



MEMORANDUM

EUGENE WATER & ELECTRIC BOARD



TO: Commissioners Carlson, Barofsky, McRae, Schlossberg, and Brown
FROM: Frank Lawson, CEO & General Manager; Rodney Price, Asst. General Manager
DATE: Aug 25, 2023 (Board Meeting September 5, 2023)
SUBJECT: SD23 Draft Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Policy – Amended
OBJECTIVE: Correspondence – Commissioner Feedback

Issue

Based on Commissioner guidance provided at the Board Work Session, August 15, 2023, Management provides the following revisions to the initial draft of SD23 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy for further feedback.

Background

In 2021, as part of Commissioners’ annual policy review, along with work on revisions to SD15 Climate Change policy, it was recognized that “equity considerations” were not included within EWEB Board policy. Since that time, and over the course of seven (7) correspondence or meeting and work session agenda topics, Management and Commissioners developed and executed on a roadmap, including developing a baseline understanding of DEI concepts, to produce a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion policy for the organization. A full description of the background of this policy development can be found at [\[link-to-work-session-memo\]](#).

Discussion

At the August 15, 2023, Work Session, Commissioners supported the overall direction of the current draft and provided the following feedback:

- a. The policy does provide a bridge between EWEB’s published value of Community/Culture and the actions of the utility.
- b. Having a policy makes EWEB’s actions towards diversity, equity, and inclusion feel more substantial but will depend on EWEB’s implementation of the policy.
- c. The positive tone of the draft is appreciated but it is also important to identify and address bias and discrimination.
- d. Look for ways to humanize the draft and make it more inspiring and less dry.
- e. The draft presented is very concise; it would be ok to add slightly to the length to build on the topics being addressed.
- f. The definition of Diversity is intended to be inclusive of and yet move beyond the legally protected classes to include a full range of human identities and experiences.
- g. The definition of Equity could be refined to be more outcome focused and to use different terms to differentiate between equal and equitable.
- h. Within the definition of Community, the word collaborate is not representative of supply chain relationships with suppliers and contractors.
- i. Within the Directives section, the access to products and services is more than just prices and could be broader in scope.

Recommendation

Management and staff seek additional feedback on the Draft SD23 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy, revised since the August 15, 2023, Work Session. Unless significant revisions are recommended, Management will recommend the Board approve SD23 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy at the October 3, 2023, Regular Board Meeting.

Requested Board Action

No Action is requested currently. Management seeks additional Commissioner feedback and guidance.

Attachment(s)

- 1 – Revised (2023-09-05) SD23 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy – CLEAN COPY
- 2 – Revised (2023-09-05) SD23 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy – MARKUP COPY

Strategic Direction Policies (SD Policies)

SD23 **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Policy¹**
Effective Date **MM DD, 2023**

1.0 Background

EWEB acknowledges that the principles of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion are foundational to the consistent application of our values in the pursuit of our vision and fulfillment of our mission. EWEB recognizes and strives to celebrate our human differences and will ensure representation across a wide spectrum of characteristics and experiences, combat bias and discrimination that negatively impacts members of our community, and foster an inclusive culture that welcomes people and leads to a sense of belonging and shared commitment.

Why Diversity – Embracing and respecting our individual uniqueness and collective Diversity fosters broad perspectives, creative solutions, and an improved understanding of our workforce and Community.

Why Equity – As a public entity, providing our entire workforce and Community with Equitable Access to Products and Services, public participation, governance, employment opportunities, and business partnerships is fundamental to enhancing the vitality, health, and welfare of the community and meeting our obligation to serve.

Why Inclusion – An environment based on Inclusion creates the collaboration, motivation, and commitment necessary to galvanize our Board and workforce, and inspire our customers to use our Products and Services and actively participate in our governance and public processes, essential to sustaining and continually improving our organization.

2.0 Definitions as applied to this policy:

Diversity: *in addition to legally protected classes, the presence and recognition of all aspects of human differences within a group.*

Equity (Equitable): *the fair, unbiased, impartial opportunity to achieve a just outcome.*

Inclusion (Inclusive): *continually creating a welcoming environment where people with different identities and diverse experiences feel respected, have a sense of belonging, and can participate and achieve to their potential.*

Community: *includes the people with whom we serve, conduct business with, collaborate, influence, or impact in the fulfillment of our mission.*

Products and Services: *includes the delivery of drinking water, electricity, information, support, and supplemental programs related to the fulfillment of our mission.*

¹ Non-Grammatical capitalized terms in this policy refer to the definitions as described in Section 2.0

Access: *The physical and/or virtual means of obtaining, examining, or consuming Products and Services.*

3.0 Primary Directives

Consistent with EWEB’s Vision, Mission, and Values (SD1) and other Strategic Direction (SD) policies, along with other policies guiding Governance Process (GP), Board-Staff Linkage (BL) and Executive Limitations (EL), the Board supports an intentional and comprehensive approach to reducing and/or eliminating discrimination, and continually improving Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, as defined above, by focusing on the following strategic areas:

- a) **Access to Products and Services:** The Board authorizes, delegates, and directs the General Manager to ensure that the Community we serve has Equitable Access to Products and Services.
- b) **Workforce:** EWEB will rely on workforce, business, and operations management policies and practices to guide and govern conduct and decision-making. Furthermore, the Board authorizes, delegates, and directs the General Manager to ensure these policies exist, are routinely reviewed, and are enforced with the goal to create and nurture a working environment that facilitates productive, Inclusive, and respectful workforce engagement through Equitable actions, including but not limited to recruiting and hiring, compensation, promotion and retention, training and skill building, discipline and separation policies, procedures, and practices.
- c) **Engagement:** Furthermore, the Board authorizes, delegates, and directs the General Manager to facilitate productive, Inclusive, and respectful Community engagement through open, accessible, and transparent communications, facilities, and Equitable opportunity to participate in our procurement, contracting, governance, and/or public processes.
- d) **Board of Commissioners:** Commissioners shall adhere to board policies specifically addressing but not limited to their governing styleⁱ, job dutiesⁱⁱ, rules of conductⁱⁱⁱ, external communications^{iv}, and public input^v in a manner that fosters the organizational and Community benefits of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion outlined in this policy.

