

# **Agenda**

**Sacramento Suburban Water District  
Employee Benefits Ad Hoc Committee**

3701 Marconi Avenue, Suite 100  
Sacramento, CA 95821

Monday, October 4, 2021  
4:00 p.m.

**This meeting will be conducted both in-person in the District's Boardroom at the address above, and by videoconference and teleconference using the information provided below. The public is invited to listen, observe, and provide comments during the meeting by any method provided. The Chairperson will call for public comment on each agenda item at the appropriate time and all votes will be taken by roll call.**

**The District recommends that members of the public participate in public meetings via videoconference and/or teleconference per the instructions below.**

**For members of the public interested in viewing and having the ability to comment at the public meeting via Zoom, an internet enabled computer equipped with a microphone and speaker or a mobile device with a data plan is required. Use of a webcam is optional. You also may call in to the meeting using teleconference without video. Please use the following login information for videoconferencing or teleconferencing:**

**Join the meeting from a computer, tablet or smartphone:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85751863500?pwd=U1djZDFhcmF1K2E2di9sTINKTUREZz09>

**Meeting ID:** 857 5186 3500

**Password:** 390988

**You can also dial in using your phone:** 1-669-900-6833

New to Zoom? Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts: <https://zoom.us/>. Zoom uses encryption of data during Zoom meetings. The District uses a secure password to restrict access to scheduled meetings. The meeting host has control of content sharing, recording, and chat.

**Please mute your line.**

Where appropriate or deemed necessary, the Committee may take action on any item listed on the agenda, including items listed as information items. Public documents relating to any open session item listed on this agenda that are distributed to all or a majority of the members of the Board of Directors less than 72 hours before the meeting are available for public inspection in the customer service area of the District's Administrative Office at the address listed above.

The public may address the Committee concerning an agenda item either before or during the Committee's consideration of that agenda item. Persons who wish to comment on either agenda or non-agenda items should fill out a Comment Card and give it to the General Manager. The President will call for comments at the appropriate time. Comments will be subject to reasonable time limits (3 minutes).

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you have a disability, and you need a disability-related modification or accommodation to participate in this meeting, then please contact Sacramento Suburban Water District Human Resources at 916.679.3972. Requests must be made as early as possible, and at least one full business day before the start of the meeting.

**Call to Order**

**Roll Call**

**Announcements**

**Public Comment**

This is an opportunity for the public to comment on non-agenda items within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Committee. Comments are limited to 3 minutes.

**Consent Items**

The committee will be asked to approve all Consent Items at one time without discussion. Consent Items are expected to be routine and non-controversial. If any member of the Committee, staff or interested person requests that an item be removed from the Consent Items, it will be considered with the action items.

- 1. Minutes of the September 1, 2021, Employee Benefits Ad Hoc Committee Meeting**  
*Recommendation: Approve subject minutes.*

**Items for Discussion and Action**

- 2. Employee Handbook Review**  
*Recommendation: Receive information from staff regarding requested formatting to the Employee Handbook.*

**Adjournment**

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**Upcoming Meetings:**

- Tuesday, October 5, 2021, at 4:00 p.m., Finance and Audit Committee Meeting
- Wednesday, October 6, 2021, at 6:00 p.m., CWD/SSWD Joint Board Meeting
- Monday, October 11, 2021, at 6:00 p.m., Special Board Workshop - Budget
- Monday, October 18, 2021, at 6:00 p.m., Regular Board Meeting

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I certify that the foregoing agenda for the October 4, 2021, meeting of the Sacramento Suburban Water District Employee Benefits Ad Hoc Committee was posted by September 30, 2021 in a publicly-accessible location at the Sacramento Suburban Water District office, 3701 Marconi Avenue, Suite 100, Sacramento, California, and was made available to the public during normal business hours.

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Dan York  
General Manager/Secretary  
Sacramento Suburban Water District



## **Agenda Item: 1**

**Date:** October 4, 2021

**Subject:** Minutes of the September 1, 2021, Employee Benefits Ad Hoc Committee Meeting

**Staff Contact:** Dan York, General Manager

**Recommended Board Action:**

Approve the draft minutes of the September 1, 2021, Employee Benefits Ad Hoc Committee Meeting.

**Attachment:**

1 – Draft Minutes

## Minutes

Sacramento Suburban Water District  
**Employee Benefits Ad Hoc Committee**  
Wednesday, September 1, 2021

### Location:

Video and Audio Conference at 1-669-900-6833, or Zoom at Meeting Id # 850 4335 8831  
3701 Marconi Avenue, Suite 100, Sacramento, CA 95821

### Call to Order – Videoconference/Audioconference Meeting

Chair McPherson called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

### Roll Call

Directors Present: Kevin Thomas and Kathleen McPherson.

