

From: [Will Wright](#)
To: [DL-Board Support Team](#)
Subject: ITEM 10-2: Approve New General Manager Employment Contract for Adel Hagekhalil
Date: Friday, June 4, 2021 3:06:31 PM

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to comment on Item 10-2 on the June 8, 2021 MWD Board Meeting.

Congratulations on your selection of Adel Hagekhalil as your next General Manager.

My experience with Mr. Hagekhalil dates back to his environmental leadership at City of Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation and has continued to this date in his current role as the General Manager of the City of LA Bureau of Street Services. He's always been accessible, impactful, and highly effective at mobilizing professionals deeply engaged in environmental performance and climate action.

Mr. Hagekhalil is an excellent choice for this position with the Metropolitan Water District and for all that care about safe, sustainable, and equitable water and land-use policy for Southern California.

Mr. Hagekhalil is committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion and serves as a fair and balanced leader. He takes climate action seriously and understands the complexity of our watershed, access, and the health of our water supply, especially with natural and multi-beneficial systems.

As a recognized leader that knows the complexity of the Southern California political landscape, Mr. Hagekhalil is an excellent choice to lead the Metropolitan Water District.

Very truly yours,

Will Wright, Hon. AIA LA
Director, Government & Public Affairs
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From: [Adriana De La Cruz](#)
To: [DL-Board Support Team](#)
Subject: Recommendation of Adel Hagekhalil - General Manager
Date: Saturday, June 5, 2021 11:07:16 AM

ITEM 10-2: Approve New General Manager Employment Contract.

I would like to comment on Item 10-2.

Congratulations on your selection of Adel Hagekhalil as your next General Manager.

My experience with Mr. Hagekhalil has been a positive one and I am truly grateful for the collaboration during our time on the Bureau of Street Services Advisory group.

I believe that you have made an excellent selection on adding Adel to your team. He is a superb and motivate individual and has been very passionate about providing the best quality of service he and the Bureau employees have been able to dedicate. Here are a few highlights of his superb leadership:

- He is committed to inclusivity and he treats people with fairness regardless of race, gender, economic status, ethnicity, or anything else. Southern California is a diverse place, and this kind of fairness is needed to make sure no one is left behind.
- He takes the climate crisis seriously and understands the environmental challenges to our water supplies. He will help prepare Southern California for continuing drought, with a commitment to sustainability.
- He has shown his ability to lead and to bring positive change to large agencies.
- There is new state and federal commitment to sustainable infrastructure. Adel is a recognized leader in water and in public works, and he will be able to bring national and state investment to Southern California's water system.

Thank you for allowing me to be able to provide you with my recommendation of Adel Hagekhalil.

It will be a loss for us but a gain for you and no one deserves recognition for excellence other than Adel.

My appreciation,
Adriana De La Cruz
(310) 795-6495

Bureau of Street Services Stakeholder Advisor
Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Westside Regional Alliance and Del Rey
MarVista NC
Treasurer of the Los Angeles Congress of Neighborhoods
Government Relations co-chair for the Los Angeles LGBTQ+ Alliance

June 4, 2021

Honorable Chairwoman Gloria Gray
Honorable Board of Directors
The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
700 North Alameda Street
Los Angeles, California 90012-2944

Honorable Chairwoman Gray:

Subject: Board Selection of Mr. Adel Hagekhalil for General Manager

I congratulate the Board of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) on your selection of Mr. Adel Hagekhalil for the position of General Manager.

I have personal experience working with Mr. Hagekhalil for over 20 years and strongly agree with MWD that he is the right person for the job.

Mr. Hagekhalil has been at the forefront of leading water resources management solutions at the local level with the Los Angeles Bureau of Sanitation (LASAN) and at the national level as President of the National Association of Clean Water Agencies. His deep involvement in the industry has provided both technical and financial long-term solutions to complex water resources challenges.

