

Memo

To: Board Members
From: Aaron Byzak
Date: September 19, 2025
Subject: Policies & Procedures Committee Minutes – **September 10, 2025**

The Committee met on Wednesday, September 10, 2025, at 1:30 p.m., for a special meeting. Members of the public were able to participate by telephone, Zoom, or in-person at the Grossmont Healthcare District Conference Center, located at 9001 Wakarusa Street, La Mesa, CA. For the purpose of these minutes, the listed items are reflected in the order set forth on the posted Agenda. In some cases, discussion of items may have taken place out of sequence during the meeting.

Attendees: Director Robert “Bob” Ayres, Chair
Director Maggie Watkins, Member
Aaron Byzak, Interim Chief Executive Officer
Tom Scaglione, Chief Administrative Officer (via Zoom)
Amy Abrams, Chief Community Health Officer
Holland Kessinger, Head Librarian

A. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by Director Ayres at 1:34 p.m.

B. Approval Agenda: The agenda was approved as posted.

C. Public Comment: There was no public comment.

D. Reports/Discussion/Possible Action Items

1. District Policies for Potential Recommendation

a) New

i. General Driving Policy

The Committee discussed making minor revisions to the driving policy including adding Harman Sarky, Compliance Coordinator, as the notification contact for accident criteria. The Committee

recommended making the revisions and taking the final version of the updated General Driving Policy to the full Board for approval.

ii. Guidelines for Individuals with Service Animals

The Committee reviewed the guidelines for service animals, noting that while vests are not required, staff can ask two specific questions to verify an animal's service status. The policy will be posted outside on the bulletin board in the courtyard and will be on the District website. The Committee *recommended* moving forward with the Guidelines for Individuals with Service Animals for full Board approval.

iii. District Visitor Policy

The Committee discussed properly posting the District Visitor Policy on the District campus and requested adding the prohibition of smoking on the campus. The Committee *recommended* moving forward with the District Visitor Policy for full Board approval.

iv. Public Policy Priorities Guidelines

Interim CEO Aaron Byzak presented a proposal for a Public Policy Priorities Guideline document to streamline the District's involvement in legislative processes. The model document presented has been used by many different organizations, including the local Chamber of Commerce and other advocacy organizations. It outlines the District's guiding principles which state that legislation must be in alignment with our mission and our pillars, be geographically relevant to us, provide improvement or protection of our operations and our partners and benefits to them, preserve local control, oppose unfunded mandates where financial responsibility is transferred to the District, have a neutral to positive fiscal impact on the District, and that it upholds high standards of transparency, ethical governance, and public trust of healthcare systems, districts and public agencies.

Interim CEO Byzak has reviewed the document with staff, with Tim Madden, our lobbyist in Sacramento, and our partners at Sharp Healthcare. Once adopted by the Board, the Chief Executive Officer will send the Public Policy Priorities Guidelines to elected officials before the fall legislative session yearly. The Public Policy Priorities Guidelines will be posted on the District website. The Committee

recommended moving forward with the Public Policy Priorities Guidelines for full Board approval.

v. Grant and Support Letter Policy

Interim CEO Aaron Byzak emphasized the need for timely support of community partners seeking a statement of support from the District, proposing a policy that would allow the Chief Executive Officer to issue letters of support directly, with Board oversight. Letters of support can be influential in helping our community partners secure other sources of funding for their health-related work in the District, but are often needed on short notice. The Committee discussed the potential benefits of adopting this policy, including increased community impact without costing the District anything. The Committee *recommended* forwarding the Grant and Support Letter Policy for full Board approval.

b) Pre-Existing

i. Employee Handbook

CAO Scaglione presented highlights of the proposed rewritten Employee Handbook to the Committee. He explained that the current handbook needed to be updated to be more contemporary and consistent, with less ambiguity. The Handbook was drafted by District staff with the help of our HR consulting firm and our current legal counsel.

- COLA – recommendation of a 5% cap with a rollover provision. The current cap is 3.5%.
- Cellular phone allowance for employees required to use their cellular phone for business.
- Continue to reimburse employees for Eligible Out-of-Pocket Medical Expenses (deductibles and copays).
- The District currently pays the Employee contributions of one Classic PERS member currently employed.
- For Board consideration, the handbook has a placeholder for District matching of 457 deferred compensation contributions for up to \$1,000 per year per employee.

- For Board consideration, the Handbook has a placeholder for gym membership reimbursements of up to \$50 per month per employee.
- The proposed Handbook consolidates all the provisions related to leave from work (PTO) which includes both vacation and sick pay.

