

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT OF ORANGE COUNTY (MWDOC)**

April 28, 2023

At 8:30 a.m. President Yoo Schneider called to order the Special Meeting of the Municipal Water District of Orange County in Conference Room 101 at the District facilities located in Fountain Valley, California. Legal Counsel Joe Byrne led the Pledge of Allegiance and Secretary Goldsby called the roll.

MWDOC DIRECTORS

Al Nederhood
Larry Dick
Karl W. Seckel
Bob McVicker
Randall Crane
Jeffery M. Thomas
Megan Yoo Schneider

STAFF

Harvey De La Torre, Interim General Mgr.
Joe Byrne, Legal Counsel
Maribeth Goldsby, District Secretary
Heather Baez, Governmental Affairs Manager
Joe Berg, Director of Water Use Efficiency
Damon Micalizzi, Director of Public Affairs
Melissa Baum-Haley, Int. Dir. of MET Issues/Policy
Charles Busslinger, Director of Engineering

OTHERS PRESENT

Peter Whittingham
Peer Swan
Mike Markus
John Kennedy
Lisa Ohlund

Whittingham Public Affairs Advisors
Irvine Ranch Water District
Orange County Water District
Orange County Water District
Ohlund Management & Technical Services

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION/PUBLIC COMMENTS

President Yoo Schneider inquired whether any members of the public wished to comment on agenda items.

No public comments were received.

**STUDY SESSION ON MWDOC AND OCWD RELATIONS AND DISCUSSION
REGARDING LAFCO'S MUNICIPAL SERVICES REVIEW FOCUSED STUDY**

Interim General Manager, Harvey De La Torre provided an overview of the MWDOC's and OCWD's history (including enabling legislation and missions), background, working relations between the two agencies, the 2022 Grand Jury Report, previous reviews and studies on consolidation, recent activities, OCWD's request for a LAFCO MSR Focused Study (Study), and potential next steps.

Director Nederhood spoke in opposition of the study and overall effort. His comments included an overview of the core differences of the two agencies. He also stated his belief that the Study is fatally flawed (unless the Study includes the potential for all of Orange County to have access to the groundwater basin). He encouraged the Board to issue a statement in opposition.

Considerable discussion ensued regarding the core differences of the two agencies, as well as opportunities to work together to improve water reliability in the region. Some Board members believed that although the two Districts have distinct missions, they complement each other and that working collaboratively together would ensure two strong agencies which would provide benefit to the community.

The Board also discussed areas of disagreement between the two agencies, as well as prior consolidation efforts/discussions and the reasons why both agencies determined that consolidation would not work in the past (governance, groundwater access to South Orange County agencies, cost of terminating CalPERS retirement benefits, and legislative issues relating to the MET Act). The Board questioned whether anything has changed since the prior discussions on consolidation (2013); it was confirmed that there has been no changes, and as a result, the issues prohibiting consolidation continue to exist. It was noted that unless a consolidation would benefit the entire service area, several of the MWDOC Board members would not support the effort at this time. Board members also felt that OCWD's strong decisions and actions were not warranted, and that a process should be established to work through the issues.

Following discussion, the Board generally concurred that although they opposed any consolidation efforts, they supported OCWD as an agency and encouraged cooperation between the two agencies. In response to OCWD's strong position and actions, it was suggested that a discussion of what needs/issues OCWD believes are not being met, be addressed at the Joint MWDOC/OCWD Board meeting (scheduled for May 5, 2023).

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:39 a.m.

Maribeth Goldsby
District Secretary