

## Michele King

---

**From:** D. Muirhead <doug.muirhead@stanfordalumni.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 07, 2020 1:09 PM  
**To:** Michele King  
**Cc:** Clerk of the Board; John Varela  
**Subject:** comment Board of Directors Meeting February 11, 2020 #2.1 CEO Recruitment Stakeholder Participation

Water District Board of Directors Meeting Tuesday, February 11, 2020 2.1. Chief Executive Officer/General Manager Recruitment Stakeholder Participation.

-----  
Public Comment, Doug Muirhead, Morgan Hill:

Offering the public one chance to comment on qualities desired in a new CEO is what you did when introducing executive search firm Korn Ferry who then brought us Ms. Camacho.

Sometime during that process, the District home page offered a survey for District CEO Recruitment. (See [Note 1] for my reaction.) The five categories were:

1. What are the issues that matter most to you
2. specific professional characteristics or competencies
3. specific personal characteristics or competencies
4. What is the district executive leadership doing well?
5. Where can our executive leadership improve?

While my passions are trails and recycled water and transparency, the issues most important to the District should be

- 1) retirement, institutional knowledge, and succession planning  
With the number of employees nearing retirement age, I think the first priority should be institutional knowledge handoff and succession planning. Board and staff need to be sensitive to lack of context and history when having discussions on items which have a significant past.
- 2) we need a better way to know what is most important to the District and what progress or lack thereof is being made.  
Far too often there is an announcement (internal task force on permitting, community meetings for trails policy) followed by months or years of silence.
- 3) we need to talk to people in language they can understand and act on; tell people what they are getting and why they should care.
  - \* Why is that important in the grand scheme of things?
  - \* What are your messages for non-believers?
  - \* Our current supporters were attracted by our past messages.
  - \* What new messages will attract new supporters?I wonder if people know what they are getting when you talk about, for example, "clean toxins from the water".
  - Mercury at Lake Almaden?
  - Old tires polluting creeks?
  - Nitrate and salt in groundwater?
- 4) I remain convinced that understanding complexity and uncertainty are essential to changing community attitudes that the District has too many employees and pays them too much and yet cannot complete a dam rebuild (my first community meeting in Morgan Hill for Anderson Dam was in 2013 with a construction start date of 2016). Your Public Perception Polls and Proposed Public Education Campaigns need to deliver on perception and attitude changes.
- 5) what waters you control and what other parties are responsible for and what regulatory hurdles are required.  
The cleanup work you are doing for Coyote Creek in San Jose where

you have permits or do not need permits is one way to communicate District abilities and limitations. Engineered channels versus natural channels. Why tree size matters. SMP and mitigation.

-----

[Note 1] sent to CoB on Sun April 23 2017; no response In looking at the revised and new agenda material, I also noticed that the web home page now includes a survey for District CEO Recruitment.

Please forward these questions to the Board or Communications Unit as appropriate.

1) When was this survey posted? There is no date on it.

2) When will this survey end? There is no date on it.

3) How was this survey announced? I received no announcement either from a County-wide email blast nor from a communication from my district director.

-----

[Note 2] Posted on July 28, 2017

Norma Camacho named Santa Clara Valley Water District's chief executive officer

As for her priorities, Ms. Camacho said,

\* We must focus on preparing for future wet and dry years to ensure our residents have a reliable water supply, no matter what extreme weather the changing climate brings.

\* We are committed to protecting our environment and are working to restore habitat along creeks and the bay, clean toxins from the water, and make sure water is used efficiently.

\* We remain dedicated to keeping residents and businesses safe through our flood protection programs

-----

[Note 3] Tuesday, February 11, 2020

2.1. Chief Executive Officer/General Manager Recruitment  
Stakeholder Participation.

Staff report:

To manage the search process, the board has retained Avery and Associates, an Executive Search and Labor Relations consulting firm. [executive search firm Korn Ferry] The Board is currently in the strategy stage of the recruitment process and invites any interested stakeholders to attend the February 11, 2020 public Board meeting to provide input on the selection process. The Board will hear comments on this subject at 11:00 a.m.

Input can also be provided in writing, by sending an email to the Clerk of the Board at [clerkoftheboard@valleywater.org](mailto:clerkoftheboard@valleywater.org).

The Board will take into consideration all stakeholder comments as they conduct the recruitment process.

-----