

## Villaraigosa's DWP pick criticized general manager

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The Los Angeles City Council approved Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa's pick to oversee the Department of Water & Power today, placing environmentalist Jonathan Parfrey in the seat once occupied by former DWP Commission President Nick Patsaouras.

Before the council cast its vote, Parfrey pointedly criticized DWP General Manager H. David Nahai over his handling of Measure B, the March 3 solar energy ballot measure. Parfrey described himself as a huge supporter of Measure B, which would require the city's utility to install 400 megawatts of solar panels on rooftops and parking lots by 2014.

But when Councilwoman Janice Hahn blamed the DWP for giving neighborhood councils too little advance warning on the plan, Parfrey responded by saying he holds Nahai and Patsaouras responsible for failing to hold a full board discussion of the solar proposal.

**"The general manager should have brought the plan related to Measure B before the Board of Water and Power Commissioners," Parfrey told the council.** "I feel that this is something that also should have been demanded by the board president at the time."

DWP spokesman Joe Ramallo defended Nahai, saying he had told the commission on "numerous occasions" that the mayor's office was drafting a solar measure. Patsaouras, on the other hand, has complained vigorously that he had been left out of the loop on the plan. "I asked Nahai, 'When is the commission going to see the solar plan?' and he said, **'I cannot release it unless the mayor gives the OK,'**" Patsaouras recalled.

After the ballot measure was unveiled, Patsaouras quit the DWP board and announced his campaign for city controller.

Parfrey is the head of Green L.A., an environmental coalition that has pushed for greener policies at the City Hall. Last year, he was registered with the Ethics Commission as a lobbyist for Liberty Hill Foundation, a nonprofit group that focuses on environmental and social justice issues.

Parfrey, who is paid for his work with Green L.A., said he views his work as social advocacy, not lobbying. Still, because Villaraigosa bars lobbyists from serving as commissioners, Parfrey vowed to stop contacting city policymakers on behalf of his group's advocacy issues. According to the Ethics Commission's website, Parfrey halted his lobbying work on Dec. 11 -- the day the mayor nominated him to serve on the DWP board.

-- David Zahniser