



Santa Clara Valley Water District

File No.: 20-0572

Agenda Date: 7/14/2020

Item No.: *2.6.

BOARD AGENDA MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT:

Board Confirmation of the Assistant Chief Executive Officer, Operations.

RECOMMENDATION:

*Confirm the appointment of Melanie Richardson as the Assistant Chief Executive Officer, Operations, for Santa Clara Valley Water District.

SUMMARY:

Board Governance Policy Executive Limitation 3.8 states that a “BAO shall present an appointment of a Chief-level position to the Board for Confirmation.”

Following a competitive internal recruitment process, the Chief Executive Officer has selected a candidate for the position of Assistant Chief Executive Officer, Operations, (Assistant Chief Executive Officer) and requests that the Board confirm the appointment.

POSITION SUMMARY

The Assistant Chief Executive Officer position is a new single position classification with responsibility for ensuring Watershed and Water Utility Enterprise Operations are strategic and collaborative in developing and execution of short- and long-term strategic goals and objectives; to ensure programs, and projects meet the needs of the community and comply with applicable regulatory requirements; to represent the Chief Executive Officer and Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water) in interactions with the public and other organizations; to function as the CEO in his/her absence; and to perform related duties as assigned. The position provides highly complex assistance to the CEO in a variety of administrative, management, and liaison capacities, providing leadership to the Chief Operating Officers (COOs) and Deputy Operating Officers, and developing and implementing agency-wide and Watershed and Water Utility divisional programs, projects, initiatives, policies, and procedures.

The Assistant Chief Executive Officer serves at the will of the CEO and is accordingly employed in Valley Water’s unclassified service

SELECTION PROCESS

The Assistant Chief Executive Officer position is a competitive promotional opportunity. All candidates must go through several interviews consisting of panels with employees, labor union

representatives, mid-managers, and executive management from across the organization and a final interview with the CEO.

***CANDIDATE**

The selected candidate is Melanie Richardson, who has been serving as the Chief Operating Officer of Watersheds since January 2019 and served as Interim Chief Operating Officer of Watersheds since 2016. Ms. Richardson started her career at Valley Water in July 1990 and brings to the role of Assistant Chief Executive Officer of Operations over 30 years of experience, including executive level positions in Water Utility, Administration, and Watersheds.

As the Chief Operating Officer of Watersheds, Ms. Richardson oversees a \$4.3 billion-dollar capital program (72% of Valley Water CIP) and a \$160 million-dollar operating budget with 276 full-time employees and 3 major Watershed Divisions. She also leads the Anderson Dam Seismic Retrofit Project and the FERC-ordered compliance project; provides management oversight on flood protection, environmental stewardship and dam safety capital projects; and provides leadership for Watersheds and some Water Utility Operations and Maintenance work.

Prior to her current role, Ms. Richardson held several leadership roles at Valley Water, including Deputy Operating Officer of Watersheds Design and Construction Division, Deputy Administrative Officer of Corporate Business Services, and Assistant Operating Officer of Water Supply Management Division. Under Ms. Richardson's leadership, key flood protection projects have been completed: San Francisquito Creek, McKelvey Park, Cunningham Flood Detention and Upper and Lower Berryessa Creeks.

Ms. Richardson holds a Bachelor of Science in Petroleum Engineering from Montana State University and certification as a Professional Engineer. She is also a graduate of U.C. Berkeley Extension's Executive Leadership Program.

Ms. Richardson has demonstrated leadership, critical thinking and a collaborative management style. Her leadership skills, broad experience and ability to successfully move Valley Water projects to completion, uniquely qualifies her for the Assistant Chief Executive Officer.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

*Ms. Richardson will assume the position of Assistant Chief Executive Officer immediately upon Board confirmation with an annual starting salary of \$332,633.60. The salary has been budgeted for in the Office of the CEO, Project 60131007, using a repurposed position and general fund salary savings.

CEQA:

The recommended action does not constitute a project under CEQA because it does not have a potential for resulting in direct or reasonably foreseeable physical change in the environment.

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ATTACHMENTS:

- *Original Agenda Memo
- *Original Attachment 1: Recruitment Posting
- *Supplemental Agenda Memo

UNCLASSIFIED MANAGER:

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