



Advocacy & Accountability

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Thursday September 19, 2024
Remote Connection Via Zoom
10:00 AM

ADVISORY BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

A. Roll call attendance

A commencing roll call was voted as follows:

Name	Community	Vote
Michael Rademacher	Arlington	Here (remote)
David Manugian	Bedford	Here (remote)
Charlie Jewell	Boston (BWSC)	Here (remote)
Jim Arsenault	Braintree	Here (remote)
Jay Hersey	Brookline	Here (remote)
John Sanchez	Burlington	Here (remote)
Cate Fox-Lent	Chelsea	Here (remote)
James Finegan	Lynnfield WD	Here (remote)
Amy McHugh	Marblehead	Here (remote)
Timothy McGivern	Medford	Here (remote)
Elena Proakis Ellis	Melrose	Here (remote)
Chase Berkeley	Milton	Here (remote)

John Terry	Needham	Here (remote)
Name	Community	Vote
Tom Fitzgerald	Newton	Here (remote)
Chris Cole	Reading	Here (remote)
Rich Raiche	Somerville	Here (remote)
Sam Stivers	Southborough	Here (remote)
Joseph Conway	Wakefield	Here (remote)
Patrick Fasanello	Walpole	Here (remote)
David Cohen	Wellesley	Here (remote)
Robert Rafferty	Westwood	Here (remote)
Joseph Lobao	Wilmington	Here (remote)
J.R. Greene	Quabbin and Ware Watershed	Here (remote)
Maurice Handel	MAPC	Here (remote)

Other attendees included:

Kendall Christiansen
Stephen Greene
Eugene Benson
David White
Wendy Leo

Dan Winograd
Devon Winkler
Moussa Siri
Juliet Simpson
Lydia Olson

Paul Rybicki
Paul Lauenstein
Kristin Anderson
Karen Lachmayr
William Copithorne

Erin Bonney Casey
Gwen Speeth
Bill Kiley
Bill Fadden
Rebecca Weidman

Bruce Spencer
Hampton Watkins
Tori MacMullin
Chad Whiting
Christine Bennett



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Vandana Rao	Andreae Downs	Kareen Sud	Carolyn Francisco-	Eric Sherman
Andrew Pappastergion	Kurtis Bertolami	Christine Bennett	Murphy	Sean Navin
Matthew Romero	Matthew Brown	Susan Herman	Jim Coyne	Martin Pillsbury
Nathan Coté	Kristen Hall	Katie Ronan	Colleen Rizzi	Alfredo Vargas
Kareen Sud	Kannan Vembu	Mike Cole	Thomas Durkin	Janet Rothrock
Warren Kimball	Scott Neesen	Moussa Siri	Matthew Horan	Leo Norton
Steven Daunais	Lou Taverna	Judith Pederson		Adriana Cillo
Ralph Abele	Fred Laskey		Joe Foti	Jim Ferrara

B. Amending bylaws

The Executive Committee is proposing amendments to their bylaws, primarily focusing on reducing the number of committee members through natural attrition to bring it closer to the original size, currently at 19 members. It was clarified that no existing member wishing to continue serving would be removed under this amendment, as the reduction would only apply to future vacancies.

Matthew Romero was then invited to provide further background. He explained that additional language updates were made to ensure continuity for standing subcommittees after annual elections. Originally, the bylaws suggested that these subcommittees might dissolve after the election until the chairs could reappoint or reconstitute them. The new amendment clarifies that members will continue to serve until replaced or removed by the chairs, ensuring no gaps in service. This change mirrors similar provisions for the elected MWRA Board of Directors representatives.

A motion was put forward to amend the Advisory Board's bylaws as presented and filed with the records of the meeting, as well as to add this item to the vote taking place afterward to elect the Executive Committee. It was moved by Rich Raiche and seconded by David Manugian.

C. Election of Executive Committee

The meeting proceeded to the election of the new Executive Committee members, with Matthew Romero providing an overview. He explained that the Executive Committee, acting as the Advisory Board's nominating committee, had met the previous week to finalize the slate of officers and at-large members, now included in the meeting materials. Mr. Sanchez was stepping down as Chair and as Burlington's representative, and the committee nominated Mr. Raiche to succeed him as Chair, with Mr. Manugian taking on the role of Secretary. All other officers were nominated to continue in their current roles. Matthew clarified that the election process was open, allowing members to nominate additional candidates from the floor.