As a visionary – Mr. Hagekhalil's idea of One Water LA 2040, is an example of where he led a successful partnership for integrated water resources planning between LASAN and the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP). This award-winning plan was successful due to the collaborative spirit that Mr. Hagekhalil personally brought to the team. He worked tirelessly through many hours to ensure that alternatives and differences were addressed for the final plan. This was ultimately an effort supported by Mayor Eric Garcetti to help improve the City of Los Angeles' long term future water supply reliability.

Honorable Chairwoman Gray
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Mr. Hagekhalil led the effort in the completion of plans to recycle 100 percent of available effluent that are currently being implemented at three out of the City's four treatment plants (Tillman, Los Angeles-Glendale, and Terminal Island), and set the framework for 100 percent reuse at Hyperion, which Mayor Garcetti announced in 2019.

Mr. Hagekhalil was instrumental in leading the LASAN team in collaborating with LADWP on our Recycled Water Master Plan and in helping to develop the Recycled Water Advisory Group which consisted of over 60 stakeholders that provided specific input on the Master Plan. Mr. Hagekhalil showed excellent listening and relationship building skills with this diverse group of differing opinions to build consensus on the final Master Plan.

Mr. Hagekhalil led the LASAN team on completing the Environmental Impact Report for the Donald C. Tillman Groundwater Replenishment Project which involved navigating through many different alternatives and building consensus with stakeholders including elected officials, grassroots community groups, regulatory agencies, etc.

The experience Mr. Hagekhalil brings is sure to benefit MWD as you are an organization based on many partnerships and collaborations. He is not only a transformational leader that builds bridges and partnerships, but also leads innovation and creates inclusive cultures across all levels in the organizations that he serves.

I applaud your selection of Mr. Hagekhalil to serve as MWD's next General Manager. LADWP looks forward to working closely with Mr. Hagekhalil and MWD to ensure continued regional success.

Sincerely,



Martin L. Adams
General Manager and Chief Engineer

DK:lb

c: Mr. Richard F. Harasick
Mr. Anselmo G. Collins
Mr. David R. Pettijohn
Mr. Delon Kwan

From: [Antoinette Goodbody](#)
To: [DL-Board Support Team](#)
Subject: Adel Hagekhalil
Date: Monday, June 7, 2021 9:57:09 AM

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the Board ,

We are very concerned about the ongoing issues about water management in Southern California. With ongoing drought and depleting aquifers, we strongly recommend Adel Hagekhalil as the new board member . With depleting resources it has become paramount to look at innovative ways to obtain water that are environmental sustainable. Looking into desalinization and recycling water . We strongly support the Sierra Clubs position of support for Adel Hagekhalil
In hope of a responsible and wise vote ,

Antoinette Goodbody

3225 Granada Ave , San Diego , Ca 92104



Employees Association of the Metropolitan Water District
of Southern California, AFSCME Local 1902, AFL-CIO

June 7, 2021

Via Email

Alan Shanahan
Executive President

Laura Garcia
Executive Vice-President

Jannine Rojo
Executive Secretary

Stephanie Salgado
Executive Treasurer

Gloria Gray, Chairwoman
Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
700 N. Alameda St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Chairwoman Gray,

AFSCME Local 1902 (“AFSCME”) is writing regarding the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (“MWD”) Board of Directors selection of the successor MWD General Manager (“GM”).

AFSCME is aware that on May 8, 2021, the MWD Board of Directors (“Board”) approved the selection of Adel Hagekhalil during its more than nine hour closed session by a majority vote. Upon returning to open session, and as shown in the hyperlinked quote, [*“The Board made a selection for General Manager and provided direction on contract negotiation...”*](#) as stated by yourself, Board Chairwoman Gloria Gray. This was further confirmed by numerous sources as noted in the [May 26th, 2021 LA Times article](#).

AFSCME, which represents approximately 80% of the MWD workforce, appreciates and congratulates the Board’s extensive work and deliberations as it arrived at its decision. We recognize that after the professional and extensive, legal, and personal background check, which was performed by the Hawkins Group, a process approved by the Board, the last step is to approve Mr. Hagekhalil’s contract tomorrow, June 8, 2021.

