Seismic Safety Commission
Revised Minutes of Meeting
July 8, 2004
State Capitol, Room 444
Sacramento, California

Members Participating
Lucy Jones, Chairman
Donald R. Parker, Vice Chair
Andrew Adelman
Mark Church
Lawrence T. Klein
Linden Nishinaga
Daniel Shapiro
Jimmie R. Yee

Members Absent
Senator Richard Alarcon/Chris Modrzejewski
Bruce Clark
Don Manning
Stan Y. Moy
Celestine Palmer

Staff Present
Richard McCarthy
Robert Anderson
Karen Cogan
Henry Reyes
Henry Sepulveda
Fred Turner

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Chairman Lucy Jones called the meeting of the Seismic Safety Commission to order at 10:03 a.m. Executive Assistant Karen Cogan called the roll and confirmed that a quorum was present.

III. APPROVAL OF JUNE 10, 2004 COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES (Out of Order)

Background Discussion:
Executive Director Richard McCarthy welcomed comments on the shorter format for the meeting minutes. He said the staff plans to prepare two sets of minutes for each meeting, one with some detail, and then a shorter synopsis to post on the Web page. He noted Commissioner Larry Klein made some suggestions, including adding a brief description of the purpose for each agenda item covered in the minutes.

Commissioners suggested that it would be helpful to include a brief statement explaining the relationship of agenda items to the Commission’s mandate.

Commissioners made no changes or corrections to the June 10 minutes.

ACTION: Commissioner Linden Nishinaga made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Jimmie Yee, that:

*The Commission approve the minutes of the June meeting as presented.*
II. CHAIRMAN’S REMARKS

Committee Assignments

Background Discussion:
Chairman Jones drew attention to the updated committee rosters in the meeting packet. She pointed out some of the changes. Chairman Jones suggested removing her name from the PEER Review Committee and adding Commissioner Andrew Adelman’s name.

Mr. McCarthy noted the list of committees includes a new ad hoc committee for revising the Homeowner’s Guide to Earthquake Safety. He recommended adding a California Earthquake Authority representative and Mr. Kaname Suzuki, who will be working with the Commission and the Office of Emergency Services (OES) for nine months as part of an exchange program with Shizuoka Prefecture, Japan.

Chairman Jones asked Commissioner Dan Shapiro to chair the ad hoc committee, and Commissioner Shapiro agreed. Commissioner Shapiro suggested assigning Mr. Fred Turner as the staff support person for the new committee.

Chairman Jones said Commissioner Nishinaga had proposed establishing a new committee to facilitate the exchange program with Shizuoka Prefecture and other prefectures in Japan. She proposed combining that function with the Homeowner’s Guide revision in a single ad hoc committee.

Chairman Jones said she would like regular reports from all the committees and external groups to keep the Commission apprised of their activities. She suggested asking Mr. Chris Poland to provide an update on the Strong Motion Instruction Advisory Committee at the September meeting. Commissioner Shapiro noted the strong motion program is having an important meeting sometime in September, and he recommended waiting until after that for an update. Chairman Jones asked the staff to contact Mr. Poland and arrange a suitable time for an update.

Commissioner Adelman requested that the staff update the committee rosters and provide each commissioner with a copy.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Operation Hope

Mr. McCarthy reported that the Commission’s Outreach and Education Committee will meet with representatives from Operation Hope in Los Angeles on July 9. He said the committee will develop recommendations for the Commission’s consideration at the October meeting.

Mr. McCarthy noted the theme of the October meeting will be education and outreach. He said
Meeting Minutes

representatives from OES and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will be invited to attend.

Introduction of Mr. Kaname Suzuki

Mr. McCarthy introduced Mr. Kaname Suzuki, a visitor from Shizuoka Prefecture. He noted Mr. Suzuki has a background in seismology, and he drew attention to the résumé included in the meeting packet.

Budget Update

Commissioner Klein noted the state budget had not yet been approved, and he drew attention to the printout provided by the staff.

Mr. McCarthy informed the Commission that some funds from last fiscal year were swept by the Department of Finance; in particular, $10,000 earmarked for office relocation and $5,000 for Attorney General services reverted to the general fund.

Update on FEMA Appeal

Background Discussion:
Mr. McCarthy briefed the Commission on recent developments in the Commission’s appeal of FEMA’s decision to disallow $216,000 in Commission charges associated with the Northridge earthquake. Mr. McCarthy reported that a FEMA representative contacted the staff, acknowledged that FEMA made a mistake in the audit decision, and indicated that FEMA owes the Commission $159,881. Mr. McCarthy said he requested a letter from FEMA confirming this determination, but nothing in writing has been received yet.