The Chair then asked if there were any additional nominations, but with no hands raised, it was decided to proceed with the election as planned. The Chair invited the new candidates to speak briefly. Rich Raiche began by sharing his experience on the Executive Committee and his dedication to the Board's mission, especially regarding major upcoming initiatives like the Deer Island Treatment Plant, the NPDES permit, the CSO Long-Term Control Plan, and planning for water system redundancies. He expressed his honor at the opportunity to serve as Chair and emphasized the importance of the Board's role in guiding and providing





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feedback to the MWRA Board of Directors.

Dave Manugian followed, introducing himself as a long-time Advisory Board member, with eight years on the Executive Committee, and expressing his enthusiasm for the Secretary position. He noted the Board's vital role in community outreach and shared goals with Mr. Raiche in advancing the Board's objectives.

A motion was made to elect the 2024-2025 Executive Committee as presented and filed with the records of the meeting. It was moved by Michael Rademacher and seconded by James Arsenault.

A roll call vote was taken on the following items:

- *The amendment of the bylaws as presented and filed with the records of the meeting.*
- *The election of the 2024-2025 Executive Committee and officers as presented and filed with the records of the meeting.*

Name	Community	Vote
Michael Rademacher	Arlington	Yes (remote)
David Manugian	Bedford	Yes (remote)
Charlie Jewell	Boston (BWSC)	Yes (remote)
Jim Arsenault	Braintree	Yes (remote)
Jay Hersey	Brookline	Yes (remote)
John Sanchez	Burlington	Yes (remote)
Cate Fox-Lent	Chelsea	Yes (remote)
James Finegan	Lynnfield WD	Yes (remote)
Amy McHugh	Marblehead	Yes (remote)
Timothy McGivern	Medford	Yes (remote)
Elena Proakis Ellis	Melrose	Yes (remote)
Chase Berkeley	Milton	Yes (remote)

John Terry	Needham	Yes (remote)
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Chris Cole	Reading	Yes (remote)
Rich Raiche	Somerville	Yes (remote)
Sam Stivers	Southborough	Yes (remote)
Joseph Conway	Wakefield	Yes (remote)
Patrick Fasanello	Walpole	Yes (remote)
David Cohen	Wellesley	Yes (remote)
Robert Rafferty	Westwood	Yes (remote)
Joseph Lobao	Wilmington	Yes (remote)
J.R. Greene	Quabbin and Ware Watershed	Yes (remote)
Maurice Handel	MAPC	Yes (remote)

The Chair officially transferred leadership to Mr. Raiche, who took over as the new Chair, and announced that Brian White would now represent Burlington on the Advisory Board.

Following the election, members offered heartfelt farewells and appreciation to outgoing chair John Sanchez. Colleagues praised his steady leadership during a turbulent year marked by significant challenges, including staff transitions and important board initiatives. Michael Rademacher from Arlington spoke of John's mentorship and his invaluable support during his time as public works director in Arlington. Members also expressed thanks for his dedication, leadership, and collaborative spirit that had greatly benefited the Advisory Board.

Matthew Romero added his thanks, acknowledging John's legacy and noting that John's leadership was especially meaningful as the first Hispanic Advisory Board Chair alongside the first Hispanic Advisory Board Executive Director, a milestone coinciding with the beginning of Hispanic Heritage Month. Members also extended their best wishes for John's retirement, with a few lighthearted comments about staying in touch, future breakfasts, and a hope to see him at future Advisory Board field trips. The meeting concluded



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warmly, with John expressing gratitude for his time on the board and his confidence in the incoming leadership.

D. **Proposed modifications to MWRA Policy OP.05- Emergency Water Supply Withdrawals**

The agenda moved to proposed updates for MWRA Policy 05 (OP5), which governs emergency water supply withdrawals for non-member communities. Colleen Rizzi, Director of Environmental and Regulatory Affairs at MWRA, presented the recommended changes. She explained that OP5 outlines the process allowing non-member communities to access MWRA water on an emergency basis. Originally last updated in 2007, OP5 grants MWRA's Executive Director or Chief Operating Officer the authority to approve water withdrawals for up to 30 calendar days.

