

MINUTES
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF THE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS
THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
January 21 and 23, 2025

53923 The Executive Committee and Board of Directors of The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California met in a special session on Tuesday, January 21, 2025.

Chair Ortega called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

Director Kassakhian stated that he is using AB 2449 just cause for illness.

Director Lefevre stated that he is using AB 2449 just cause caretaker.

53924 Board Secretary Fong-Sakai administered the roll call. Those responding present were: Directors Alvarez, Armstrong (teleconference posted location available for the public), Bryant, Camacho, Cordero, Dennstedt, Fellow, Fong-Sakai, Garza, Gold, Goldberg, Jung (teleconference posted location available for the public), Kassakhian (AB2449-Just Cause), Kurtz, Lefevre (AB2449-Just Cause), Lewitt, Luna, McCoy, Ortega, and Sutley.

Board Secretary Fong-Sakai declared a quorum present.

Director Dick stated that he is using AB 2449 just cause for illness.

Director Petersen stated that he is using AB 2449 just cause for illness.

Directors entered the meeting after the roll call: Directors Ackerman, De Jesus, Dick (AB2449 – Just Cause), Erdman, Gray, McMillan, Miller, Petersen (AB2449-Just Cause), Phan (teleconference posted location available for the public), Pressman, Quinn, Ramos, and Seckel.

Those not responding were: Directors Crawford, Douglas, Faessel, Katz, Morris, and Phan.

53925 Chair Ortega invited members of the public to address the limited to the items listed on the agenda (in-person and via teleconference).

	Name	Affiliation	Comment
1.	Adel Hagekhalil	Metropolitan Employee	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
2.	Kerry Garvis Wright	Attorney at Glaser Weil	Items 6a-b and 7a-c

3.	Darcy Burke	Watermark Associates	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
4.	Emilio Cruz	EP Consultants	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
5.	Bruce Reznick	LA Waterkeeper	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
6.	Aaron Harris	City of LA Dept Public Works	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
7.	Connor Everts	Environmental Justice Coalition for Water and the Statewide Environmental Water Caucus	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
8.	Seyla Te	City of LA Watershed Protection Division	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
9.	Eric Lee	City of LA Dept of Public Works	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
10.	Andy Lipkis	Accelerate Resilience LA	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
11.	John Popoch	Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of LA City Councilmember Bob Blumenfield	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
12.	David Gironn	City of LA	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
13.	Paul Koretz	Former Council Member City of LA	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
14.	Lauren Ahkiam	LAANE	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
15.	Hans Johnson	East Area Progressive Democrats	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
16.	Rickita Hudson	Metropolitan Employee	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
17.	Evelyn Windle	We Tap	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
18.	Belén Bernal	Executive Director, Nature of All	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
19.	Penelope Lapom	California citizen	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
20.	Jonesy	Metropolitan Employee	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
21.	Mark Morandi	Metropolitan Employee	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
22.	Barbara Barrigan	Executive Director, Restore	Items 6a-b and 7a-c

		the Delta	
23.	Audie Liberman	Resident	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
24.	Alan Shanahan	AFSCME President	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
25.	Nancy Blastos	Environmentalism	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
26.	Neil Desai	National Parks Conservation Association	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
27.	Trish Gonzales	Former Metropolitan Employee	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
28.	Ruben Lopez		Items 6a-b and 7a-c
29.	Marcia Smith		Items 6a-b and 7a-c
30.	Sally Garcia	Resident City of LA	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
31.	Lenice Marrero	Environmental Engineer, City of LA	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
32.	Caty Wagner	Sierra Club	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
33.	Conrad Villa	Metropolitan Employee	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
34.	Chris Moreno	Program Manager, Shingle Springs, Miwok Indians	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
35.	Amir Shabik	League Director, Care LA	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
36.	John Virsalovich	Metropolitan Employee	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
37.	Wesley Chung	Rate Payer	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
38.	Matt Ortega	Metropolitan Employee	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
39.	Oscar Yanez	Metropolitan Employee	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
40.	Charlie Jackson	Metropolitan Employee	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
41.	John Munson	Sierra Club	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
42.	Daniel Rodriguez	AFSCME Union Member	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
43.	Dan Silver	Resident	Items 6a-b and 7a-c
44.	Jan Warren	Advocate Clean Water Contra Costa County	Items 6a-b and 7a-c

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| 45. | Brandy Vanderjack | Metropolitan Employee | Items 6a-b and 7a-c |
| 46. | Lauren Saber
O'Connor | Former Chief Sustainability
City of LA | Items 6a-b and 7a-c |
| 47. | Caty Wagner | Reading Comments for
Ellen Mackey Metropolitan
Employee | Items 6a-b and 7a-c |

Directors Ackerman, Dick (AB2449 – Just Cause), Erdman, Gray, McMillan, Miller, Petersen (AB2449-Just Cause), Pressman, Quinn, Ramos, and Seckel entered the meeting.

Chair Ortega made a statement on the status of General Manager Hagekhalil.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ITEMS

5. CONSENT CALENDAR OTHER ITEMS – ACTION

- A. Approve the draft of the Committee and Board meeting agendas and schedule for February 2025.

Chair Ortega asked if there were any additions or deletions to the February 2025 draft packet. No comments were made.

Chair Ortega called for the vote on Item 5A.

Director Camacho made a motion, seconded by Director Garza, to approve the consent calendar Item 5A as listed.

The vote was:

Ayes: Directors Armstrong, Camacho, Cordero, Erdman, Fong-Sakai, Garza, Goldberg, Gray, Jung, Luna, McCoy, Ortega, Pressman, Quinn, and Sutley.

Abstention: None

Recusal: None

Absent: De Jesus

The motion for Items 5A passed by a vote of 15 ayes; 0 noes; 0 abstention; and 1 absent.

