



● Chair of the Board Adán Ortega Jr.'s Monthly Activity Report – July 2024

Summary

This report highlights my activities as Chair of the Board during the month of July 2024 on matters relating to The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's business.

Monthly Activities

Key Activities

- Took part in a Podcast recording at Rowland Water District titled "H2Know Podcast Talking Issues", where I discussed the history and mission of Metropolitan in providing water delivery to Southern Californians. I emphasized the need for continued efforts to develop solutions for the future, like Metropolitan's Pure Water Southern California Program, to address climate impacts and vulnerabilities facing the region's water system and the communities served to advance strategies for an equitable and resilient water future.
- I had the honor of attending the Hispanic Employees Association (HEA) 2024 Scholarship Banquet, where I was asked to deliver the keynote address and help present scholarships to the deserving college students and their families. This event celebrated the achievements of those recognized and paid tribute to the Henry Lozano Memorial Scholarship, named in honor of HEA's founding president. This scholarship commemorates his dedication to assisting the next generation of leaders by promoting diversity in the workplace and advancing equal employment opportunities.



- Attended the City of Burbank City Council meeting with Board Member Marsha Ramos and Acting Interim General Manager Shane Chapman. We addressed the interrelation between CAMP4Water, the Biennial Budget Process, Bay-Delta Issues, and the Colorado River, as well as our collective resiliency in addressing the State Water Project Exclusive Areas challenges. We thanked the City Council and Burbank's representative on the Metropolitan Board, Director Marsha Ramos, for their leadership and continued collaboration.



- Provided opening remarks at Metropolitan's Community Leaders' Briefing with Inland Empire Utilities Agency (IEUA) where I discussed what Metropolitan is doing to ensure a resilient and sustainable water future amid climate change. IEUA President Marco Tule, Senator Rubio, and Metropolitan Water District Director Michael Camacho talked about important water issues, including the climate bond, PFAS, and securing funding and resources for water infrastructure projects.



- Participated in Metropolitan's Employee Appreciation Picnic where Interim General Manager Deven Upadhyay and I provided opening remarks. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I thanked everyone, including member agencies, for their hard work throughout the year and acknowledged the HR team and event organizers for their efforts. I highlighted that it had been five years since our last employee appreciation event and expressed hope that it would become an annual tradition. I also shared a brief history of the Shoshone tribes to emphasize the importance of water in Southern California and praised the employees' dedication to providing clean, reliable water. Lastly, I spoke about Metropolitan's resilience, adaptability, and innovative spirit as we approached our 100th anniversary.



- Director Miguel Luna and I joined San Fernando Mayor Celeste Rodriguez and the Honorable Dennis Garcia, Chairman of Elders of the Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, in an early morning Peace and Dignity Journey run send-off. Director Luna and I accompanied the runners for a 7-mile stretch of the run from San Fernando on their day-long run to Long Beach. This unique initiative promotes indigenous unity and cultural revitalization through long-distance relay runs across the Americas, where runners pass a sacred staff, symbolizing connections between communities. The event blends cultural celebration, advocacy, and personal transformation.



Interviews & Correspondence

- I recorded a tribute interview about retiring U.S. Representative Grace Napolitano that will be shown at the upcoming banquet in her honor being held by the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF) in the Fall. I reminisced about meeting Congresswoman Napolitano over 30 years ago, her contribution to water resources in the Southwest, and Metropolitan's honor of naming the Grace F. Napolitano Pure Water SoCal Innovation Center.



Special Activities

- Interim General Manager Deven Upadhyay and I have been conducting Metropolitan site meetings to meet with the employees, provide district updates, and listen to and address their concerns. So far, we have attended three meetings in August: Jensen, Diemer, and Weymouth Water Quality Lab, where we participated in a robust question-and-answer session addressing various topics, including Metropolitan's local and regional planning investments, workforce initiatives, and CAMP4W. We emphasized our commitment to upholding high service standards and transparency. I communicated the Board's strong unity in recent tough decisions and our united concern for their well-being. I was encouraged by the focus the workforce is demonstrating on our mission of providing safe and reliable drinking water to the community. Interim General Manager Deven Upadhyay's comments and answers to questions were received with candor, appreciation, good humor, and with sincere thanks.

- I was proud to celebrate the future of Metropolitan on National Intern Day. This summer, we're honored to host interns, including those participating in our Engineering Co-Op internship program, in partnership with California State Polytechnic University-Pomona and the Coro Southern California 2024 Youth Fellows Program. The three Coro fellows recently "graduated" from our Education department's experiential learning program, while our 17 engineering interns will be with us until March 2025. Thanks to hands-on experiences at locations including Diamond Valley Lake, the Pure Water facility, and Weymouth Water Treatment plant, our interns are gaining valuable workplace knowledge. The future is in good hands with these aspiring civic leaders and engineers.



Regularly Scheduled/Ongoing Meetings

I continue to meet regularly to review the Board's organizational issues and coordinate activities with the Board Vice Chairs and Department Heads.