

THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

MINUTES

LEGAL AND CLAIMS COMMITTEE

March 10, 2026

Vice Chair McMillan called the meeting to order at 12:06 p.m.

Members present: Directors Camacho (entered after roll call), De Jesus (teleconference posted location), Douglas, Kassakhian (entered after roll call), Katz, Kurtz, McMillan, Miller, Ramos (teleconference posted location), and Shepherd Romey.

Members absent: Director Crawford.

Other Board Members present: Directors Ackerman, Alvarez, Bryant, Cordero, Crane, Denham (teleconference posted location), Dennstedt, Erdman, Faessel, Fellow, Fong-Sakai, Garza, Gray (teleconference posted location), Jay, McCoy, Ortega, Paule, Pressman, Seckel, and Sutley.

Committee Staff present: Beatty, Boucher, Deshmukh, Gaxiola, Hudson, Rubin, and Scully.

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

None

2. MANAGEMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS

A. Subject: General Counsel's report of monthly activities

General Counsel Scully provided an update on the deferral of Item 7-1.

CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS – ACTION

3. COMMITTEE ACTION (ONLY)

A. Subject: Approval of the Minutes of the Legal and Claims Committee for February 10, 2026.

4. COMMITTEE ITEMS (FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION)

Director Camacho entered the meeting.

7-1 **Subject** Amend the Metropolitan Administrative Code to conform to current policy, law, and practice, and to make other minor, non-substantive changes; the General Manager has determined that the proposed action is exempt or otherwise not subject to CEQA

Item 7-1 was deferred.

7-2 **Subject** Approve amendments to the Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code to modify the structure and duties of existing committees to accommodate a new committee, and make other minor non-substantive changes; the General Manager has determined that the proposed action is exempt or otherwise not subject to CEQA

Motion Approve amendments to the Metropolitan Water District Administrative Code to modify the structure and duties of existing committees to accommodate a new committee, and make other minor non-substantive changes

7-3 **Subject** Authorize an increase in the maximum amount payable under contract with Van Ness Feldman, LLP, for legal advice on Colorado River matters by \$250,000 to an amount not-to-exceed \$500,000; the General Manager has determined that the proposed action is exempt or otherwise not subject to CEQA

Motion Authorize an increase in the maximum amount payable under contract with Van Ness Feldman LLP, for legal advice on Colorado River matters by \$250,000 to an amount not to exceed \$500,000

The following Directors provided comments or asked questions:

1. Miller
2. Garza

Staff responded to the Director's questions and comments.

No presentations were given. Motion by Director Camacho, seconded by Director Miller, to approve the consent calendar items 3A, 7-2, and 7-3.

The vote was:

Ayes: Directors Camacho, De Jesus, Douglas, Katz, Kurtz, McMillan, Miller, Ramos, and Shepherd Romey
Noes: None
Abstentions: Katz (item 3A)
Absent: Directors Crawford, Kassakhian

The motion for Item 3A passed by a vote of 8 ayes, 0 noes, 1 abstention, and 2 absent.

The motion for Items 7-2 and 7-3 passed by a vote of 9 ayes, 0 noes, 0 abstention, and 2 absent.

END OF CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS

Vice Chair McMillan called the meeting into closed session.

Chair Kassakhian entered the meeting.

5. COMMITTEE ITEMS (ACTION FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION)

- 8-2** Subject Report on litigation in Systems Integrated, LLC v. Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Los Angeles County Superior Court Case No. 21STCV18292 and consider authorizing settlement [Conference with legal counsel--existing litigation; to be heard in closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d) (1)]
- Presented by: Tony Zepeda, Senior Deputy General Counsel
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- 8-3** Subject Report on litigation in Encarnacion Gutierrez v. Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Los Angeles County Superior Court Case No. 23STCV11052; and authorize an increase in the maximum amount payable under contract for legal services with BDG Law Group, APLC, in the amount of \$400,000 for a total amount not to exceed \$900,000; the General Manager has determined that the proposed action is exempt or otherwise not subject to CEQA [Conference with legal counsel existing litigation; to be heard in closed session pursuant to Government Code Section 54956.9(d)(1)]
- Presented by: Tony Zepeda, Sr. Deputy General Counsel
- Motion Authorize an increase in the maximum amount payable under contract for legal services with BDG Law Group, APLC, in the amount of \$400,000 for a total amount not to exceed \$900,000

- 8-4** Subject Report on litigation in Katano Kasaine v. Metropolitan Water District of Southern California; Adel Hagekhalil, an individual; Los Angeles Superior Court Case No. 25STCV05250, and authorize increase in the maximum amount payable under a contract for legal services with Davis Wright Tremaine LLP in the amount of \$500,000 for a total amount not to exceed \$750,000; the General Manager has determined that the proposed action is exempt or otherwise not subject to CEQA [Conference with legal counsel—existing litigation; to be heard in closed session pursuant to Gov. Code Section 54956.9(d)(1)]
- Presented by: Tony Zepeda, Sr. Deputy General Counsel
- Motion Authorize increase in the maximum amount payable under a contract for legal services in Katano Kasaine v. Metropolitan Water District of Southern California; Adel Hagekhalil, an individual; with Davis Wright Tremaine LLP in the amount of \$500,000 for a total amount not to exceed \$750,000

Chair Kassakhian reported on Item 8-2 there was no reportable action taken in closed session and on Item 8-3 and 8-4 no action was taken in closed session.

In open session, Director Kurtz made a motion, seconded by Director Camacho to approve the contract increase in Item 8-3.

The vote was:

Ayes: Directors Camacho, De Jesus, Douglas, Kassakhian, Katz, Kurtz, McMillan, Miller, Ramos, and Shepherd Romey
Noes: None
Abstentions: None
Absent: Director Crawford

The motion for Item 8-3 passed by a vote of 10 ayes, 0 noes, 0 abstentions, and 1 absent.

In open session, Director Douglas made a motion, seconded by Director Katz to approve the contract increase in Item 8-4.

The vote was:

Ayes: Directors Camacho, De Jesus, Douglas, Kassakhian, Katz, Kurtz, McMillan, Miller, Ramos, and Shepherd Romey
Noes: None
Abstentions: None
Absent: Director Crawford

The motion for Item 8-4 passed by a vote of 10 ayes, 0 noes, 0 abstentions, and 1 absent.

6. COMMITTEE ITEMS (INFORMATIONAL FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION)

None

7. COMMITTEE ITEMS (INFORMATIONAL)

None

8. FOLLOW-UP ITEMS

None

9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None

Meeting adjourned at 1:59 p.m.

Ardy Kassakhian
Chair