Colleen detailed a recent scenario with the town of Wayland, a non-member community that needed emergency water beyond 30 days due to delays in bringing its well back online and completing required testing and sampling. This need arose the day after the MWRA's July board meeting, and since there is no regular board meeting in August, MWRA was forced to hold an off-cycle meeting to extend Wayland's emergency water access. Given this gap in the meeting schedule, MWRA staff recommended extending the emergency approval period from 30 to 60 days to ensure that non-member communities experiencing similar emergencies could continue to access water even during periods without scheduled board meetings.

Colleen clarified that an emergency declaration from the Massachusetts DEP is required before MWRA can authorize emergency water access. The DEP declaration specifies the emergency duration, and MWRA's approvals are aligned to this timeframe. If a situation resolves sooner than expected, the non-member community is required to stop using MWRA water once the DEP declaration expires. This structure ensures that emergency water withdrawals are limited to only the required period, preventing unnecessary usage by non-member communities.

Following Colleen's presentation, the Chair opened the floor for questions. One member asked whether once MWRA water is provided to a community, a fixed period of commitment is required. Colleen explained that the DEP's emergency declaration acts as a backstop: once the emergency is resolved, the community must cease withdrawals. The policy's structure includes both the DEP timeline and MWRA's approval limit, whether short-term (up to 60 days under the proposed update) or long-term (up to six months, requiring board approval).

The Executive Committee reviewed these changes in the previous week's meeting, discussing the rationale behind the 60-day extension, which they agreed made sense for logistical reasons. The initial proposal also included reimbursement changes related to asset charges during emergency access, which could potentially be applied to the entrance fee for non-members. However, since the entrance fee has been waived for the next three years, this element was deemed low priority and was not included in the final proposal.

Matthew Romero further contextualized the proposed changes, noting that the original 30-day limit reflected an older MWRA board schedule when meetings occurred twice a month. The shift to monthly meetings left potential gaps in coverage, particularly during months without a board meeting, making the 60-day extension more practical. He also praised MWRA staff for their proactive approach in communicating these proposed changes, enabling the Advisory Board to engage in thorough discussion.

A motion was put forward to recommend that the Advisory Board approve the proposed changes to MWRA





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Policy OP.05 as presented and filed with the records of the meeting and request the MWRA Board of Directors to adopt the proposed changes. It was moved by David Manugian, seconded by Elena Proakis Ellis, and moved to the omnibus vote at the end of the meeting.

E. Lead & Copper Rule Revisions/Improvements update- Kristen Hall, MWRA Senior Program Manager

The Advisory Board reviewed updates to the Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) and related requirements. Matthew Romero introduced Kristen Hall from MWRA, who provided critical information on the latest revisions and upcoming deadlines. Kristen emphasized that community inventories on lead service lines are due to the DEP within 27 days, by mid-October, with this submission mandated by the EPA to avoid federal violations. She urged communities to submit the best available information and offered MWRA's support for those struggling to complete the inventory. The inventory must include details on the public and private portions of each service line, specifying whether they are lead, non-lead, galvanized (requiring replacement), or unknown.

Following the inventory, Kristen noted that by November 15th, communities must send notification letters to properties with lead, galvanized, or unknown service lines. She recommended that communities also update their websites, adding the inventory, lead replacement program details, health information, and guidance for homeowners on identifying lead service lines.

Looking forward, Kristen reminded members of the EPA's requirement for full lead service line replacement within ten years. She encouraged communities to begin planning their replacement schedules, consider hiring consultants, and prepare for construction bids, outlining a timeline for action over the next year.

Kristen also announced a workshop titled "Lead and Copper Updates from Inventory to Implementation," scheduled for October 24th, which will cover these topics in-depth and provide updates on the anticipated new EPA regulations. This training, open to MWRA and non-MWRA communities, will offer TCHs (training contact hours) for participating water professionals. The Advisory Board plans to record the session as a long-term resource for communities.

Kristen concluded with updates on the MWRA's Lead Service Line Replacement Program, highlighting a recent \$100 million increase in funding and a new 25% grant for communities covering the cost of private-side replacements. Interest-free loans are also available, with details on the MWRA website.

