

**MINUTES OF THE WORKSHOP MEETING OF THE
MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT OF ORANGE COUNTY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS WITH METROPOLITAN DIRECTORS
February 4, 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 (MWDOC) with the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan or MET) Directors Conference in Room 101 at the District facilities located in Fountain Valley, as well as including attendance via the Zoom Webinar application. Trabuco Canyon Water District General Manager Larry McKenney led the Pledge of Allegiance and District Secretary Crespi called the roll.

MWDOC Directors

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

*Also MWDOC MET Directors

Other MWDOC MET Directors

Linda Ackerman
Dennis Erdman

Also Present

Dick Ackerman
Paul Jones
Doug Davert
Dennis Cafferty
Vu Chu
Mike Gaskins
Kathryn Freshley
Kay Havens
Mark Monin
Peer Swan
Doug Reinhart
Paul Weghorst
Jim Atkinson
Albert Napoli
Donald Froelich
Sherry Wanninger
Garrett Durst
Lisa Ohlund
Emily Novak
Saundra Jacobs

Staff

Harvey De La Torre, General Manager
Melissa Baum-Haley, Assistant General Manager
Angela Crespi, District Secretary
Kathy Pham, Assistant Board Secretary
Charles Busslinger, Director of Engineering/
District Engineer
Heather Baez, Director of Government Affairs
Damon Micalizzi, Director of Public Affairs
Jennifer Wicks, 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
Joseph Byrne, Legal Counsel

Ackerman Consulting
Dopudja & Wells
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
Mesa Water District
Metropolitan
Moulton Niguel Water District
Moulton Niguel Water District
National Resources Results
Ohlund Management & Technical Services
Orange County Water District
Santa Margarita Water District

Greg Mills	Serrano Water District
Jerry Vilander	Serrano Water District
Brad Reese	Serrano Water District
Doug Erdman	South Coast Water District
Scott Goldman	South Coast Water District
Joe Muller	South Coast Water District
Bill Green	South Coast Water District
Rick Shintaku	South Coast Water District
Marc Serna	South Coast Water District
Erica Castillo	South Coast Water District
Jody Brennan	South Coast Water District
Sheena Johnson	South Coast Water District
Wyatt McClean	Trabuco Canyon Water District
Larry McKenney	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
Brett Barbre	Yorba Linda Water District
Susan Hinman	
Chuck Gibson	

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).

District Secretary Crespi announced that Director Thomas was participating remotely due to Just Cause circumstances under Section 54953.8.3 of the Brown Act, and that notice had been provided to the Board of Directors (Board).

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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

El Toro Water District Director Mark Monin commended MWDOC on a successful Water Policy Forum.

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. 2169

PRESENTATION ITEM

1. DOHENY OCEAN DESALINATION PROJECT UPDATE (PRESENTATION BY SOUTH COAST WATER DISTRICT GENERAL MANAGER – RICK SHINTAKU)

General Manager Harvey De La Torre introduced South Coast Water District General Manager Rick Shintaku, who provided an update on the Doheny Ocean Desalination Project. Mr. Shintaku highlighted the project history, funding sources, challenges, opportunities, and next steps.

The Board discussed the status of the South Coast Water District's groundwater recovery facility and the District's ability to successfully complete large and complex projects.

The Board thanked Mr. Shintaku for the presentation.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2. LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

a. Federal Legislative Report (Natural Resource Results)

In addition to the report provided in the agenda packet, National Resource Results (NRR) Partner Garret Durst provided an overview of federal funding and passing 11 of the 12 appropriations bills, leaving the Department of Homeland Security funding as the final outstanding bill.

The Board thanked Mr. Durst for his report.

b. State Legislative Report (West Coast Advisors)

In addition to the report in the agenda packet, West Coast Advisors Michael Boccadoro and Beth Olhasso provided an overview of water supply conditions and implications with legislators on water issues. Mr. Boccadoro reported that the legislators will discuss the budget, which projects a deficit, and artificial intelligence this year.

