

**MINUTES OF THE WORKSHOP MEETING OF THE
MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT OF ORANGE COUNTY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS WITH MET DIRECTORS
November 5, 2025, 8:30 a.m.**

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

MWDOC Directors

Al Nederhood
Larry Dick*
Karl W. Seckel* (arrived at 9:29)
Bob McVicker
Randall Crane
Jeffery M. Thomas (absent)
Megan Yoo Schneider

*Also MWDOC MET Directors

Other MWDOC MET Directors

Linda Ackerman
Dennis Erdman

Staff

Harvey De La Torre, General Manager
Melissa Baum-Haley, Assistant General Manager
Angela Crespi, District Secretary
Pari Francisco, Records Specialist
Charles Busslinger, Director of Engineering/
District Engineer
Heather Baez, Director of Government Affairs
Jennifer Wicks, Public Affairs Communications
Manager
Rachel Davis, Water Loss Programs Manager
Sarina Sriboonlue, Principal Engineer
Kevin Hostert, Senior Water Resources Analyst
Rachel Waite-Harvey, Water Use Efficiency
Programs Supervisor
Katrina Wraight, Legal Counsel

Also Present

Adam Benson
Arnount Van den Berg
Albert Napoli
Dick Ackerman
Doug Davert
Vu Chu
Mike Gaskins
Kathryn Freshley
Kay Havens
Mark Monin
Sherri Seitz
Peer Swan
Doug Reinhart
Paul Weghorst
Steve LaMar
Keith Van Der Maaten
Jim Atkinson
Stacy Taylor
Donald Froelich
Dick Fiore
Marina Lindsay

Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
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Ackerman Consulting
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
El Toro Water District
Irvine Ranch Water District
Irvine Ranch Water District
Irvine Ranch Water District
Irvine Ranch Water District
Laguna Beach County Water District
Mesa Water District
Mesa Water District
Moulton Niguel Water District
Moulton Niguel Water District
Moulton Niguel Water District

Sherry Wanninger	Moulton Niguel Water District
Garrett Durst	National Resources Results
Sara Tucker	National Resources Results
Lisa Ohlund	Ohlund Management & Technical Services
John Kennedy	Orange County Water District
Sandra Jacobs	Santa Margarita Water District
Jerry Vilander	Serrano Water District
Greg Mills	Serrano Water District
Bill Green	South Coast Water District
Syrus Devers	Syrus Devers Advocacy
Fernando Paludi	Trabuco Canyon Water District
Peter Whittingham	Whittingham Public Affairs Advisors
Brett Barbre	Yorba Linda Water District
Gene Hernandez	Yorba Linda Water District
Tom Lindsey	Yorba Linda Water District
Mark Toy	Yorba Linda Water District
Christine McIlrevey	Yorba Linda Water District
Chuck Gibson	Yorba Linda Water District

TELECONFERENCE SITES

Directors McVicker and Yoo Schneider participated via teleconference locations (all agenda requirements pursuant to the Ralph M. Brown Act requirements were complied with).

PUBLIC COMMENTS

President McVicker 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 McVicker 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. 2163

PRESENTATION ITEMS

- 1. INTEGRATED OVERVIEW OF METROPOLITAN NEAR-TERM BUDGET DRIVERS AND LONG-TERM RESOURCE PLANNING (PRESENTATION BY METROPOLITAN STAFF)**

Adam Benson of Metropolitan Water District of Southern California introduced his colleague Arount Van den Berg, who provided a presentation regarding financial trends and challenges facing Metropolitan as they develop their bi-annual budget.

The Board discussed the proper balance of cost pressures and long-term reliability of our water system, including staffing levels, the reliability of long-term forecasting, and investing in infrastructure maintenance and long-term reliability over time through gradual rate increases.

The Board thanked Mr. Benson and Mr. Van den Berg for their presentation.

2. FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS AND ADVOCACY FORECAST (PRESENTATION BY GARRETT DURST)

President McVicker requested that Mr. Durst combine his presentation with their monthly update.

3. STATE ADVOCACY RECAP (PRESENTATION BY SYRUS DEVERS)

President McVicker requested that Mr. Devers combine his presentation with his monthly update.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

4. 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 the government shutdown.

Regarding what is to come in 2026, Mr. Durst provided a presentation on three things MWDOC should be aware of. The first topic is Sites Reservoir. The next year will be marked by big decisions and key milestones, including permitting to prepare for construction scheduled for next fall. The second topic to maintain an awareness of in 2026 will be the Federal grant process at large. NRR is seeing a lot of uncertainty and change and expects that will continue into the next year. The third and final area is the Colorado River. There are a lot of steps that still need to be taken to move forward with a consensus agreement. The team will continue to work closely with Metropolitan and its lobbyist, but expect a bumpy year ahead.

The Board thanked Mr. Durst for his report.

b. State Legislative Report (SDA)

Mr. Syrus Devers of Syrus Devers Advocacy directed the Board to review his report, included in the packet. After writing the Board report, CalMatters released a report on golden mussels, and given the significance of the issue, it should also be highlighted in his forecast. Of statewide importance are issues related to SGMA, and a recent lawsuit that was filed. He also indicated that additional work will need to be put into the implementation of SB 72, which has to do with increased water supply planning in the California Water Plan.

Mr. Devers thanked the Board for the honor of working for them for the last 10 years and the Board thanked Mr. Devers for his report.

c. Legal and Regulatory Report (Ackerman)

Mr. Dick Ackerman of Ackerman Consulting provided an update on the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act and ongoing litigation. He also reported continued nationwide investment in water projects, including by private companies.

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 informed the Board that the Orange County Board of Supervisors approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with South Coast Water District for a landfill gas-to-energy project for the Doheny Desalination project. Orange County Waste and Recycling is also discussing potential energy projects with other districts.

He also reported that the CalOptima audit related to the process for a real-estate investment project was released last week. No major issues were found, but the Board of Supervisors has authorized an audit of all contracts over the past 10 years.

The Board thanked Mr. Whittingham for his report.

- e. MWDOC Legislative Matrix
- f. MET Legislative Matrix

The Board received and filed the reports.

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

Director Ackerman provided an update on California Pure Water, noting that responses to the draft EIR are being prepared and that the final document is expected in June of 2026. The Colorado River negotiations are still ongoing, and there is still a November 11th deadline for a decision. Finally, the Metropolitan Board just welcomed new General Manager, Shivaji Deshmukh, with a 60-day onboarding plan.

Director Erdman informed the Board that they recently held the Engineering, Operations, and Technology Committee Inspection Trip to the Colorado River. He reported that the trip provided a chance to look much more in-depth at the Colorado River aqueduct operations and to see the level of support needed beyond just the pumps themselves. He emphasized the importance of succession planning for the Metropolitan employees at these locations.

Director Seckel built upon Director Erdman's report on the Engineering, Operations, and Technology Committee Inspection Trip to the Colorado River. He reemphasized the dedication and knowledge of Metropolitan employees in its desert operations, as well as their commitment to reliability. Finally, he provided details regarding the system complexity and life expectancy.

Director Dick reported that he is pleased with the interest he is seeing in the Agricultural Committee and the possibility of it being added as a regular meeting. He also noted a recent increase of \$100,000 in the Metropolitan legal contract for Best Best & Kreiger. He expressed gratitude for Director Erdman serving as Chairman of the Engineering, Operations, and Technology Committee, noting his expertise. Finally, he expressed the importance of adequate budgetary investment in reliability to meet Metropolitan's mission.

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

7. MET BOARD AGENDA DISCUSSION ITEMS

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

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, President McVicker adjourned the meeting at 10:30 a.m.



Angela Crespi
District Secretary