Matthew added that MWRA and the Advisory Board aim to support all communities in meeting the LCR requirements and invited additional questions and suggestions. He shared Somerville's lead service line web page as a resource, offering it as a helpful reference for other communities. The session ended with plans to document the discussion in the minutes for future reference.

F. Presentations FY25 priorities

Fred Laskey, Executive Director of the MWRA, outlined the agency's FY25 priorities, covering an array of complex operational, regulatory, and financial challenges. A major focus was on the Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) program and the ongoing Boston Harbor cleanup, governed by intricate legal and regulatory frameworks. Fred Laskey highlighted the MWRA's longstanding work on CSO management, including close cooperation with the EPA, DEP, and local municipalities. Since the 1980s, the MWRA has achieved an 88% reduction in CSO volume, bringing it down from 3.3 billion gallons to 397 million gallons annually, primarily





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by treating 96% of the remaining CSO volume. The federal court will review progress on the remaining outfalls this December, underscoring the agency's commitment to ongoing improvement and compliance.

Another critical priority is the development of tunnel redundancy for the metropolitan water system. After six years of planning, the MWRA has reached a key milestone, moving from preliminary to final design on a project that completes a vision first established a century ago. This tunnel project is essential to ensure an uninterrupted water supply for the metropolitan area, particularly during maintenance or emergency situations.

Mr. Laskey also discussed MWRA's efforts on PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or "forever chemicals"), which are increasingly under scrutiny, including potential federal RICO investigations. As PFAS management becomes a significant public health issue, the MWRA is monitoring PFAS levels in water and supporting affected communities.

The agency's response to the updated EPA Lead and Copper Rule is another major focus. New federal guidelines mandate full removal of lead service lines within ten years, and the MWRA's goal is to complete removals within five years to avoid adding phosphates to the water. While phosphate addition would control lead levels, it would also impact water taste and quality and increase operational costs. To facilitate faster lead line removal, the MWRA has added \$100 million to its Lead Service Line Replacement Program, now offering a 25% grant for communities covering the cost of private-side replacements. This funding is intended to speed up lead line replacements and reduce the burden on environmental justice communities, which often have higher concentrations of lead service lines.

System expansion is also a growing priority, partly due to a temporary waiver of entrance fees. Towns like Weymouth and Wayland are interested in joining the system, and studies on potential expansion to the north, south, and west are underway. This expansion is a significant undertaking that draws attention from state and local governments. Fred Laskey stressed the need for ongoing coordination to address capacity, funding, and regulatory requirements associated with expansion.

In parallel, the MWRA is making strides in environmental justice (EJ) and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The agency recently hired its first EJ coordinator and received a DEI award from the New England Water Works Association. The MWRA's environmental justice strategy focuses on equitable access to clean water and addressing health disparities within marginalized communities, particularly those disproportionately affected by lead service lines and other environmental issues.

Staffing challenges remain a pressing concern as the agency balances new hires with high turnover, a crucial task for maintaining operational stability. In terms of sustainability, the MWRA secured \$20 million in federal green energy funds to support projects like solar energy, heat pumps, and the transformative combined heat and power (CHP) initiative at Deer Island. When completed, the CHP project is expected to shift Deer Island towards energy independence, reducing MWRA's reliance on volatile energy markets and enhancing long-term sustainability.

Carolyn Francisco-Murphy, MWRA General Counsel, highlighted the Boston Harbor litigation as a significant priority, noting that the case has been active for nearly 40 years, with MWRA filing detailed annual reports to track progress. In December, MWRA will file a supplemental report on 16 CSO outfalls that are not yet fully compliant. Murphy noted the agency's substantial achievements, including closing or effectively closing



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41 of 86 outfalls and reducing CSO volumes from 3.3 billion to 397 million gallons annually.

Throughout the presentation, Chief Operating Officer David Coppes contributed insights, particularly on CSO management and the upcoming long-term control plan for variance waters. Coppes emphasized the importance of aligning investments with expected outcomes to achieve the most effective resource allocation for water quality and environmental health.

Fred Laskey concluded by underscoring the importance of the MWRA's collaboration with the Advisory Board, which brings invaluable expertise that has supported the MWRA's efforts to meet evolving regulatory requirements. He also expressed his appreciation to Rich Raiche, the new Advisory Board Chair, for leading a recent tour of MWRA facilities. With no questions from members, this part of the meeting concluded, reaffirming the MWRA's and the Advisory Board's commitment to these FY25 goals.

