

THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

MINUTES

COMMUNITY AND WORKPLACE CULTURE COMMITTEE

October 13, 2025

Chair McCoy called the meeting to order at 1:25 pm

Members present: Directors Cordero, Dennstedt, Faessel (teleconference posted location), Fong-Sakai, McCoy, McMillan (teleconference posted location), and Seckel

Members absent: Directors Gray, Luna, Phan, and Ramos

Other Board Members present: Directors Ackerman, Armstrong, Erdman, Fellow, Garza, Jay, Katz, Miller, Ortega, and Shepherd Romey

Committee Staff present: Aguirre, Beatty, Berbeo, Hudson, Kasaine , Rubin, 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

2. COMMITTEE ACTION

- A. Subject: Approval of the Minutes of the Community and Workplace Culture Committee for September 8, 2025.

3. COMMITTEE ITEMS (FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION)

None

Director Dennstedt made a motion, seconded by Director Seckel, to approve the consent calendar for item 2A.

The vote was:

Ayes: Directors Cordero, Dennstedt, Faessel, Fong-Sakai, McCoy, McMillan, and Seckel

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

Absent: Directors Gray, Luna, Phan, and Ramos

The motion for item 2A passed by a vote of 7 ayes, 0 noes, 0 abstentions, and 4 absent.

END OF CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS

4. COMMITTEE ITEMS (ACTION FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION)

None

5. COMMITTEE ITEMS (INFORMATIONAL FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION)

None

6. COMMITTEE ITEMS (INFORMATIONAL)

a. Subject: Ethics Education – Political Activities

Presented by: Hiroshi Ishikawa, Principal Administrative Analyst

Mr. Ishikawa presented an overview of Metropolitan's rules on political activities.

b. Subject: Ethics Quarterly Statistical Report

Presented by: Dominic Berbeo, Senior Deputy Ethics Officer

Mr. Berbeo presented the education activities, advice, compliance and complaint matters received from July to September 2025.

- c. Subject: Business Outreach & Community Engagement Annual Report FY 2024 2025
Presented by: John Arena, Business Outreach Manager

Mr. Arena presented the achievement of a record 29% small business utilization, exceeding the Board's 25% goal. He highlighted ongoing partnerships, community engagement, and training programs that continue to expand opportunities for small and disabled veteran-owned businesses through outreach events and collaboration with member agencies.

The following Directors provided comments or asked questions:

1. Ortega
2. Garza

Staff responded to the Director's questions and comments.

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

Ms. Arzate reported that EEO office received 21 complaints this quarter, an increase from 12 last quarter, with disability discrimination and retaliation among the most common issues. Case resolution times improved to an average of 75 business days, showing enhanced case management. To address recurring concerns, EEO will provide to the committee data on complaints that were substantiated and deploy targeted training and team-building interventions.

The following Director provided comments or asked questions:

1. Seckel
2. Ortega

Staff responded to the Director's questions and comments

7. MANAGEMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS

- a. Subject: Ethics Officer's report on monthly activities
 Presented by: Dominic Berbeo, Senior Deputy Ethics Officer

Mr. Berbeo provided an update on the Ethics Office's recent activities, highlighting that as of September 30, there were five open investigations with two expected to close within the month, reflecting timely resolution efforts. He also highlighted that the Ethics Office received seven new complaints in September, and there are currently 10 open ethics complaints under review. He added that one complaint was lodged via the Alternative Complaint Hotline and referred by the outside firm monitoring the hotline to the General Counsel's Office for review.

The following Director provided comments or asked questions:

1. Dennstedt

Staff responded to the Director's question and comments.

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

Ms. Thomas highlighted the DEI Desert Intensive Activities initiative in Parker and Lake Havasu, Arizona, which builds community partnerships to boost workforce and procurement opportunities. Activities included facility tours, strategic partnerships and cultural events like the NatiVisions Film Festival to support inclusion and community engagement.

The following Directors provided comments or asked questions:

1. Ortega
2. McCoy

Staff responded to the Directors' questions and comments.

- c. Subject: Equal Employment Opportunity activities
 Presented by: Jonaura Wisdom, Chief EEO Officer

EEO activities report is available online.

8. FOLLOW-UP ITEMS

Business Outreach to provide a written annual report for FY 2024 – 2025 and future annual reports.

9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:11 pm

Tana McCoy
Chair