

**THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

**MINUTES**

**COMMUNITY AND WORKPLACE CULTURE COMMITTEE**

**July 7, 2025**

Chair McCoy called the meeting to order at 1:20 pm.

Members present: Directors Cordero, Dennstedt (AB 2449 “Just Cause”), Faessel, McCoy, McMillan (entered after roll call), Phan, Ramos, and Seckel

Members absent: Directors Fong-Sakai, Gray, and Luna

Other Board Members present: Directors Armstrong, Bryant, Dick, Fellow, Jay, Katz, Kurtz, Lewitt, Miller, and Ortega

Director Dennstedt indicated she is participating under AB 2449 “just cause” regarding illness. Director Dennstedt appeared by audio and on camera.

Committee Staff present: Aguirre, Beatty, Kasaine, Rubin, Salinas, Thomas, Upadhyay, and Wisdom

**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 Special Community and Workplace Culture Committee for June 24, 2025.

**3. OTHER CONSENT ITEMS FOR ACTION**

- 7-1 Subject: Amend Metropolitan Administrative Code Division VI (Personnel Matters) to create a Principal Assistant position to the Ethics Officer; the General Manager has determined that the proposed action is exempt or otherwise not subject to CEQA

Motion: Amend Metropolitan Administrative Code Division VI (Personnel Matters) to create a Principal Assistant position to the Ethics Officer.

No presentations were given. Director Faessel made a motion, seconded by Director Seckel, to approve the consent calendar consisting of items 2A and 7-1.

The vote was:

Ayes: Directors Cordero, Faessel, McCoy, Phan, Ramos, and Seckel

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

Absent: Directors Dennstedt, Fong-Sakai, Gray, Luna, and McMillan

The motion for items 2A and 7-1 passed by a vote of 6 ayes, 0 noes, 0 abstain, and 5 absent.

Items on the agenda were reordered to hear the presentation for Item 6c first.

## **6. COMMITTEE ITEMS**

- c. Subject: Recommended Updates to EEO Complaint and Investigative Procedures for the Board and its Direct Reports

Presented By: Jonaura Wisdom, Chief Equal Employment Opportunity Officer

Ms. Wisdom presented on updates to the EEO Complaint and Investigative Procedures for Board members and their direct reports, ensuring consistency, legal compliance, and transparency in the investigation process.

The following Directors provided comments or asked questions:

1. Faessel
2. Cordero
3. Ortega

Staff responded to the Directors' questions and comments.

**END OF CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS**

Director McMillan entered the meeting.

Director Dennstedt reentered the meeting.

#### 4. OTHER BOARD ITEMS – ACTION

8-3 Subject: Amend Metropolitan Administrative Code Section 2416(f)(5) to update procedures for addressing Equal Employment Opportunity allegations against members of the Board and direct reports to the Board; the General Manager has determined that the proposed action is exempt or otherwise not subject to CEQA.

Presented By: Jonaura Wisdom, Chief Equal Employment Opportunity Officer

Motion: Amend Metropolitan Administrative Code Section 2416(f)(5) to update procedures for addressing Equal Employment Opportunity allegations against members of the Board and direct reports to the Board

Ms. Wisdom discussed the proposed amendment to Metropolitan Administrative Code Section 2416(f)(5) aims to update procedures and standards for handling Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) allegations involving Board members and their direct reports.

The following Directors provided comments or asked questions:

1. Seckel
2. Ramos
2. Ortega

Staff responded to the Directors' questions and comments.

After completion of the presentation, Director McMillan made a motion, seconded by Director Seckel, to approve Item 8-3

Ayes: Directors Cordero, Dennstedt, Faessel, McCoy, McMillan, Phan, Ramos, and Seckel

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

Absent: Directors Fong-Sakai, Gray, and Luna

The motion for item 8-3 passed by a vote of 8 ayes, 0 noes, 0 abstain, and 3 absent.

**5. BOARD INFORMATION ITEMS**

None

**6. COMMITTEE ITEMS (CONTINUE)**

- a. Subject: Ethics Education  
Presented By: Hiroshi Ishikawa, Principal Administrative Analyst

Mr. Ishikawa provided an overview of Metropolitan's Retaliation Policy.

- b. Subject: Equal Employment Opportunity Quarterly  
Statistical Report  
Presented By: Marisol Arzate, Deputy Chief EEO Officer

Ms. Arzate presented on quarterly informational updates to the EEO complaint statistics.

The following Directors provided comments or asked questions:

1. Faessel
2. Ramos

Staff responded to the Directors' questions and comments.

**7. MANAGEMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS**

- a. Subject: Ethics Officer's report on monthly activities  
Presented: Abel Salinas, Ethics Officer

Mr. Salinas presented an update on the Ethics Office's recent activities. The office has not entered into any new legal or professional services contracts in June. Mr. Salinas also reported one open investigation. The investigation, concerning alleged misuse of authority, was initiated in September 2024 and is expected to be completed within the next 30 to 60 days. For the period of May 2025 to June 2025, the Ethics Office received a total of 9 complaints involving 10 allegations. Mr. Salinas reported a total of 87 complaints total for Fiscal Year 2025. The FPPC has posted on its website Form 700s for

the Board of Directors, General Manager, Chief Financial Officer, and other specific positions.

- b.       Subject:       Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion activities  
          Presented:     Liji Thomas, Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer

Ms. Thomas highlighted the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Team’s collaborative efforts with various organizations like NAACP and ACWA Foundation. Both events showcase Metropolitan’s commitment to education, equity, and workforce inclusion across diverse communities.

The following Directors provided comments or asked questions:

- 1. Ortega

- c.       Subject:       Equal Employment Opportunity Activities  
  
          Nothing to report.

**8. FOLLOW-UP ITEMS**

Equal Employment Opportunity to bring back a report regarding anonymous complaints as well as how many complaints are about directors or direct reports at next quarterly report.

**9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

None

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 2:25 pm

Tana McCoy  
Chair