

**MINUTES OF THE WORKSHOP MEETING OF THE
MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT OF ORANGE COUNTY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS WITH METROPOLITAN DIRECTORS
January 7, 2026, 8:30 a.m.**

At 8:30 a.m., President Dick called to order the Joint Workshop Board Meeting of the Municipal Water District of Orange County with Metropolitan Directors Conference in Room 101 at the District facilities located in Fountain Valley, as well as including attendance via the Zoom Webinar application. Director of Public Affairs Damon Micalizzi led the Pledge of Allegiance and District Secretary Crespi called the roll.

MWDOC Directors

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

*Also MWDOC MET Directors

Other MWDOC MET Directors

Linda Ackerman
Dennis Erdman

Also Present

Albert Napoli
Dick Ackerman
Jessica Neuwerth
Paul Jones
Doug Davert
David Youngblood
Dennis Cafferty
Vu Chu
Mike Gaskins
Kathryn Freshley
Kay Havens
Mark Monin
Peer Swan
Doug Reinhart
Paul Weghorst
Jim Atkinson
James Fisler
Stacy Taylor
Donald Froelich
Dick Fiore
Sherry Wanninger
Laura Rocha
Garrett Durst

Staff

Harvey De La Torre, General Manager
Melissa Baum-Haley, Assistant General Manager
Angela Crespi, District Secretary
Pari Francisco, Records Specialist
Heather Baez, Director of Government Affairs
Damon Micalizzi, Director of Public Affairs
Jennifer Wicks, Public Affairs Communications
Manager
Rachel Waite-Harvey, Water Use Efficiency
Programs Supervisor
Joseph Byrne, Legal Counsel

Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
Ackerman Consulting
Colorado River Board of California
Dopudja & Wells
East Orange County Water District
East Orange County Water District
El Toro Water District
El Toro Water District
El Toro Water District
El Toro Water District
El Toro Water District
El Toro Water District
Irvine Ranch Water District
Irvine Ranch Water District
Irvine Ranch Water District
Mesa Water District
Mesa Water District
Mesa Water District
Moulton Niguel Water District
Moulton Niguel Water District
Moulton Niguel Water District
Moulton Niguel Water District
National Resources Results

Lisa Ohlund	Ohlund Management & Technical Services
Emily Novak	Orange County Water District
Dennis Davis	San Diego County Water Authority
Saundra Jacobs	Santa Margarita Water District
Greg Mills	Serrano Water District
Rick Erkeneff	South Coast Water District
Rick Shintaku	South Coast Water District
Wyatt McClean	Trabuco Canyon Water District
Michael Boccadoro	West Coast Advisors
Beth Olhasso	West Coast Advisors
Peter Whittingham	Whittingham Public Affairs Advisors
Tom Lindsey	Yorba Linda Water District
Mark Toy	Yorba Linda Water District
Freddie Ojeda	Yorba Linda Water District
Chuck Gibson	

TELECONFERENCE SITE

Director McVicker participated via teleconference location (all agenda requirements pursuant to the Ralph M. Brown Act requirements were complied with).

PUBLIC COMMENTS

President Dick asked whether any members of the public wished to comment on agenda items.

There were no public comments.

ITEMS RECEIVED TOO LATE TO BE AGENDIZED

No items were received.

ITEMS DISTRIBUTED TO THE BOARD LESS THAN 72 HOURS PRIOR TO THE MEETING

President Dick inquired as to whether there were any items distributed to the Board less than 72 hours prior to the meeting.

District Secretary Crespi reported there were no items distributed to the Board less than 72 hours prior to the meeting.

NEXT RESOLUTION NO. 2167

PRESENTATION ITEM

1. COLORADO RIVER 2026 GUIDELINES UPDATE (PRESENTATION BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JESSICA NEUWERTH)

Director of Government Affairs Heather Baez introduced Colorado River Board of California Executive Director Jessica Neuwerth, who provided an update on the Colorado River Basin States' negotiations for Post-2026 operating guidelines. She reported that the Basin States were unable

to meet the November 11 deadline to reach consensus, prompting the Department of Interior to set a new deadline of February 14; if consensus remains unmet, the Bureau of Reclamation will issue a unilateral operational plan.