Mr. McCarthy recommended that the Commission form a small ad hoc committee to assist the staff in reviewing the letter and accepting FEMA’s offer. He proposed that Chairman Jones, Commissioner Parker, Commissioner Klein, Commissioner Shapiro, and Commissioner Manning serve as committee members.

ACTION: Commissioner Adelman made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Parker, that:

The Commission establish the committee as proposed and delegate authority to the committee to respond to FEMA’s offer.

* Motion carried, 8 - 0.

Chairman Jones expressed her appreciation to the staff for persevering in this effort.

Governor Schwarzenegger’s California Performance Review (CPR) Report

Mr. McCarthy informed commissioners that the California Performance Review plans to release its report as soon as the 2004-05 budget is signed. Ms. Cogan added that the entire process will
probably be completed in December.

**Update on Workers’ Compensation Insurance Policy**

Mr. McCarthy reported that the Commission is appealing to the Department of Insurance regarding the high workers’ compensation insurance rates offered through the State Compensation Insurance Fund. He explained that employees and commissioners participating in post-earthquake clearinghouses are considered high-risk personnel, so the rates are much higher. He said the Commission is awaiting an answer from the Insurance Commissioner. Mr. McCarthy noted the Commission has also asked OES to assist with coverage for clearinghouse participation.

**September Commission Meeting Agenda**

Mr. McCarthy noted Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) has a $980 million bond initiative on the November ballot to fund necessary retrofit projects. He suggested having a presentation on this topic at the September meeting. Mr. McCarthy proposed also inviting representatives from the High-Speed Rail Commission to talk about proposed routes and their seismic implications.

Mr. McCarthy said another September agenda topic will be a briefing about a joint California-Nevada project looking at active faulting around Lake Tahoe.

**Upcoming Commission Meetings**

Mr. McCarthy noted education and outreach will be the theme of the October meeting. He said Chairman Jones is arranging a tour of active faults in the area on the day before the meeting, and Universal Studios has offered a tour of their facilities after the meeting.

**II. CHAIRMAN’S REMARKS (Continued)**

**Committee Assignments (Continued)**

Chairman Jones requested Commission approval of the revised committee rosters.

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

* The Commission approve the committee rosters as revised.

  * Motion carried, 8 - 0.

**V. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

There were no committee reports.

**VI. LEGISLATION**
Meeting Minutes

Director of Legislation Henry Sepulveda reviewed the status of pending legislation of interest to the Commission. He drew attention to his written report for more details.

Mr. Sepulveda encouraged commissioner to begin thinking about ideas for bills in the next legislative session. He said the Legislature will be meeting until the end of August, recessing, and then resuming its business in January. He recommended researching legislative ideas during the fall months, approaching potential authors in December and January, and preparing to introduce new bills in February.

Mr. Sepulveda recommended that commissioners submit ideas to the Legislative Advisory Committee for consideration.

VII. REVIEW OF REPORT ON SCHOOL SAFETY

Chairman Jones reported that the final version of the school safety report would be ready for approval at the next meeting.

VIII. BRIEFING ON REVISION OF HOMEOWNER’S GUIDE

Publishing this guide – The Seismic Safety Commission is required to develop, adopt, update, and publish The Homeowner’s Guide to Earthquake Safety containing information on geologic and seismic hazards, explanations of structural and nonstructural earthquake hazards, and recommendations for mitigating these hazards (Business and Professions Code, Section 10149).

Dr. Guna Selvaduray, Collaboration for Disaster Mitigation, discussed efforts to revise and simplify the Commission’s Homeowner’s Guide to Earthquake Safety to make it more user-friendly. Mr. McCarthy drew attention to the sample pages in the meeting packet.

Dr. Selvaduray proposed starting with basic information on earthquakes, including a list of historical earthquakes, a map of active faults, and an explanation of California’s seismic hazard zones. He said the pictures of damage are intended to scare homeowners, but also convey the message that there are simple and low-cost mitigation steps that can be taken to reduce damage. He suggested reorganizing the contents of the document to focus first on building contents, and then on structural retrofit possibilities and nonstructural mitigation.

Commissioners expressed support for the revision effort. They agreed that the overall message should be that earthquakes are very survivable, and people can take simple measures to prevent loss of life and property.

Commissioners recommended referring people to other publications and resources for additional information. Dr. Selvaduray said the publication will be made available in an electronic format as well as a hard copy, and a list of Web links will be provided.
Chairman Jones thanked Dr. Selvaduray for his presentation.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

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

X. MISCELLANEOUS & GOOD OF THE MEETING

Commissioners proposed asking Dr. Jack Moehle to provide an update on the future of PEER funding and research projects at a future meeting.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting of the Seismic Safety Commission was adjourned at 11:46 a.m.

Sue Celli
Office Manager

Approved by:

Richard McCarthy
Executive Director