In his presentation of the MWRA Advisory Board's FY25 priorities, Executive Director Matthew Romero expanded on key points previously outlined by MWRA Executive Director Fred Laskey, emphasizing that the coming fiscal year would be shaped by major regulatory challenges and operational goals. Matthew Romero highlighted the importance of proactive efforts related to the revised EPA Lead and Copper Rule, which requires comprehensive lead service line inventories and eventual removal. MWRA aims to complete removals within five years to avoid adding phosphates to the water supply, a solution that would alter water chemistry and taste. He noted that MWRA's expanded \$100 million Lead Service Line Replacement Program, now offering a 25% grant for private-side replacements, is designed to expedite the process and lessen the financial impact on communities, especially those classified as environmental justice (EJ) neighborhoods. Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) management was also emphasized as a central environmental priority. Carolyn Francisco-Murphy, MWRA's General Counsel, had earlier detailed the substantial progress on CSO volume reduction, noting an 88% decrease in CSO levels, with an upcoming December court review set to assess compliance on the remaining outfalls. Matthew Romero reinforced that this high-stakes litigation will serve as a test of MWRA's commitment to compliance and improved water quality outcomes, all while managing cost implications for member communities.

Matthew Romero further discussed PFAS ("forever chemicals") management, which has drawn increasing regulatory scrutiny. Although MWRA's water sources contain trace PFAS amounts, the Advisory Board is closely monitoring potential EPA standards for PFAS in residuals, as these standards would affect MWRA's operations and compliance costs. On the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, Matthew Romero assured members that MWRA remains vigilant for any updates to its discharge regulations, as changes could have substantial operational and financial implications. He also touched on MWRA's 2030 deadline for pension funding, highlighting the compressed timeline and potential impact on community assessments as the funding date nears, signaling the need for careful financial planning to avoid cost escalations.

Matthew Romero then addressed MWRA's ongoing system expansion efforts, which have garnered strong interest due to a temporary entrance fee waiver. Towns like Weymouth and Wayland are eager to join, while Metro West communities remain vocal about potential membership. As MWRA assesses capacity, funding, and other expansion considerations, Matthew Romero emphasized the importance of ongoing coordination with state and local governments. Watershed management is another high-priority area, particularly DCR's loss of citation authority for its rangers, which has contributed to increased rule violations since FY22. Matthew Romero noted that, while the DCR rangers have returned to an educational approach,



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data shows that violations have increased significantly, and he and outgoing Advisory Board Chair John Sanchez had continued to advocate for the reinstatement of enforcement authority.

In terms of community outreach, Matthew Romero announced a renewed push to strengthen engagement with local officials and improve the Advisory Board's contact database to better share information on programs like lead service line replacement and CSO management. Additionally, Matthew Romero noted that staff is working with the Advisory Board's independent auditor and CPA to address internal process gaps revealed after the unexpected passing of Advisory Board staff member James Guidod. This review aims to strengthen administrative resilience and ensure operational continuity while implementing appropriate checks and balances.

To improve oversight of MWRA's budgets, Matthew Romero announced a shift from verbal updates to a visual, data-driven format, which will include metrics such as staffing levels to track MWRA's progress in addressing high turnover. Recognizing the importance of modern communication, Matthew Romero also introduced the Advisory Board's new podcast series, "ABTV," which will cover topics like Lead and Copper Rule compliance and other issues critical to member communities. Set to launch in October, the podcast will be available on multiple platforms, with a dedicated website page providing easy access to all episodes. Matthew Romero also welcomed Kareen Sud, a new co-op from Northeastern University, who will support the Advisory Board's social media efforts, helping to amplify the board's outreach.