Director Nederhood inquired about water use consumption by Artificial Intelligence (AI) data facilities, and Director Crane reported that Professor Ren from University of California, Riverside will join the March 6 Water Advisory Committee of Orange County (WACO) meeting to discuss data centers.

Ms. Olhasso highlighted a few committee changes at the end of last year, but there were few resources and water committee assignments for the MWDOC Senate delegation and noted that they pay close attention to the local government committee. She reported that they are hearing about possible low-income water rate assistance and a few groundwater bills. Finally, they will be monitoring and working with the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA) on the language for wildfire liability protection for water agencies.

Director Nederhood requested monitoring of Assembly Bill (AB) 1578, which addresses hate speech training for elected officials.

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 rebuilding efforts in the Palisades and Altadena and the rebuilding of water infrastructure.

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 updated the Board that the City of Anaheim City Manager tendered his resignation, and the Assistant City Manager will be interim until the position is filled. Second, a proposed data center in Monterey Park was effectively halted by opposition from an activist group. Similarly, a proposed battery energy storage project in the City of Industry was defeated due to concerns about rezoning to encourage such development.

The Board thanked Mr. Whittingham for his report.

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

Trabuco Canyon Water District General Manager Larry McKenney inquired about the Metropolitan Budget and how the Pure Water Southern California project costs are integrated. General Manager Harvey De La Torre indicated that Metropolitan staff will join us in March to discuss the budget, and we can certainly obtain more information on that topic.

Director Nederhood provided his observation on staffing projections in the proposed Metropolitan Budget and asked the Metropolitan Directors for their impressions on the first draft of the budget.

Director Seckel offered to provide additional background from Metropolitan on staffing and how it will position the organization from an emergency-response position to a proactive one in addressing reliability. He also indicated that the increase in the Capital Improvement Program budget reflects an investment in the system to accompany the staffing. Finally, he noted that the ten-year forecast does not include all investments that still need to be deliberated by the Board.

Director Crane highlighted his engagement with the budget to date as the new MWDOC MET Director. He is particularly looking at the proposed revenue.

Director Erdman reported his perspective on the staffing issues at Metropolitan and how recent tours highlighted the need to replace and maintain infrastructure in the desert to protect reliability. He encouraged everyone to join the Engineering, Operations & Technology Committee meeting for a review of the asset management program.

Director Ackerman reiterated that this is the first look at the budget and noted that staffing is a top priority of the new Metropolitan General Manager. She is interested in hearing about his perspective on staffing and operations based on his experience.

INFORMATION ITEMS

4. METROPOLITAN ITEMS CRITICAL TO ORANGE COUNTY

- a. Metropolitan's Finances
- b. Metropolitan Water Supply Condition Update
- c. Metropolitan Water Quality Update
- d. Colorado River Issues
- e. Delta Conveyance Activities and State Water Project Issues

In addition to the report provided in the agenda packet, General Manager Harvey De La Torre provided an overview of the timeline for the Metropolitan budget process, including a presentation at the March 4 MWDOC Workshop Board meeting. He also reminded the Board that MWDOC will host the Salinity Management Forum from February 17 – 19, 2026.

5. METROPOLITAN BOARD AGENDA DISCUSSION ITEMS

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

Director Erdman reported that the next Engineering, Operations & Technology Committee meeting includes certification of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for Pure Water Southern California project.

Director Ackerman expanded on the role of Data Centers and emphasized the essential role of water in their cooling systems.

Director Seckel noted there will be extensive budget discussions and expressed interest in how these decisions will affect the Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water (CAMP4W).

Director Crane commented on his observations regarding current investments, the volumetric charge, and the Ad Valorem rate, and how these elements will be incorporated into the Metropolitan budget.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, President Dick adjourned the meeting at 10:45 a.m.



Angela Crespi
District Secretary