



State Of California

ALFRED E. ALQUIST SEISMIC SAFETY COMMISSION

Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor

Alfred E. Alquist Seismic Safety Commission
Minutes of Meeting
February 14, 2008
Holiday Inn Downtown
300 J Street, Sacramento, California

Chief Don Parker
Fire Protection
Chairman

Hon. Mark Church
Local Government
Vice Chair

Gary McGavin, AIA
Architectural Planning

Dennis Mileti
Social Services

Hon. Elaine Alquist
State Senate

James Schwab
Senate Representative

Hon. Sam Blakeslee
State Assembly

Dr. Lucy Jones
Seismology

Arul Arulmoli
Soils Engineer

Andrew Adelman
City Building Official

Henry Renteria
Office of Emergency Services

Grace Koch
OES Representative

David Thorman
State Architect

Dave Walls
Building Standards
Commission

Hon. Ken Cooley
Cities Government

Bill Chubb
Utilities

Sharron Leon
Emergency Services

Bradley Mitzelfelt
County Government

Ali Sadre
Structural Engineering

Michael Stevens
Insurance

John Littrell
Mechanical Engineer

Richard McCarthy
Executive Director

Members Participating

Don Parker, Chair
Mark Church, Vice Chair
Andrew Adelman
Kandiah (Arul) Arulmoli
Jonathan Changus (arrived at 10:55 a.m.)
William Chubb
Ken Cooley
Christina Curry
Lucy Jones
Sharon Leon
John Littrell
Elizabeth Mathieson
Gary McGavin
Dennis Mileti
Ali Sadre
James Schwab (arrived at 10:05 a.m.)
Michael Stevens
David Thorman
David Walls (arrived at 11:27 a.m.)

Members Absent

Brad Mitzelfelt

Staff Participating

Richard McCarthy, Executive Director
Karen Cogan, Executive Assistant
Robert Anderson, Staff Geologist
Henry Reyes, Staff Structural Engineer
Larry Rillera, Director of Legislative Affairs
Meghan Sweeney, Student Assistant
Fred Turner, Senior Structural Engineer

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Commission Chairman Don Parker called the meeting of the Alfred E. Alquist Seismic Safety Commission to order at 10:00 a.m. Executive Assistant Karen Cogan called the roll and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

II. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Chairman Parker welcomed the newest members of the Commission, Commissioner Christina Curry and Commissioner John Littrell, and he invited them to provide brief descriptions of their backgrounds and areas of interest.

Commissioner Curry indicated she had been with the Office of Emergency Services (OES) since 1991 and was presently deputy director. She summarized her experience managing recovery programs.

Commissioner Littrell stated that he was a mechanical and electrical engineer with a background working in the construction industry.

Evaluation of Executive Director Merit Increase

Chairman Parker drew attention to the memo in the meeting packet proposing a 7.5 percent salary increase for the executive director, effective in March 2008.

ACTION: Commissioner Andrew Adelman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Mark Church, that:

The Commission recommend a 7.5 percent increase as proposed.

* Motion carried, 16 - 0 (Commissioners Changus, Schwab, and Walls absent during voting).

III. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 25, 2008 MEETING MINUTES

ACTION: Commissioner Church made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Ken Cooley, that:

The Commission approve the minutes of the January 25, 2008 meeting as presented.

* Motion carried, 16 - 0 (Commissioners Changus, Schwab, and Walls absent during voting).

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Budget

Executive Director Richard McCarthy noted that the staff's budget projections were very close to those of Contracted Fiscal Services. He reported that the Commission made a \$70,000 repayment to FEMA via OES.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) De-obligation Update

Mr. McCarthy advised that the Commission has a balance of \$73,000 to repay to FEMA, and he recommended making a final payment in June in order to eliminate the debt this fiscal year. He said the exact amount can be decided at the June meeting.

Mr. McCarthy noted that no budget reduction was being proposed for the Seismic Safety Commission in Fiscal Year 2008-09. He added that he would have updated budget projections at the April meeting.

Commissioner Cooley commented that the Commission should promote research, even in lean times, because the peril of earthquakes continues. He expressed support for repaying the FEMA debt this fiscal year.

Update on Earthquake Research Program

Mr. McCarthy said the Commission had approved six research projects, and the contracts were being reviewed by the Department of General Services (DGS), a lengthier process than anticipated. He noted that the delays were affecting project schedules. He had requested a meeting with Agency representatives to try to speed up the preliminary review process from two or three months to two or three weeks.