The Colorado River's current operating rules will expire on October 1, 2026, requiring a new set of guidelines that will determine Upper Basin's releases to the Lower Basin and how shortages are shared among the States and the Republic of Mexico. Negotiations toward these rules have stalled because the Upper Basin has resisted committing to water-use reductions during a drought. While the Lower Basin has agreed to cut 1.5 million acre-feet, further reductions are expected and must include participation by the Upper Basin.

The Board discussed possible solutions and outcomes as negotiations move forward toward the new Federal deadline of February 14, 2026.

The Board thanked Ms. Neuwerth for the presentation.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2. LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

a. Federal Legislative Report (NRR)

In addition to the report provided in the agenda packet, National Resource Results (NRR) Partner Garret Durst provided an overview of the Federal Legislative Report, highlighting spending bills and possible changes to the Endangered Species Act, and recent activities regarding Sites Reservoir.

The Board thanked Mr. Durst for his report.

b. State Legislative Report (WCA)

In addition to the report provided in the agenda packet, West Coast Advisors Michael Boccadoro and Beth Olhasso provided an overview of new leadership in Sacramento, the Fiscal Year 2026-27 state budget, the Bay Delta Water Quality Control Plan, and anticipated legislation.

The Board thanked Mr. Boccadoro and Ms. Olhasso for their report.

c. Legal and Regulatory Report (Ackerman)

Mr. Dick Ackerman of Ackerman Consulting provided an update on the Delta Conveyance Project and emerging technology for fire suppression that uses sound waves instead of water.

The Board thanked Mr. Ackerman for his report.

d. County Legislative Report (Whittingham)

In addition to the report provided in the agenda packet, Mr. Peter Whittingham of Whittingham Public Affairs Advisors provided an overview of the Climate Action Plan and WISE agreements, which are to be included in an upcoming Orange County Board of Supervisors agenda.

The Board thanked Mr. Whittingham for his report.

3. QUESTIONS OR INPUT ON MET ISSUES FROM THE MEMBER AGENCIES/ MET DIRECTOR REPORTS REGARDING MET COMMITTEE PARTICIPATION

Director Erdman reported that the Engineering, Operations & Technology Committee will review an item to award a contract for concrete cylinder pipe rehabilitation and another to approve the guiding principles for Pure Water Southern California partnerships and a quarterly update.

Director Ackerman highlighted upcoming Metropolitan decisions on Pure Water, Sites Reservoir, and Delta Conveyance, and how these projects will be handled within the budget.

Director Seckel agreed with the updates provided and added that the CAMP4W scenarios will also be discussed in early 2026. There will also be representatives speaking about Pure Water at the January Board meetings.

Director Crane thanked President Dick for his introduction, noting that he joined the Metropolitan Board in December and that he has joined a number of committees, and will report back in the coming months.

INFORMATION ITEMS

6. MET ITEMS CRITICAL TO ORANGE COUNTY

- a. MET's Finance and Rate Issue
- b. MET's Water Supply Condition Update
- c. MET's Water Quality Update
- d. Colorado River Issues
- e. Delta Conveyance Activities and State Water Project Issues
- Oral Update by District Counsel Joseph Byrne and State Water Contractors Assistant General Manager Chandra Chilmakuri

In addition to the report provided in the agenda packet, District Counsel Joseph Byrne and State Water Contractors Assistant General Manager Chandra Chilmakuri provided an update on Federal and State permitting issues impacting the State Water Project.

7. MET BOARD AGENDA DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Summary regarding December MET Board Meeting
- b. Review items of significance for MET Board Agenda

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, President Dick adjourned the meeting at 11:15 a.m.



Angela Crespi
District Secretary