

THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

MINUTES

ETHICS, ORGANIZATION AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

October 8, 2024

Chair Pressman called the meeting to order at 8:37 am

Members present: Directors Bryant, Douglas (AB 2249 “Just Cause”), Faessel, Fong-Sakai, Jung (teleconference posted location), Lewitt, McMillan, Phan (entered after roll call), Pressman, Ramos (entered after roll call), and Sutley.

Members absent: Directors Camacho, Cordero, Erdman, Phan, and Ramos.

Other Board Members present: Directors Ackerman, Dennstedt (teleconference posted location), Garza, Gray (teleconference posted location), Goldberg, Kurtz, Lefevre (teleconference posted location), Miller, Morris, Ortega, Seckel, and Smith (teleconference posted location).

Chair of the Board Ortega was present in the room for Quorum purposes and for Director Douglas to participate via AB2449 "Just Cause".

Director Douglas indicated he is participating under AB 2449 “Just Cause” due to family caretaker needs, Director Douglas appeared by audio and on camera.

Committee Staff present: Aguirre, Brower, Chapman, Kasaine, Salinas, H. Torres, Wisdom, and Wheeler

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. Approval of the Minutes of the Ethics, Organization, and Personnel Committee for September 10, 2024 (copies submitted to each Director, any additions, corrections, or omissions)

Director Bryant made a motion, seconded by Director McMillan to approve the consent calendar items 2A.

The vote was:

Ayes:	Directors Bryant, Faessel, Fong-Sakai, Jung, Lewitt, McMillan, Pressman, and Sutley.
Noes:	None
Abstentions:	None
Absent:	Directors Camacho, Cordero, Douglas, Erdman, Phan, and Ramos.

The motion for item 2A passed by a vote of 8 ayes, 0 noes, and 6 absent.

3. **CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS – ACTION**

None

END OF CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS

4. **OTHER BOARD ITEMS – ACTION**

None

5. **BOARD INFORMATION ITEMS**

None

Director Phan and Ramos entered the meeting.

6. **COMMITTEE ITEMS**

- a. Subject: Discussion of additional complaint hotline for Ethics, Equal Employment Opportunity, and other misconduct allegations involving members of the Board of Directors and Executive staff.

Presented by: Abel Salinas, Ethics Officer

Mr. Salinas advised PowerPoint presentation was printed, and copies were available. Mr. Salinas gave an overview of the additional complaint hotline for Ethics, EEO, and other misconduct allegations. This hotline will be managed by an outside firm who will then forward complaints to the appropriate department for further investigation. This is an additional reporting option for employees to feel free to report issues without fear of retaliation and continue to improve compliance program.

The following Directors provided comments or asked questions:

1. Ortega
2. Pressman
3. Ramos
4. Bryant
5. Goldberg

Staff responded to the Directors' questions and comments.

b. Subject: Equal Employment Opportunity Statistical Report

Presented by: Jonaura Wisdom, Chief EEO Officer

Ms. Wisdom provided a quarterly statistical report regarding EEO complaints for July-September 2024. She gave an overview of the number of complaints received and resolved. Eleven complaints were closed and finalized, fifteen are open and under investigation.

The following Directors provided comments or asked questions.

1. Smith
2. Garza
3. Fong-Sakai
4. Pressman
5. Ortega

Staff responded to the Directors' questions and comments.

- c. Subject: Update on the Ad Hoc Committee for the Department Heads Evaluation Process

Presented by: Barry Pressman, Chair of Committee

Adan Ortega, Chair of the Board

Eleanor Ellen, Catapult for Change

Chair of the Board Ortega gave a brief update on the Ad Hoc committee for department heads evaluation process. Ms. Ellen gave an overview of the Ad Hoc meetings, she shared improvements for the department head evaluation process, a series of workshops for the 4 department heads participating, set business plan goals, and report back to the board.

The following Directors provided comments or asked questions.

1. Ortega
2. Smith

Staff responded to the Directors' questions and comments.

7. MANAGEMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS

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

Presented by: Abel Salinas, Ethics Officer

Mr. Salinas shared there has been one new investigation since the last meeting and one renewed annual contract with Shaw Law Group, Ellis Investigations, and the Office of Rebecca Yang. Currently, there are two open investigations, one from March and alleges conflict of interest, the second was open in September and alleges misuse of authority. As a follow-up to the director's questions from the September meeting. Comments from August meetings related to workplace safety, accommodations and equity issues, HR, and management and they are addressing those concerns.

The following Directors provided comments or questions.

1. Pressman

- b. Subject: Equal Employment Opportunity activities
 Human Resources activities
 Safety, Security, and Protection activities

Chair Pressman stated Equal Employment Opportunity and Safety, Security, and Protection activities reports are posted online for review.

Presented By: Mark Brower, Human Resources Group Manager

Mr. Brower gave a reminder on open enrollment ending October 16th, shared the positive feedback regarding the new benefit enrollment portal and Benefits team responses to phone calls and emails. Advised the process this year was supported by new team members and announced 2 HR members retired with a combined service of over 60 years. Thanked HRIS and Benefits managers along with their teams for excellent work supporting employees. Gave an update on Civility training, led by DE&I and supported by HR.

The following Director provided comments or asked questions:

1. Pressman
2. McMillan

8. FOLLOW-UP ITEMS

None

9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

None

10. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 9:36am

Barry Pressman
Chair