Mr. McCarthy observed that the Commission might want to consider allocating another \$200,000 of research funds for a study of earthquake early warning systems. He noted the Commission will be participating in statewide drills next fall in northern and southern California, including the Mega-Cities Earthquake Conference hosted by the City of Los Angeles. He added that he would have more detail about these topics at the April meeting.

V. REPORT BY THE HOSPITAL BUILDING SAFETY BOARD

Ms. Michelle Malone Keith, Chair, Hospital Building Safety Board (HBSB), introduced Vice Chair Joe LaBrie. She presented a series of slides highlighting the HBSB's accomplishments and activities.

Ms. Keith summarized the Board's responsibilities and composition. She said the Board maintains a few standing committees, as well as ad hoc committees focusing on specific issues. In 2005, the Board established ad hoc committees to look at pertinent sections of the California Building Code (CBC 420A), establish an exam and approval process for inspectors of record, and review structural regulations. In 2006, the Board added ad hoc committees on the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development's (OSHPD's) remodel policy (CAN 2-34), change orders, surgery and dialysis clinics, pre-approvals, fire and life safety regulations. Ms. Keith noted that OSHPD implemented HAZUS as a screening tool for recategorizing hospital buildings, and the Board held special meetings on that topic during 2007.

Mr. LaBrie discussed the Board's review of structural regulations and implementation of HAZUS. He said the Board worked with the staff to develop a standard practice manual for preapprovals. In addition, OSHPD developed emergency regulations for ASCE 4106, a standard for existing buildings, adoption of the 2007 CBC, and implementation of HAZUS.

Ms. Keith commented that use of HAZUS primarily helps small, low-rise hospitals in Central California. Mr. LaBrie noted that a hospital can request a HAZUS evaluation or use of an alternate method.

VI. REVIEW OF DRAFT REPORT - “NIIGATA CHUETSU-OKI JAPAN EARTHQUAKE: LESSONS FOR CALIFORNIA”

Director of Legislative Affairs Larry Rillera referred to the Japan investigative team’s draft written report and welcomed feedback from commissioners. He said the team focused on economic recovery, insurance, mitigation, and early warning systems. He drew attention to the report conclusions and recommendations. He indicated that in the three years of experimental operations, there have been 30 false alarms in 11 activations.

Mr. McCarthy suggested that commissioners make comments on the report and send additional suggestions to Mr. Rillera via email. He said the intent of the report was to present information in a clear and interesting manner and to focus on recommendations with a good chance of implementation. He asked commissioners to think about more dramatic and forceful ways to present the recommendations.

Mr. McCarthy advised that as a result of the trip to Japan, Agency Secretary Rosario Marin is interested in an early earthquake warning system for California, and it would make most sense to use the existing California Integrated Seismic Network. He suggested that the Commission gather members of the seismic community together to discuss the feasibility of an early warning system and issue a joint statement making a recommendation.

Commissioner Jones noted that California already has a system network that could be expanded. She said the Commission could serve a useful role in bringing federal and state government agencies together in a summit conference to determine how to move forward.

Chairman Parker thanked the staff for the draft report. He encouraged commissioners to submit further comments and suggestions.

VII. PRESENTATION ON EARTHQUAKE EDUCATION/OUTREACH/DRILLS FOR 2008

Mr. McCarthy proposed that the Commission participate in two major earthquake preparedness projects, one in Northern California next October, and the other in Southern California in November. He suggested that the Commission compile lessons learned from these exercises and then make a recommendation about a future yearly statewide exercise, as envisioned by Secretary Marin. He reported that the Governor’s Office likes the concept of an annual preparedness day.

Commissioner Jones discussed plans for the Southern California Shakeout event next November. She explained that the purpose of this regional drill is to encourage preparedness for a major earthquake on the southern segment of the San Andreas Fault. She said the event will include a Golden Guardian exercise and drill involving local governments, military and civilian responders, schools, businesses, and community organizations; an international earthquake safety conference to discuss policies and share best practices; and a downtown street festival.

Commissioner McGavin asked if local colleges and universities were participating in the drill. Commissioner Jones said some schools were participating. Commissioner McGavin offered his assistance in contacting local colleges.