Just as noted in the recent, [LA Times Editorial Board on June 4, 2021](#), we too believe the Board should come together and finalize the selection of Mr. Hagekhalil, as we believe he can be a champion for change, water resiliency, transparency and improvement of the [MWD culture](#) which was revealed in numerous LA Times articles.

We look forward to seeing the Board come to together to approve his contract and working with Mr. Hagekhalil in his new role at MWD.

Respectfully,

Alan F. Shanahan
Executive President, AFSCME Local 1902
AFSCME International Vice-President, CA

CC:
MWD Board of Directors

Attachment: LA Times Editorial, June 4, 2021

AFSCME Local 1902

**Metropolitan Water
District of Southern
California**

**Crescenta Valley
Water District**

**Foothill MWD
Operators
Association**

**Joshua Basin Water
District**

**Quartz Hill Water
District**

**Rosamond
Community
Services District**

**Twentynine Palms
Water District**

**Water
Replenishment
District**

OPINION

EDITORIALS

The MWD's murky transition

ADEL Hagekhalil is an inspired choice to be the next general manager of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, the agency that delivers the water ultimately used by half of the state's population. He's an engineer, a consensus builder and a champion of the movement to integrate management of different types of water — drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, environmental water — in order to reduce costs and use precious resources more efficiently. He may be exactly what the MWD needs at this point in its history, as it struggles to redefine itself as a supplier of liquid assets not just from distant mountains and rivers, but from recycled urban wastewater.

But here's the problem: Is Hagekhalil (currently head of the L.A. city Bureau of Street Services) actually the MWD board's choice?

As reported in *The Times*, the board selected Hagekhalil earlier this year in an extremely close vote, but nothing that this massive water wholesaling agency does is ever that simple or that final. The MWD is notorious for its labyrinthine governance rules and lack of transparency. In the instance at hand, board and staff members who would prefer a more traditional water manager and less innovative water policies are working hard to achieve a different outcome in a second vote, scheduled for next week.

In a masterstroke of irony, some MWD insiders are arguing that the first vote — in which Hagekhalil reportedly achieved a razor-thin majority of 50.42% — is invalid precisely because the results were made known to the public. In other words, the board kept the outcome a secret, yet *The Times* reported it anyway, so some member of the board must have leaked the results, and therefore, under a disclosure exception in California's open meeting law, the vote is invalid.

Without getting too far down in the weeds of said law (the Ralph M. Brown Act of 1953, as amended), it's time for the MWD to focus its attention on its ultimate constituents: the 20 million Californians who pay the bills to the cities and other water districts and agencies represented



L.A. Bureau of Street Services

ADEL HAGEKHALIL may lead the Metropolitan Water District.

on the MWD board.

Until now, the agency has tended to see the public as its customers, and of course that's correct — but the public is also really, if indirectly, both the MWD's constituents and its owners. As taxpayers as well as ratepayers, they could be on the financial hook for the board's decisions. That gives them a direct interest in MWD business beyond being simply consumers. They have a stake as Californians who want to see their natural environment

protected, their water conserved and their costs under control.

They also have a stake in the agency's internal processes, including the treatment of women and people of color in the workforce who, as reported in another *Times* article, have complained of harassment and discrimination.

Representation and voting power on the MWD board is weighted by the size of the city or agency member. The largest single member is the city of L.A., with five mayoral appointees. But the city's power has been blunted in recent decades by an odd lack of accord among those appointees (they notoriously split 3 to 2 on whether to move ahead with a tunnel project to alter the flow southward of water from the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta) and by an acrimonious dispute with the next biggest faction, San Diego.

But the L.A. members have been on the same page in recent votes, and they and San Diego do see eye to eye on a more modern water system that relies less on imports and more on developing local supplies through recycling and other innovations. They are joined by more progressive-oriented small water agencies, and together their thinking represents roughly half of the MWD board, meaning many close votes and lots of lobbying and pressure applied to, especially, the smaller agencies.

If Hagekhalil's selection is finalized, as it should be, he will have far more on his plate than water policy. He should make it a priority to improve the MWD's relationship with the public and enhance its transparency.

If he can pull that off, the more forward-looking water policies that conserve resources and public costs just might fall into place on their own.