

THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

MINUTES

COMMUNITY AND WORKPLACE CULTURE COMMITTEE

February 10, 2026

Chair McCoy called the meeting to order at 11:43 a.m.

Members present: Directors Cordero, Dennstedt (entered after the roll call), Faessel, Fong-Sakai, McCoy, McMillan, and Seckel.

Members absent: Directors Gray, Phan, and Ramos

Other Board Members present: Directors Ackerman, Crane, Douglas, Erdman, Fellow, Garza, Jay, Miller, and Paule

Committee Staff present: Aguirre, Beatty, Deshmukh, Hudson, Kasaine, Thomas, Salinas, 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. COMMITTEE ACTION (ONLY)

A. Subject: Approval of the Minutes of the Community and Workplace Culture Committee for January 13, 2026.

3. COMMITTEE ITEMS (FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION)

None

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

The vote was:

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

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

Absent: Directors Dennstedt, Gray, Phan, and Ramos

The motion for item 2A passed by a vote of 6 ayes, 0 noes, 0 abstentions, and 4 absent.

Director Dennstedt entered the meeting.

END OF CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS

4. COMMITTEE ITEMS (ACTION FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION)

None

5. COMMITTEE ITEMS (INFORMATINAL FOR BOARD CONSIDERATION)

None

6. COMMITTEE ITEMS (INFORMATIONAL)

a. Subject: Quarterly Workforce Development Update

Presented By: Brenda Martinez, Workforce Development Manager

Ms. Martinez provided a quarterly workforce development update, highlighting expanded outreach in Colorado River basin communities and increased collaboration with schools, community groups, and Native Nations to raise awareness, strengthen training pipelines, and increase the qualified candidate pool for skilled trade positions.

The following Directors provided comments or asked questions:

1. Seckel
2. Cordero

Staff responded to the Directors' comments and questions.

- b. Subject: Quarterly Business Outreach Update

Presented By: Ken Ashford, Public Affairs Representative

Mr. Ashford presented the quarterly Business Outreach Report, highlighting the four components of the Vendor Development Program: Business Coaching, Mentor-Protégé, Contractor Academy, and Vendor Introduction, which support regional, small, and disabled veteran-owned businesses. He reaffirmed Metropolitan's commitment to inclusive outreach and ongoing updates to the Committee.

The following Directors provided comments or asked questions:

1. Crane
2. Cordero
3. Fong-Sakai

Staff responded to the Directors' comments and questions.

7. MANAGEMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS

- a. Subject: Ethics Officer's report on monthly activities

Presented: Abel Salinas, Ethics Officer

Mr. Salinas provided an update to Board Vice Chair Garza's request from November 2025 regarding Ethics Office reviews of policies, procedures, and practices. Since the November meeting, General Manager Deshmukh and Mr. Salinas have continued discussions on framing the process moving forward. Once the new Ethics Committee of the Board is formed, the Ethics Officer will bring an information item to explain the Ethics Office's role in making recommendations that enhance the integrity of Metropolitan and improve workplace culture.

The following Director provided comments or asked questions:

1. Dennstedt

Staff responded to the Director's comments and questions.

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

Presented: Liji Thomas, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer

Ms. Thomas reported on the December 2025 ERG Leaders Inspection Trip, which enhanced leadership development and workplace culture through site tours and collaboration. She also reaffirmed the DEI Office's compliance and commitment to fairness, access, and inclusive excellence to support a diverse workforce and equitable procurement practices.

The following Directors provided comments or asked questions:

1. Seckel
2. Cordero
3. Garza

c. Subject: Equal Employment Opportunity activities

The EEO activities report is available online.

8. FOLLOW-UP ITEMS

Director Dennstedt requested that the Ethics monthly report include consistent date ranges, including fiscal-year-to-date opened and closed case counts. She also asked for information on how many ethics cases are handled by internal versus external investigators.

9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:32 p.m.

Tana McCoy
Chair