

# **THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

## **MINUTES**

### **EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND AFFORDABILITY COMMITTEE**

**November 13, 2023**

Chair McCoy called the meeting to order at 12:17 p.m.

Members present: Directors Dennstedt, Dick, Fellow, Fong-Sakai, Gray (teleconference location posted), and McCoy.

Members absent: Directors Cordero, De Jesus, Garza, Luna, and Sutley.

Other Members present: Abdo, Ackerman, Armstrong, Bryant, Faessel, Goldberg, Kurtz, McMillan, Miller, Morris, Ortega, Peterson (AB2449 Emergency Circumstances), Pressman (teleconference location posted), Seckel, and Smith.

Committee Staff present: Crosson, Hagekhalil, Kasaine, Redin, Ros, and Upadhyay.

#### **1. OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COMMITTEE ON MATTERS WITHIN THE COMMITTEE'S JURISDICTION**

None

### **CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS — ACTION**

#### **2. CONSENT CALENDAR OTHER ITEMS – ACTION**

- a.                   Subject:           Approval of the Minutes of the Equity, Inclusion, and Affordability Committee for October 24, 2023 (Copies have been submitted to each Director, Any additions, corrections, or omissions)

#### **3. CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS – ACTION**

None

Director Fellow made a motion, seconded by Director Dick, to approve the consent calendar consisting of item 2a.

The vote was:

Ayes: Directors Dennstedt, Dick, Fellow, Fong-Sakai, Gray, and McCoy.

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

Absent: Directors Cordero, De Jesus, Garza, Luna, and Sutley.

The motion for item 2a passed by a vote of 6 ayes, 0 noes, 0 abstain, and 5 absent.

## **END OF CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS**

### **4. OTHER BOARD ITEMS – ACTION**

None

### **5. BOARD INFORMATION ITEMS**

None

Director Peterson indicated he is participating under AB 2449 “emergency circumstances” for a physical emergency that prevents him from attending in person.

Director Peterson appeared by audio and on camera.

Director McCoy made a motion, seconded by Director Fellow, to approve AB2449 Emergency Circumstance participation for Director Peterson.

The vote was:

Ayes: Directors Dennstedt, Dick, Fellow, Fong-Sakai, Gray, and McCoy.

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

Absent: Directors Cordero, De Jesus, Garza, Luna, and Sutley.

The motion for Director Peterson to participate using AB2449 Emergency Circumstance passed by a vote of 6 ayes, 0 noes, 0 abstain, and 5 absent.

## 6. COMMITTEE ITEMS

- a. Subject: Panel on Regulatory Requirements Impacting Affordability
- Panelist:
- Danielle Blacet, Deputy Executive Director, California Municipal Utilities Association
- Wendy Broley, P.E., Executive Director, California Urban Water Agencies
- Laurel Firestone, Board Member, State Water Resources Control Board
- Erik D. Olson, Senior Strategic Director, Health and Food, People & Communities Program, Natural Resources Defense Council
- J. Alan Roberson, P.E., Executive Director, Association of State Drinking Water Administrators
- Alex Rojas, General Manager, Central Basin Municipal Water District

Presented by: Adrian Hightower, Special Projects Manager

Ms. Kasaine introduced the item and introduced Mr. Hightower who presented the committee with regulatory processes with potential impacts to affordability. Next, Mr. Hightower introduced the panelists: Danielle Blacet, Deputy Executive Director, California Municipal Utilities Association; Wendy Broley, P.E., Executive Director, California Urban Water Agencies; Laurel Firestone, Board Member, State Water Resources Control Board; Erik D. Olson, Senior Strategic Director, Health and Food, People & Communities Program, Natural Resources Defense Council; J. Alan Roberson, P.E., Executive Director, Association of State Drinking Water Administrators; Alex Rojas, General Manager, Central Basin Municipal Water District

Mr. Hightower asked the panel the following questions:

1. Please introduce yourself and describe one current, upcoming, or potential regulation that could impact water affordability?
2. What affordability considerations are being taken into account in the development of PFOA/PFOS regulations? What additional considerations could the EPA take while adopting new regulations?
3. CUWA's member agencies are engaged in direct potable reuse (DPR) regulations. How can large water agencies consider equity as reuse regulations are developed, and projects are implemented?

4. What strategies do agencies have to handle the additional costs of regulations?
5. What impact do regulations have on smaller municipal utilities and what considerations should be taken into account?
6. In your opinion, what role should Metropolitan play in making water affordable, particularly for our most vulnerable communities, in the face of new and/or stricter regulations

The following Directors provided comments or asked questions:

1. Ortega
2. Morris
3. Smith
4. Dennstedt
5. Seckel

Staff responded to the Directors' comments and questions.

- b.       Subject:           Business Outreach Annual Report

Presented by:   Ken Ashford, Principal Public Affairs Representative

Ms. Thomas introduced the item and Mr. Ashford presented the committee with an overview of the business outreach program activities for fiscal year July 2022 through June 2023. His presentation included core objectives, community engagement, strategic initiative, total SBE utilization, and next steps.

The following Directors provided comments or asked questions:

1. Fong-Sakai

Staff responded to the Directors' comments and questions.

## **7.       MANAGEMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS**

- a.       Subject:           Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion activities

No report was given.

## **8.       FOLLOW-UP ITEMS**

None

**9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

None

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 2:16 p.m.

Tana McCoy  
Chair