4.0 Implementation

According to board policy^{vi}, the General Manager *“is responsible for implementing policies and direction established by the Board”*. To implement this policy, the Board and General Manager will work together to develop annual goals, consistent with board policy^{vii}, related to the primary directives included herein, as applicable, including milestones and measurements, and reporting frequency.

So that the organization’s actions related to this policy are visible to the Board and our Community, at least annually EWEB will review and report on the status of relevant customer and workforce demographics and data, tactical activities, strategic initiatives, and annual goals associated with the implementation of this policy.

5.0 Reference Policies

The following are referenced in this policy.

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- ⁱ Board Policy GP1 Governing Style
 - ⁱⁱ Board Policy GP2 Board Job Description
 - ⁱⁱⁱ Board Policy GP6 Rules of Conduct
 - ^{iv} Board Policy GP9 External Communications
 - ^v Board Policy GP10 Public Input
 - ^{vi} Board Policy BL1 Global Board – General Manager Linkage
 - ^{vii} BL4 Delegation to the General Manager; BL5 Evaluating the General Manager’s Performance

Source: Initial Board Approval MM,DD,YYYY, Resolution 23xx.

Equity (Equitable): ~~fair and just practices and policies that ensure all have equal access to opportunities to thrive~~the fair, unbiased, impartial opportunity to achieve a just outcome.

Inclusion (Inclusive): continually creating a welcoming environment where people with ~~diverse~~different identities and diverse experiences feel respected, have a sense of belonging, and can participate and achieve to their potential.

Community: includes the people with whom we serve, conduct business with, collaborate, influence, or impact in the fulfillment of our mission.

Products and Services: includes the delivery of drinking water, electricity, information, support, and supplemental programs related to the fulfillment of our mission.

Access: The physical and/or virtual means of obtaining, examining, or consuming Products and Services.

3.0 Primary Directives

Consistent with EWEB’s Vision, Mission, and Values (SD1) and other Strategic Direction (SD) policies, along with other policies guiding Governance Process (GP), Board-Staff Linkage (BL) and Executive Limitations (EL), the Board supports an intentional and comprehensive approach to reducing and/or eliminating discrimination, and continually improving Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, as defined above, by focusing on the following strategic areas:

- a) **Access to Products and Services:** The Board authorizes, delegates, and directs the General Manager to ensure that the Community we serve has Equitable ~~access~~Access to ~~products~~Products and ~~services at fair non-discriminatory prices~~Services.
- b) **Workforce:** EWEB will rely on workforce, business, and operations management policies and practices to guide and govern conduct and decision-making. Furthermore, the Board authorizes, delegates, and directs the General Manager to ensure these policies exist, are routinely reviewed, and are enforced with the goal to create and nurture a working environment that facilitates productive, Inclusive, and respectful workforce engagement through Equitable actions, including but not limited to: recruiting and hiring, compensation, promotion and retention, training and skill building, discipline and separation policies, procedures, and practices.
- c) **Community Engagement:** Furthermore, the Board authorizes, delegates, and directs the General Manager to facilitate productive, Inclusive, and respectful Community engagement through open, accessible, and transparent communications, facilities, and Equitable opportunity to participate in our procurement, contracting, governance, and/or public processes.

- d) **Board of Commissioners:** Commissioners shall adhere to [Board Policies, board policies](#) specifically [addressing](#) but not limited to: ~~GP1 Governing Style, GP2 Board Job Description, GP6 Rules~~ [their governing styleⁱ, job dutiesⁱⁱ, rules of Conduct, GP9 External Communications](#)~~conductⁱⁱⁱ, external communications^{iv}, and GP10 Public Input~~ [public input^v](#) in a manner that fosters the organizational and Community benefits of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion outlined in this policy.

4.0 Implementation

According to [Board Policy BL1 board policy^{vi}](#), the General Manager “*is responsible for implementing policies and direction established by the Board*”. To implement this policy, the Board and General Manager will work together to develop annual goals, consistent with [Board Policy BL4 and BL5 board policy^{vii}](#), related to the primary directives included herein, as applicable, including milestones and measurements, and reporting frequency.

So that the organization’s actions related to this policy are visible to the Board and our Community, at least annually EWEB will review and report on the status of [relevant customer and workforce demographics and data](#), tactical activities, strategic initiatives, and annual goals associated with the implementation of this policy.

5.0 Reference Policies

[The following are referenced in this policy.](#)

ⁱ [Board Policy GP1 Governing Style](#)

ⁱⁱ [Board Policy GP2 Board Job Description](#)

ⁱⁱⁱ [Board Policy GP6 Rules of Conduct](#)

^{iv} [Board Policy GP9 External Communications](#)

^v [Board Policy GP10 Public Input](#)

^{vi} [Board Policy BL1 Global Board – General Manager Linkage](#)

^{vii} [BL4 Delegation to the General Manager; BL5 Evaluating the General Manager’s Performance](#)

Source: [Initial Board Approval MM,DD,YYYY, Resolution 23xx.](#)