SPECIAL EXECUTIVE AND BOARD OF DIRECTOR ITEMS

INFORMATION ITEMS

The following Director(s) asked questions or made comments:

Director(s)

1. Gold

Chair Ortega called the meeting into closed session to discuss Agenda Items 6a, 6b, 7a, 7b, and 7c.

53926 Review and report on five completed investigations involving the General Manager, which include allegations of Equal Employment Opportunity policy and Ethics Policy violations by the General Manager [Public employee performance evaluation: General Manager, to be heard in closed session pursuant to Gov. Code Section 54957]. (Agenda Item 6a)

53927 Report on two claims presented involving the General Manager and a pending investigation regarding one of the claims [Conference with legal counsel— anticipated litigation; based on existing facts and circumstances of receipt of claims pursuant to the Government Claims Act (Gov't Code § 910 et seq.) on behalf of two individuals threatening litigation, there is significant exposure to litigation against Metropolitan; two potential cases; to be heard in closed session pursuant to Gov. Code Section 54956.9(d)(2)]. (Agenda Item 6b)

ACTION ITEMS

53928 Consider action regarding General Manager's paid administrative leave status [Public employee performance evaluation: General Manager, to be heard in closed session pursuant to Gov. Code Section 54957]. (Agenda Item 7a)

53929 General Manager Performance Evaluation [Public employee performance evaluation: General Manager, to be heard in closed session pursuant to Gov. Code Section 54957]. (Agenda Item 7b)

53930 Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release [To be heard in closed session pursuant to Gov. Code Section 54957]. (Agenda Item 7c)

The Board returned to open session. Chair Ortega called on Assistant General Counsel Torres to report on the closed session.

Mr. Torres reported that no action was taken in closed session on Items 6a, 6b, 7b, and 7c. On Item 7a the Board voted to extend administrative leave for General Manager until January 23, 2025, and to continue the Joint Special Executive Committee and Board of Directors Meeting until January 23, 2025.

53931 Chair Ortega announced that the meeting will be adjourned until January 23, 2025.

SPECIAL EXECUTIVE AND BOARD OF DIRECTOR ITEMS
ADJOURNED MEETING- CONTINUATION OF THE JANUARY 21, 2025 MEETING

53932 The Executive Committee and Board of Directors of The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California met in an adjourned special session on Thursday, January 23, 2025.

Chair Ortega called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Director Kassakhian stated that he is using AB 2449 just cause for illness.

Director Petersen stated that he is using AB 2449 just cause for illness.

Director Faessel stated that he is using AB 2449 just cause for caretaker.

Director Dick stated that he is using AB 2449 just cause for illness.

53933 Board Executive Secretary Hudson administered the roll call. Those responding present were: Directors Ackerman (teleconference posted location available for the public), Armstrong (teleconference posted location available for the public), Bryant, Camacho, Cordero (teleconference posted location available for the public), Crawford, De Jesus (teleconference posted location available for the public), Dennstedt, Erdman, Faessel (teleconference posted location available for the public), Fellow, Garza, Gold, Goldberg, Gray (teleconference posted location available for the public), Jung (teleconference posted location available for the public), Kassakhian (AB2449-Just Cause), Kurtz, Lefevre (AB2449-Just Cause), Lewitt, Luna, McCoy, McMillan, Ortega, Petersen, Pressman (teleconference posted location available for the public), Quinn, Ramos, and Sutley.

Board Executive Secretary Hudson declared a quorum present.

Directors entered the meeting after the roll call: Directors Dick (AB2449- Just Cause) and Fong-Sakai (teleconference posted location available for the public), Miller (teleconference posted location available for the public), and Phan (teleconference posted location available for the public).

Those not responding were: Directors Alvarez, Douglas, Katz, Morris, and Seckel.

Chair Ortega called the meeting into closed session to discuss Agenda Items 6a, 6b, 7a, 7b, and 7c.

53926 Review and report on five completed investigations involving the General Manager, which include allegations of Equal Employment Opportunity policy and Ethics Policy violations by the General Manager [Public employee performance evaluation:

General Manager, to be heard in closed session pursuant to Gov. Code Section 54957]. (Agenda Item 6a)

53927 Report on two claims presented involving the General Manager and a pending investigation regarding one of the claims [Conference with legal counsel— anticipated litigation; based on existing facts and circumstances of receipt of claims pursuant to the Government Claims Act (Gov't Code § 910 et seq.) on behalf of two individuals threatening litigation, there is significant exposure to litigation against Metropolitan; two potential cases; to be heard in closed session pursuant to Gov. Code Section 54956.9(d)(2)]. (Agenda Item 6b)

ACTION ITEMS

53928 Consider action regarding General Manager's paid administrative leave status [Public employee performance evaluation: General Manager, to be heard in closed session pursuant to Gov. Code Section 54957]. (Agenda Item 7a)

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53930 Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release [To be heard in closed session pursuant to Gov. Code Section 54957]. (Agenda Item 7c)

The Board returned to open session in closed session. Chair Ortega called on Assistant General Counsel Torres to report on the closed session.

Mr. Torres reported that no action was taken in closed session on Items 6a, 6b, 7b, and 7c. Item 7a the Board voted to extend administrative leave for General Manager until the next board meeting.

53934 Chair Ortega asked if there were any Follow-up Items. There were none.

53935 Chair Ortega asked if there were any Future Agenda Items.

Director McMillian left the meeting.

53936 There being no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

Rickita C. Hudson

**RICKITA HUDSON
BOARD EXECUTIVE SECRETARY**

Adán Ortega, Jr.

**ADÁN ORTEGA, JR.
CHAIR OF THE BOARD**