REVISED
DISCUSSION ITEM
August 21, 2017

TO: Board of Directors

FROM: Public Affairs Legislative Committee
(Directors Tamaribuchi, Dick and Yoo Schneider)

Robert Hunter
General Manager

Staff Contact: Damon Micalizzi

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON THREE MONTH SOCIAL MEDIA PILOT WITH HASHTAGPINPOINT CORPORATION

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Board of Directors receive and file.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

Committee recommends (To be determined at Committee Meeting)

SUMMARY

In April, the Board authorized staff to enter a sole source contract with HashtagPinpoint Corporation for social media consulting services, to compliment the District’s efforts building support for the California WaterFix. The contract for this ‘pilot program’ was three months. This report is a summary of the three-month program.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On December 5, 2016, the MWDOC Board of Directors adopted a resolution to support the California WaterFix after the MWDOC Orange County Water Reliability Study determined the WaterFix to be the single-most-cost-effective large-scale project to achieve reliable water supply for the region into the future. As such, staff was charged with educating stakeholders throughout the County about the WaterFix and, with the support of Member Agencies, focused communications efforts for Fiscal Year 17/18 on WaterFix education.

With MWDOC and its Member Agencies looking to grow their social media outreach, after investigating several firms, staff entered a three-month contract with Consultant:

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<th>Y</th>
<th>Budgeted amount: $15,000</th>
<th>Core</th>
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Fiscal Impact (explain if unbudgeted):
HashtagPinpoint Corp, editors of the California Drought Monitor, to pilot a three-month WaterFix Social Media education Campaign, leading into the FY17/18 education campaign.

**KEY FINDINGS AND RESULTS**

At the onset of the pilot, it became evident that MWDOC’s social media (Facebook) footprint was insignificant. With only roughly 1,200 followers, many of whom being water professionals, it was clear that the current model was insufficient. Furthermore, posting was sporadic and messages were not consistent. Simply put, MWDOC’s posts were barely engaging an audience of our peers.

The consultant recommended a series of ‘Like’ drives aimed at elevating the number of followers to achieve a more robust organic reach. The results: MWDOC’s followers doubled in the first 30 days and nearly tripled (3,600) by the conclusion of the pilot.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
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<th>From Last Week</th>
<th>Posts This Week</th>
<th>Engagement This Week</th>
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This initial push was then followed by additional messaging focused primarily on promoting the California WaterFix. More than 100 postings were made over this period, including videos and links to earned media. Messages were targeted to parts of the County where WaterFix awareness was not strong. As this education campaign was running, awareness built steadily for the WaterFix.
In addition to tripling MWDOC’s overall Facebook following, with boosted posts at targeted audiences, some content reached as many as 60,000 people.

At the conclusion of this trial period the following was clear:

- Social Media is an extremely powerful and valuable tool
- To use this tool successfully you must commit resources
- In three months, MWDOC’s social media presence was amplified exponentially