Directors Absent: None.

Staff Present: General Manager Dan York, Assistant General Manager Matt Underwood, Heather Hernandez-Fort, Susan Schinnerer, and Jeff Ott.

Public Present: Josh Horowitz, William Eubanks, Dave Jones, and Craig Locke.

### Announcements

None.

### Public Comment

William Eubanks (Mr. Eubanks) inquired if Chair McPherson was going to allow public comments at the meeting.

Chair McPherson expressed she would.

### Consent Items

#### 1. Minutes of the June 16, 2021, Employee Benefits Ad Hoc Committee Meeting

Chair McPherson introduced the item.

Mr. Eubanks inquired if Director Thomas agreed that the minutes were a factual account of what occurred in the last meeting.

Director Thomas answered that he agreed.

Mr. Eubanks expressed that it was the worst meeting he had attended, and stated Chair McPherson did not conduct the meeting appropriately.

Chair McPherson disagreed with Mr. Eubanks and expressed that she welcomed Mr. Eubanks comments.

The Committee unanimously approved Item 1.

AYES:	Thomas and McPherson.	ABSTAINED:	
NOES:		RECUSED:	
ABSENT:			

## Items for Discussion and Action

### 2. Employee Handbook Review

General Manager, Dan York (GM York) introduced Susan Schinnerer (Ms. Schinnerer) who presented the staff report and answered clarifying questions.

Chair McPherson expressed she was not in favor of keeping everything in one handbook; rather she was interested in splitting up what is the responsibility of the Board, and what is the responsibility of the General Manager.

Legal Counsel Josh Horowitz (Mr. Horowitz) explained that for ease of comprehension, staff thought it would be better to keep the two in the current format, however it was up to the Committee to make their recommendations to the full Board.

Chair McPherson additionally expressed she felt it was important for there to be a way to identify when the policy was passed, by which Directors, and how they each voted, as she felt that would help keep things very transparent.

Mr. Horowitz clarified how policies were reviewed by the Board, noting all of the Board identified policies from the handbook could be pulled and placed in their own separate policy, if that was what the Board agreed to. He additionally assured Chair McPherson that the conditions from the mismanagement from Carmichael Water District does not exist at the District, explaining there is an appropriate line of authority and delegation at the District. He additionally reminded the Committee that the Board has a number of policies that control benefits and expenditures on benefits, which they oversee.

Chair McPherson inquired how the Directors knew when the policies were created and by whom.

Mr. Horowitz reminded the Committee that, as directed by previous Boards, all District policies have an initial adoption date, as well as the date the policy was last reviewed.

Chair McPherson stated she was interested in having dates and how each Director voted included in the handbook, as she felt she was not getting that historical information from staff.

GM York clarified that if Chair McPherson would identify exactly what she would like, staff would provide her with it.

Mr. Horowitz reminded the Committee that they had an opportunity to have a comprehensive review of the handbook going forward, noting that if the Board agreed to

track all changes, they could do that going forward. He expressed it would not be particularly relevant to dig up the history of how many times it was changed and by whom each change was made.

Chair McPherson expressed she was not interested in gathering dates from the past, but rather she was interested in going forward with dates and which Director voted for what, noting she has never suggested it be done in retrospect.

Ms. Schinnerer inquired if the Committee was happy with the suggestions staff presented in the staff report.

The Committee was ok with staff's suggestions and recommendations in the staff report.

Chair McPherson expressed she would like to see different examples of how the handbook could be laid out, including dates and annotations, to be clear when a section was approved, and how each Director voted.

Mr. Horowitz explained the policy update process, noting the general custom was to identify the date of the change, but how they voted and the redline would be in the staff reports, and generally not included in the final policy.

Chair McPherson restated that she was not interested in anyone having to go through minutes or past Board packets to find out how their representative voted on a policy.

Mr. Horowitz expressed the Board would need to vote on that change, expressing that it might be cumbersome to have that much information in a policy, however, if that was the desire of the Board, that is what staff would do.

Ms. Schinnerer further expressed staff could always provide further detailed information if requested.

Chair McPherson suggested placing initials of who voted and how they voted. She further expressed she wanted to have more confidence in the relevance, appropriateness, and timeliness of benefits policies. She additionally recapped that the Committee agreed with the staff suggestions in the handbook, and noted that staff will come up with some annotation suggestions that the Board can decide on.