Dr. Tom Brocher, U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), described plans for a public education campaign and activities to increase awareness of the risk posed by the Hayward Fault. He said the Hayward fault averages major earthquakes every 140 years, and the last event was in 1868. He indicated that the 1868 Hayward Earthquake Alliance, comprised of representatives from OES, the California Geological Survey, Red Cross, FEMA, Association of Bay Area Governments, museums, and many other organizations, has established a steering committee and Website to disseminate information about the upcoming events. Dr. Brocher said activities will include a number of special exhibits, school drills, public service announcements, permanent art installations, teacher tutorials, TV specials, and scientific conferences.

Chairman Parker recommended offering continuing education credit for medical response people who participate.

ACTION: Commissioner Cooley made a motion, seconded by Commissioner McGavin, that:

The Commission participate on the steering committee.

* Motion carried, 18 - 0 (Commissioner Thorman absent during voting).

ACTION: Commissioner Jones made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Cooley, that:

The Commission join the 1868 Hayward Earthquake Alliance.

* Motion carried, 18 - 0 (Commissioner Thorman absent during voting).

Mr. McCarthy said he would provide an update at the April meeting.

Mr. McCarthy showed an educational DVD developed for use in California schools. He noted that the original video featured Shaquille O'Neal; in the new version, his character was replaced by an animated robot. He recommended distributing the DVD to schools next September to support both the Southern and Northern California preparedness/response efforts.

VIII. APPROVAL OF ANNUAL REPORT

Ms. Cogan directed the Commission's attention to the draft annual report under Tab I of the meeting packet. She said the Commission is required to report annually to the Governor and Legislature. She thanked commissioners who had provided comments and suggestions. She said that once approved by the Commission, the report will be sent to the Agency for review before going to the Governor and Legislature.

ACTION: Commissioner Church made a motion, seconded by Commissioner McGavin, that:

The Commission approve the Annual Report as proposed.

Mr. McCarthy thanked Ms. Cogan for her work.

* Motion carried, 17 - 0 (Commissioners Jones and Thorman absent during voting).

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

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

X. MISCELLANEOUS & GOOD OF MEETING

Mr. McCarthy suggested shifting the site of the April Commission meeting to Los Angeles in conjunction with an earthquake conference there. He proposed holding the meeting at the California Science Center in Exposition Park. He said the staff will try to make arrangements with a hotel in downtown Los Angeles.

VI. PRESENTATION BY JAPAN INVESTIGATIVE TEAM (Out of Order)

Mr. McCarthy described the investigative team's route and itinerary. He said the team learned about Japan's national early earthquake warning system, and he presented a map of Japan showing 182 seismometer location. He noted the system uses the Japanese Meteorological Agency to receive data and transmit warnings to the public. He indicated that in three years of experimental operation, there have been 30 false alarms in 1,713 activations.

Mr. Turner discussed the system of public education and outreach centers Japan has established at fire stations, museums, and other community facilities. He showed slides of educational exhibits, construction demonstrations, shake tables, and tsunami simulations. Mr. Turner said the investigative team members toured the Yaizu port and saw tsunami mitigation measures, floodwalls and gates, directional signage for evacuation routes, and placards designating safe buildings. He talked about the team's tour of the Riken Company, a piston ring manufacturing plant, a Yamaha motorcycle factory, and civic buildings. Mr. Turner presented slides of damaged buildings, landslides, and liquefaction areas.

Commissioner Arulmoli requested a copy of the PowerPoint presentation.

Chairman Parker thanked the staff and the investigative team. He suggested editing the slides and eliminating pictures of social gatherings and sightseeing activities. He observed that the team condensed a considerable amount of business into a brief trip, and he recommended keeping the focus on business.

Chairman Parker asked about the status of the second investigative trip to Japan. Mr. McCarthy said he was awaiting approval of the out-of-state travel request for Assemblyman Blakeslee. He noted representatives of PG&E and the California Energy Commission will also be part of the team. The team will inspect the nuclear reactors at Niigata and Shizuoka and meet with regulatory officials. He added that the trip is tentatively scheduled for March 15 through 22.

Commissioner Jonathan Changus requested a copy of a detailed itinerary as soon as possible. Mr. McCarthy said Mr. Rillera would send the details.

XI. ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:28 p.m.

Sue Celli
Office Manager

Approved by:

Richard McCarthy
Executive Director