



# MEMORANDUM

EUGENE WATER & ELECTRIC BOARD



TO: Commissioners Carlson, Barofsky, McRae, Schlossberg, and Brown  
FROM: Rod Price, Assistant General Manager  
DATE: March 1, 2023 (March 7, 2023, Board Meeting)  
SUBJECT: EWEB Participation in Equity Community Consortium (ECC)  
OBJECTIVE: Information

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## Issue

This correspondence provides additional details on the Equity Community Consortium (ECC) and EWEB's participation. Based on Commissioner feedback from the February 15, 2022, Board Work Session, correspondence was provided to the Board in July of 2022 to provide examples of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) support and policy language at peer agencies. In that correspondence, the Equity Community Consortium (ECC) was introduced among other resources.

## Background

In support of 2023 Organizational Goal 2, Commissioners and Staff wish to develop a guiding DEI Board level Policy. Goal 2: "**Workforce and Culture:** *Build and inspire a workforce and a workplace culture to fulfill ongoing business obligations and strategic initiatives in alignment with our organizational values by.... working with the Board of Commissioners to develop and deploy policies that will weave **principles of DEI** (diversity, equity, and inclusion) and resiliency into our work.*"

In April, the Board will hold a work session to discuss information related to the development of a Board level DEI policy. In several discussions since the February 2022 Board meeting, Commissioners have expressed a desire to have an EWEB DEI policy that addresses both our employees' work environment and our community interactions. As EWEB is not the first local public agency to develop DEI related policy, the ECC provides a good connection point to fourteen other community focused agencies, and the work done in our community to build DEI related policy and programs.

## Discussion

This memo serves to provide the Board a brief background on the overall goals and work plans that the ECC is moving forward in 2023.

The Equity and Community Consortium (ECC) is a group of fourteen agencies and jurisdictions that provide governmental and public services in the Eugene-Springfield metropolitan area that are coming together to work on equity issues and to "foster a welcoming and hospitable community". EWEB has participated in the ECC for several decades. More details about the group's goals and governance can be found on their website: [Equity-Community-Consortium Website](#). The overall goal of ECC is to commit to improving equity in our organizations and in our community by jointly sharing experiences and resources to magnify our individual member knowledge, skills, and abilities.

To accomplish the joint goals, the ECC members committed to common definitions for DEI, as well as outlining the expected commitments from each of the fourteen members and defining how this joint work will be accomplished. Details are found in the in the [Memorandum of Understanding \(MOU\)](#) signed by all the agencies.

Included in the commitments, each agency is to have a publicly available policy or statement demonstrating a commitment to equity. At EWEB, DEI policy language developed in 2023 by the Board and Staff will be the basis of fulfilling this commitment. For links to ECC member's publicly available equity language, please refer to the July 5, 2022 Board correspondence titled [DEI Board Policy Development Background Information](#).

All ECC members meet two to three times per year for strategic planning and to hear results from the working groups who meet monthly. At the ECC August 2022 planning and strategy meeting, five topics were chosen as the focus of work for 2023. From October thru January, working groups developed specific goals within the focus categories. During the February 2023 ECC meeting, the five focus topics, along with specific goals for each, were discussed and approved by the collective group. These objectives will drive the ECC's two-year work plan. The focus areas and goals for the two-year ECC work plan are as follows (*EWEB progress in italics*):

#### ECC Visibility and Engagement

- Update ECC member websites. (*Linked to Board Policy work.*)
- Continue First Friday events. (*EWEB will be hosting a First Friday in June 2023.*)
- Create a brand/logo for ECC.
- Support/attend celebrations/partnerships with marginalized communities. (*EWEB's Diversity Team is working on a 2023 community event participation calendar.*)

#### Human Resources: Recruitment, Hiring, and Retention

- Engagement survey for personnel that can be shared across organizations.
- Gather agency demographic data. (*EWEB data is available, and will be shared when ECC format is finalized*)

#### Leadership engagement: elected and organizational

- Shared training for all ECC Leadership and thought partners through partnership with Lane Community College; identify goals and themes from Chief Administrative Officers (CAO) for the training.
- Audit of current training and professional development efforts or strategies within each organization. Provide evidence of each organization's support and alignment with the MOU.

#### Resource Sharing

- On a rotating basis, share learning and resources at each ECC meeting. (*Ongoing by AGM Price, adding additional EWEB staff to working groups*)

#### Retention and Belonging

- Compile resources and initiatives ECC members are implementing to promote belonging.
- Create shared definitions of belonging and retention.
- Build community resources to share with new hires.

### **Recommendation/Requested Board Action**

No formal action is being requested at this time as this memo is to provide background information to prepare Commissioners for a discussion in April. The Board will be asked in April to discuss perspectives and provide input, guidance, and direction on next steps in development of a diversity, equity, and inclusion policy at EWEB.