



MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Managers
FROM: Lars Erdahl, District Administrator
DATE: July 13, 2017
SUBJECT: Committee and Meeting Structure

The Board’s Committee meeting structure was an item of discussion item at the April 27, 2017, Policy and Planning Committee and other recent conversations. In 2013, the work of the several committees of the Board was consolidated into three committees: Executive, Operations and Programs, and Policy and Planning. The three committees and their relationship with the Board were as follows:



The way in which the Board and its committees conduct their business has evolved away from this model. Whether to retain or change the committee structure has been discussed at Board retreats and, from comments at the April 27 meeting, its value remains a question.

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The current practice, generally:

- The Board really has two regular meetings a month. The Board workshop (the second Thursday of the month) is intended to provide background information and discussion that sets the stage for Board action at its regular monthly meeting (the fourth Thursday of the month). No action items should be scheduled for a workshop, but in practice action started to be taken on minor or time-sensitive matters for the District to be nimble and efficient in getting work done. At present, any item that is ready for Board action placed on the workshop agenda, and the distinction between the Board's workshop and regular meetings has largely been erased. The one constant is that the Board approves payment of claims at its regular meeting at the end of the month.
- The Policy and Planning Committee (PPC) has been meeting twice a month for some time as the District has focused work to meet the 2017 deadline to update its Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan, and has also undertaken the District's strategic planning. As these policy matters have been of interest to non-PPC members, all or nearly all Board members have been attending the PPC meetings. In essence, PPC meetings have become Board workshops where all can become informed, direction can be given, and no action is taken.
- The Operations and Program Committee (OPC) rarely meets outside of the budget season, and then these meetings are held jointly with the PPC as the budget is a policy area that involves all Board managers. Here, too, the joint meetings function as Board workshops where all can become informed, direction can be given, and no action is taken.
- The Executive Committee comprised of the Board's president, vice-president, and treasurer, meets quarterly or as needed. Its scope includes the items listed in the table above.

One philosophy with a committee structure is that with a functional focus, Board members can develop in-depth knowledge and expertise that can better inform, guide, and benefit the whole Board. As the meeting structure has evolved, Board managers have shown an interest to be involved and participate in all matters coming to the Board for action, not just those to which go with their Committee assignment.

Holding a committee meeting prior to the Board workshop or regular meetings has generally been viewed positively by Board managers and staff. The 4:30 p.m. start time does pose some difficulties for some managers to attend these meetings consistently.

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Suggestion for Consideration:

The Board could formalize the current way it does business:

- **Two regular Board meetings each month, with payment of claims at the second meeting of the month. The meetings could start at 7:00 p.m. instead of 6:45 p.m.**
- **Workshops to be held prior to Board meetings, and consider starting them at 5:00 or 5:30 p.m. Work sessions could be held as needed, or be regularly scheduled before either or both of the Board meetings. The frequency of workshops may diminish after the Comp Plan and strategic planning process are concluded.**
- **The Executive Committee would continue to function as it currently does.**

Committee and Meeting Structure of Other Selected Metro Watershed Districts

As an observation, staff could find no other metro watershed district that has committees. It is also rare for suburban governments to have committees – their five- or seven-member city councils meet as a whole in workshops (or work sessions), either before a council meeting or on a separate evening.

<u>Watershed District</u>	<u>Workshop</u>	<u>Board Meeting</u>	<u>Committees</u>
Nine-Mile Creek	No; does hold “special” meetings	3 rd Wed., 7:00 p.m.	None
Riley-Purgatory-Bluff Creek	1 st Wed., 5:30 p.m.	1 st Wed., 7:00 p.m.	None
MWMO	No	2 nd Tues., 3:00 p.m. odd-number months	None
Capitol Region	No	1 st & 3 rd Wed., 6:00 p.m.	None
Coon Creek	No	2 nd Mon., 5:30 p.m. 4 th Mon., 5:30 p.m. if needed	None
Ramsey-Washington	No	1 st Wed., 6:30 p.m.	None
Rice Creek	2 nd Mon., 1:00 p.m.	2 nd & 4 th Wed., 9:00 a.m.	None
South Washington	No	2 nd Wed., 7:00 p.m.	None

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