issue will be discussed at the next meeting.

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the Odor Control Advisory Board will be held at the Foundation for the Junior Blind, 5300 Angeles Vista Blvd, on January 13, 2003. City will send out minutes and other meeting materials prior to the next meeting date and will confirm the next meeting location. It was decided by members that Ted Lumpkin would chair the next meeting which will discuss how Board will accomplish the objectives the Judge stipulated for it and will address Mr. Milton's concerns.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at about 9:00 pm.