GM York suggested to include the numerical vote as an option as well, such as 3/2 or unanimous, etc.

## **Adjournment**

Chair McPherson adjourned the meeting at 5:01 p.m.

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Dan York  
General Manager/Secretary  
Sacramento Suburban Water District



## Agenda Item: 2

**Date:** October 4, 2021

**Subject:** Employee Handbook Review

**Staff Contact:** Dan York, General Manager  
Josh Horowitz, General Counsel  
Susan Schinnerer, Human Resources Administrator

**Recommended Committee Action:**

Receive information from staff regarding requested formatting to the Employee Handbook.

**Discussion:**

As directed at the May 17, 2021 regular Board Meeting and the June 16 and September 1, 2021 Benefits Ad Hoc Committee Meetings, staff is providing an initial framework for suggested changes to the Employee Handbook (Handbook), specifically regarding a request to add detailed citations that delineate approval dates and Board information to the sections of the Handbook under the Board’s authority.

During this review process, staff has and will continue to use Track Changes for all edits to ensure clarity for the Committee/Board.

Attachment 1 is an initial draft of the Handbook that lists suggested formatting changes regarding the specific Board approval details requested by the Committee.

Attachment 2 is a different option for the formatting changes regarding Board approval for the Handbook that includes more detail than Attachment 1.

Both options follow similar verbiage used in District “Policy” documents.

**Fiscal Impact:**

None.

**Attachments:**

- 1 – Excerpt from employee Handbook (Section D – Employment of Relatives and Personal Relationships While Employed) with Track Changes re: Adopted Dates
- 2 - Excerpt from employee Handbook (Section D – Employment of Relatives and Personal Relationships While Employed) with Track Changes re: Adopted Dates **and Approved with Changes Dates**



## **D. Employment of Relatives and Personal Relationships While Employed – Adopted by the Board on January 1, 2000**

The District's policy is to hire, promote and transfer employees on the basis of individual merit to avoid any hint of favoritism or discrimination in making such decisions. Even if favoritism or discrimination is not shown, the existence of the situation may precipitate questions difficult to answer or may cause some discomfort for the individual involved. The District may refuse to hire relatives of present employees if doing so could result in actual or potential problems in supervision, security, safety, internal financial control or morale, or if doing so could create potential conflicts of interest. The District defines "relatives" as spouses, registered domestic partners, children, siblings, parents, in-laws and step-relatives.

The employment of relatives as defined above is regarded as a potential violation of the District's employment practices and will be generally discouraged for all full-time and temporary positions. This also applies to persons who are not legally married but in the District's judgment, because of their involved personal relationship, may be unduly likely to improperly alter their organizational decisions in favor of their partner.

If two persons should marry or enter into a domestic partnership while both are employed by the District, they may continue their employment in the same position provided that such employment does not adversely affect supervision, security, safety, internal financial control or morale, and if neither initiates or participates in making institutional recommendations or decisions which would directly affect the employment status of the other.

If these criteria are not met, one of the spouses or registered domestic partner must change positions, if one is available and if authorized by the General Manager, or leave the District. The couple will inform the General Manager within thirty (30) days of their marriage or registered domestic partnership as to which of them will a) change positions, if one is available, or b) resign and provide a final date of employment that cannot exceed ninety (90) days. If this decision is not made within thirty (30) days, the General Manager reserves the right to determine, based on the District's business needs, which employee will be transferred, if a position is available, or terminated.

The provisions of this section also apply to employees who establish a personal relationship which, in the District's judgment, has become sufficiently involved to the point where it has become likely that one or both of the employees will make improper organizational decisions in favor of the other.

The General Manager may make an exception to hire a relative of a current employee only if there is a vital District need to fill the position and the relative will not work directly with, or be supervised by, the current employee.

Please refer to the District Employee Recruitment, Hiring and Promotion Policy (PL – HR 009) and Procedure (PR – HR 009) for further information.

**D. Employment of Relatives and Personal Relationships While Employed – Adopted by the Board on January 1, 2001; Approved with Changes on January 1, 2012**

The District's policy is to hire, promote and transfer employees on the basis of individual merit to avoid any hint of favoritism or discrimination in making such decisions. Even if favoritism or discrimination is not shown, the existence of the situation may precipitate questions difficult to answer or may cause some discomfort for the individual involved. The District may refuse to hire relatives of present employees if doing so could result in actual or potential problems in supervision, security, safety, internal financial control or morale, or if doing so could create potential conflicts of interest. The District defines "relatives" as spouses, registered domestic partners, children, siblings, parents, in-laws and step-relatives.

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