The Committee reviewed the Handbook and discussed the revision of various sections including:

- Remove Christian Wallace from page 5.
- Update the handbook with the current Mission Statement to reflect the new workforce development focus.
- Remove second “collaboration” in the Ethical version of the Public Trust section.
- Clarify the reporting process for discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, specifying that employees should notify their supervisor, any member of management, and legal counsel, while explicitly excluding Board members.
- The Committee discussed full-time work hours, and CAO Scaglione clarified that regular full-time employees are scheduled for 30 hours per week, except for approved time off. He reviewed California labor laws regarding part-time and full-time work standards.
- The Committee also debated COLA rates, with President Ayres advocating for maintaining the current 3.5% cap rather than increasing to 5%, citing historical data and budget considerations. They agreed to remove the rollover provision and instead consider policy adjustments annually if COLA exceeds the 3.5% cap. They agreed to use the annual CPI index, effective March 1st, with merit increases taking effect July 1st following annual reviews.
- The Committee requested that the pay period Board members being paid a monthly stipend be the last day of the month.
- The Committee discussed a new \$50 cell phone allowance for staff with some reservations about this policy. CAO Scaglione

stated there are a handful of employees whose work requires the use of their cell phone, and this is at the discretion of their manager, since it is not policy. The Committee agreed to the new policy for eligible employees.

- The Committee discussed the new policy of giving eligible employees a \$100 monthly travel allowance in lieu of paying them actual mileage under the IRS rates. This change would be switching from an accountable plan to a non-accountable plan and would make it easier accounting wise.
- The Committee discussed the use of economy airline booking and the prohibition of using private non-commercial or chartered aircraft when traveling when traveling on District business for employees. The Committee requested Board members be added to the policy.
- The Committee discussed the use of company credit cards for booking airfares and CAO Scaglione explained it is an internal control. The Committee requested adding the additional wording “where practical”, airfares are charged to company credit cards. Board members will be added to the policy.
- The Committee requests removing the policy for rental cars that requires rental car firms that have an existing relationship with the District.
- The Committee discussed the exit interview policy and questioned why everyone is not required to participate. CAO Scaglione stated you cannot make an employee participate.
- The Committee discussed long term care for current employees and inquired if Board members can apply for long term care and life insurance.
- CAO Scaglione will strike out the vesting schedule and change the language to the existing policy.
- There was a question on continuing education and tuition assistance and whether we pay for the reimbursement if they leave their employment. Employees who voluntarily separate from the District within one year of receiving tuition

reimbursement are required to pay the District back. CAO Scaglione is checking with counsel to see if it is permissible to deduct from their last paycheck if they leave before a year.

- The Committee agreed to pay gym memberships for employees to all full-time employees at \$50 per month and \$25 for part-time employees including seasonal workers.
- The Education Assistance Program will terminate on December 25. CAO Scaglione will check with legal counsel to determine if it is tied to legislation before it is removed.
- The Committee requested that Juneteenth be removed from the list of holidays since it is now a State of California holiday.
- Floating holidays do not roll over and unused floating holidays will be forfeited at the end of the calendar year upon separation. Under the new policy, employees will receive one floating holiday upon the first January of employment and each January thereafter.
- COBRA to be paid up to 12 weeks which is a state statute. District pays coverage.
- There was a discussion on Prohibited Conduct and policy regarding someone with a concealed gun permit. Since a library is one of the places guns are prohibited by California law, this was addressed.
- On page 45, add Sharp Healthcare regarding confidentiality and nondisclosure trade secrets.
- Both employees and Directors should sign the employee handbook.

CAO Scaglione will incorporate changes into the handbook and circulate it back with tracking to the Director Ayes and Director Watkins for comments before it is placed on the October 7th Board meeting agenda.

- ii. Attendance At Meetings (BOD-03): Consideration of Legal Opinion regarding Remote Teleconferencing

The Committee addressed the policy regarding notification of Board absences and revised it to the Board member shall notify the Board President and/or the Chief Executive Officer. The Committee *recommended* forwarding the Attendance at Meetings (BOD-03) revision for full Board approval.

2. Board Meeting Times and Potential Pilot Program (For Discussion)

The Committee discussed the potential pilot program for a change in Board meeting times to one evening meeting and one morning meeting. It will be placed on the October 7th Board meeting agenda as a discussion item. It was also noted by the Committee that if a motion is made, seconded, and then fails to receive majority support, it cannot be brought back at future Board meetings except under certain circumstances permitted under the Brown Act.

E. Next Meeting: The next meeting is on the calendar for Tuesday, October 28, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

F. Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 4:03 p.m.