J.R. Greene inquired about infrastructure projects in the Quabbin Watershed. He inquired about MWRA funding for the New Salem field headquarters rebuild and a new maintenance facility at Windsor Dam. Chief Operating Officer David Coppes confirmed that the New Salem project is set to begin in FY28, while the maintenance facility is nearing the final design phase and will go to bid soon. Coppes explained that MWRA assumes capital responsibility for DCR facilities directly related to water delivery infrastructure, but non-water-related projects must seek funding from DCR or through state legislation. Greene also raised a question from Mr. Kiley about PFAS levels in MWRA's fertilizer pellets and how they compare to other producers. Coppes noted that while MWRA monitors PFAS in residuals, they lack comprehensive data for comparison and await EPA guidance on acceptable PFAS levels. With no further questions from members, Matthew Romero concluded by reaffirming the Advisory Board's commitment to supporting MWRA's goals for FY25 and thanked members for their engagement, inviting any further feedback on potential areas for improvement. The meeting concluded with a sense of collaborative momentum, as both the Advisory Board and MWRA affirmed their dedication to addressing these priorities.

Andreae Downs, Executive Director of the Wastewater Advisory Committee (WAC), and Moussa Siri, Executive Director of the Water Supply Citizens Advisory Committee (WSCAC), each presented their committees' priorities for the upcoming year.

Andreae Downs began by emphasizing the collaborative role of WAC in helping the MWRA operate effectively, especially with support from liaison Wendy Leo. WAC's primary focus last year was on securing an extension for the Deer Island permit comment deadline, which led to productive discussions and greater public awareness. Downs highlighted legislative efforts, including a "wipes bill" in the Massachusetts General Court, aimed at regulating the packaging on wipes to reduce clogs in wastewater systems. She noted that while PFAS remains a significant concern due to its presence in effluent and fertilizer pellets, bills addressing PFAS and land application of solids did not pass last session, though WAC continues to monitor EPA and state action on these issues. For FY25, WAC will focus on CSO management, contaminants, and the



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impact of climate change on sewer systems, with tours and meetings scheduled to deepen understanding and encourage involvement from new members.

Moussa Siri, newly appointed as WSCAC's Executive Director, shared his initial observations and learning experiences from his first year, thanking his team and former WSCAC members like James Guidod and Whit Beals for their foundational work. Siri has focused on building WSCAC's membership, securing seven new members with diverse backgrounds, and fostering a collaborative relationship with the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). WSCAC's recent work has included submissions on forestry management, driven by high public interest, and surveys to gauge members' priorities. Based on survey feedback, WSCAC has formed three subcommittees focused on water conservation, carbon footprints, and forestry, aligning with MWRA's initiatives on system expansion, PFAS, lead and copper rule compliance, and energy efficiency. Siri outlined plans for FY25 to increase in-person meetings and field tours, helping members better understand MWRA's operations and major projects, such as system redundancy and dam removals. He also emphasized the importance of recruiting additional members with varied expertise to broaden WSCAC's perspectives and encouraged collaboration with WAC and the Advisory Board.

G. Approval of Advisory Board meeting minutes from June 27, 2024

A motion was put forward to approve the Advisory Board meeting minutes from June 27, 2024. It was moved by John Sanchez, seconded by David Manugian, and added to the roll call vote at the end of the meeting.

H. New business

Matthew Romero provided two quick updates. First, he mentioned that Nate is working on the annual Water and Sewer Retail Rate Survey and urged members to respond promptly to avoid follow-up calls, as the goal is to complete the document on time this year. Second, he invited members interested in serving as voting members on the Finance and Operations Committees to reach out, as he will soon coordinate with current members and committee vice chairs. Unlike last year, the committees will be actively meeting to address timely topics, so he encouraged anyone interested to join.

I. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was put forward. It was moved by John Sanchez, seconded by David Manugian, and added to the omnibus vote at the end of the meeting.

A motion to approve the omnibus vote was put forward. It was moved by John Sanchez and seconded by Maurice Handel.

An omnibus vote on the following items took place:

- Approval of the changes to MWRA OP.05 as presented and filed with the records of the meeting and request the MWRA Board of Directors to adopt the proposed changes
- Approval of the Advisory Board meeting minutes from June 27, 2024
- Adjournment of the meeting.

The omnibus vote was as follows:



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J.R. Greene	Quabbin and Ware Watershed	Yes (remote)
Maurice Handel	MAPC	Yes (remote)

Respectfully submitted,

David Manugian, Secretary

These minutes reflect the discussion of the meeting. The Advisory Board maintains audio recordings of Advisory Board meetings that are available upon request.



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