

# THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

## MINUTES

### ETHICS, ORGANIZATION AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

**June 11, 2024**

Chair Pressman called the meeting to order at 11:20 a.m.

Members present: Directors Bryant, Camacho, Cordero (teleconference posted location), Douglas (entered after rollcall), Erdman, Jung (teleconference posted location), McMillan, Phan (teleconference posted location), Ramos (teleconference posted location), Pressman, Ramos (teleconference posted location), and Sutley.

Members absent: Directors Faessel, Fong-Sakai, and Kassakhian.

Other Board Members present: Directors Abdo, Ackerman, Alvarez, Armstrong, De Jesus, Dennstedt, Dick, Fellow, Garza, Goldberg, Gray (teleconference posted location), Kurtz, Lefevre (AB 2449 “just cause”), Garza, Miller, Morris, Ortega, Peterson, Lewitt, Quinn, Smith, and Seckel.

Director Lefevre indicated he is participating under AB 2449 “just cause” due to him being the primary caretaker, which prevents him from attending in person.

Director Lefevre appeared by audio and on camera.

Committee Staff present: Kasaine, Mortada, H. Rodriguez, Salinas, H. Torres, Wisdom, and Wheeler

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

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Item</b>
1.	Conner Everts	So. Cal So Water Alliance	8-6
2.	Charming Evelyn		8-6
3.	Katie Wagner	Sierra Club California	8-6

#### **CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS — ACTION**

#### 2. **CONSENT CALENDAR OTHER ITEMS – ACTION**

- A. Approval of the Minutes of the Ethics, Organization, and Personnel Committee for May 14, 2024 (copies submitted to each Director, any additions, corrections, or omissions)

#### 3. **CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS – ACTION**

None

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

The vote was:

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

The motion for item 2A passed by a vote of 10 ayes, 0 noes, and 4 absent.

### **END OF CONSENT CALENDAR ITEMS**

Chair Pressman announced agenda would be reordered. Hearing item 8-6 last.

## **5. BOARD INFORMATION ITEMS**

None

## **6. COMMITTEE ITEMS**

a. Subject: Monthly Ethics Education

Presented by: Peter Von Haam, Assistant Ethics Officer

Mr. Von Haam provided an overview of “pay to play law”. The purpose is to help public officials avoid unintentional violations in the course of campaign fund-raising.

The following Directors provided comments or questions.

1. De Jesus

Staff responded to the Director’s questions and comments.

Director Douglas entered the meeting.

- b. Subject: Update on Department Head evaluation process and comparator agencies

Presented by: Brandon Patrick, Unit Manager Class Comp and Recruitment

Barry Pressman, Chair

Director Pressman gave an update on Comparator Agencies requested feedback and recommendations. Mr. Patrick provided an overview of agencies being used to complete the Department Head 2024 salary survey. With the purpose of overviewing the process and agencies used to compare against, and to seek board guidance.

The following Directors provided comments or questions.

1. Pressman
2. Miller
3. Kurtz
4. Jung
5. Sutley
6. Erdman
7. Ortega

- c. Subject: Discussion of proposed revisions to the investigative procedures for Equal Employment Opportunity and Ethics allegations involving members of the Board of Directors and Direct Reports to the Board.

Presented by: Adan Ortega, Chair of the Board

Jennifer Rosner, Libert Cassidy Whitmore

Chair Ortega and Jennifer Rosner from Libert Cassidy Whitmore gave an overview of the plan to have an outside entity do internal investigations involving department heads and members of the board.

The following Directors provided comments or questions.

1. Pressman
2. Miller
3. Gray
4. Kurtz
5. Jung
6. Ramos
7. Douglas
8. De Jesus

Staff responded to the Directors' questions and comments.

d. Subject: Discussion on conducting a workforce assessment.

Presented by: Adel Hagekhalil, General Manager

Mark Brower, Human Resources Group Manager

Mr. Hagekhalil and Mr. Brower gave an overview of the upcoming workforce assessment, which will include an annual employee survey to capture employee feedback on themes such as strategic goals, employee and team performance, engagement and MWD culture.

## **7. MANAGEMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS AND HIGHLIGHTS**

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

Presented by: Abel Salinas, Ethics Officer

Mr. Salinas gave an update on the ethics office, no new investigations. Currently Five open which are expected to be completed within the next three months.

b. Subject: Equal Employment Opportunity Activities

Presented by: Jonaura Wisdom, Chief EEO Officer

Ms. Wisdom gave an update on EEOs annual review of policies. EEO is working with HR regarding recruitment sources to yield diverse pools, recommended to include Careers in Government in job announcements which covers all minority groups. Updating tag line to provide EEO statements in all job announcements and for nondiscrimination programs, they have established positions that are considered underutilized and will be working with HR and the Unions in order to eliminate the underutilizations for those positions.

c. Subject: Human Resources Activities

Presented By: Mark Brower, Human Resources Group Manager

Mr. Brower announced a new way for Directors to recognize retirees, the first retiree is scheduled to be recognized June 25<sup>th</sup> at the Executive committee meeting. A new employee support program will be implemented called, Interim Manager training. This will be a one-day training for Interim managers.

The following director had comments or questions.

1. Bryant

## **8. FOLLOW-UP ITEMS**

None

## **9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

None

## **4. OTHER BOARD ITEMS – ACTION**

- 8-6                      Discussion of correspondence alleging employment violations and provide direction to staff; the General Manager has determined the proposed action is exempt or otherwise not subject to CEQA [Conference with legal counsel—anticipated litigation; based on existing facts and circumstances, including receipt of a correspondence containing allegations of serious Equal Employment Opportunity and other violations; there is significant exposure to litigation against Metropolitan; one potential case; to be heard in closed session pursuant to Gov. Code Section 54956.9 (d)(2)]

Presented by:      Adan Ortega, Chair

Item discussed in closed session with no reportable action.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 1:46 p.m.

Barry Pressman  
Chair