



*Dedicated to  
Satisfying our Community's  
Water Needs*

**AGENDA  
MESA WATER DISTRICT  
SPECIAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
Monday, August 11, 2025 at 12:00 p.m.  
Panian Conference Room**

Committee Members: Marice H. DePasquale, President  
Shawn Dewane, Vice President  
Paul E. Shoenberger, P.E., General Manager  
Denise Khalifa, Chief Administrative Officer

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**Items Not on the Agenda:** Members of the public are invited to address the Board regarding items which are not appearing on the posted agenda. Each speaker shall be limited to three minutes. The Executive Committee will set aside 30 minutes for public comments for items not appearing on the posted agenda.

**Items on the Agenda:** Members of the public shall be permitted to comment on agenda items before action is taken, or after the Executive Committee has discussed the item. Each speaker shall be limited to three minutes. The Executive Committee will set aside 60 minutes for public comments for items appearing on the posted agenda.

**PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

*Items recommended for approval at this meeting may be agendized for approval at a future Board meeting.*

1. Board Workshop Planning

**ACTION ITEMS:**

2. Proclamation Honoring Arlene Schafer
3. General Legal Counsel Services

**REPORTS:**

4. Future Agenda Topics
5. Report of the General Manager
6. Directors' Reports and Comments



*In compliance with California law and the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need disability-related modifications or accommodations, including auxiliary aids or services in order to participate in the meeting, or if you need the agenda provided in an alternative format, please call the District Secretary at (949) 631-1205. Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable Mesa Water District (Mesa Water®) to make reasonable arrangements to accommodate your requests.*

*Members of the public desiring to make verbal comments using a translator to present their comments into English shall be provided reasonable time accommodations that are consistent with California law.*

*Agenda materials that are public records, which have been distributed to a majority of the Mesa Water Board of Directors (Board), will be available for public inspection at the District Boardroom, 1965 Placentia Avenue, Costa Mesa, CA and on Mesa Water's website at **[www.MesaWater.org](http://www.MesaWater.org)**. If materials are distributed to the Board less than 72 hours prior or during the meeting, the materials will be available at the time of the meeting.*

## **ADJOURNMENT**



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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Executive Committee  
FROM: Paul E. Shoenberger, P.E., General Manager  
DATE: August 11, 2025  
SUBJECT: Board Workshop Planning

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### RECOMMENDATION

Recommend that the Board of Directors review agenda topics and discuss planning for the October 28, 2025 Board of Directors' workshop.

### STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal #1: Provide an abundant, local, reliable and safe water supply.  
Goal #2: Perpetually renew and improve our infrastructure.  
Goal #3: Be financially responsible and transparent.  
Goal #4: Increase public awareness of Mesa Water.  
Goal #5: Attract, develop and retain skilled employees.  
Goal #6: Provide excellent customer service.  
Goal #7: Actively participate in regional and statewide water issues.  
Goal #8: Practice continual business improvement.

### PRIOR BOARD ACTION/DISCUSSION

None.

### DISCUSSION

For the Board of Directors' review, the proposed agenda topics are as follows:

- Regional Water Issues
- Fiscal Year 2025 Strategic Plan Status
- Annual District-Wide Performance Audit
- Annual Performance Evaluation of the General Manager
- Board Engagement Metrics

### FINANCIAL IMPACT

In Fiscal Year 2026, \$1,000 is budgeted for Board workshop expenses; no funds have been spent to date.

### ATTACHMENTS

None.



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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Executive Committee  
FROM: Denise Khalifa, Chief Administrative Officer  
DATE: August 11, 2025  
SUBJECT: Proclamation Honoring Arlene Schafer

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### RECOMMENDATION

Recommend that the Board of Directors approve a proclamation honoring Costa Mesa Sanitary District's Arlene Schafer for her nearly five decades of dedicated public service and commitment to the Costa Mesa community.

### STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal #4: Provide excellent customer service.  
Goal #7: Actively participate in regional and statewide water issues.

### PRIOR BOARD ACTION/DISCUSSION

None.

### DISCUSSION

Arlene Schafer, longtime Board Member of the Costa Mesa Sanitary District (CMSD), has retired effective August 1, 2025. To celebrate her nearly five decades of exemplary public service, Ms. Schafer will be honored at a special event being held at CMSD and over Zoom on Tuesday, August 19, 2025 at 2 p.m. Mesa Water District's (Mesa Water®) Board President Marice H. DePasquale will present a proclamation to Director Schafer at the retirement event.

Since her election to Costa Mesa's City Council in 1978, Director Schafer's expansive career has led her to serve in several leadership roles, including as Chair of the Costa Mesa Redevelopment Advisory Committee, Costa Mesa City Planning Commissioner, and Mayor of the City of Costa Mesa. She was first elected to the CMSD Board of Directors in 1994, serving as its Board President from 2000 to 2004 and again from 2008 to 2010. She most recently served as their Board's Vice Secretary, a position she stepped down from to spend more time with her family.

Director Schafer has been a dedicated public servant representing the interests of Costa Mesa and the surrounding areas in innumerable ways. She served on the Orange County Local Agency Formation Commission, represented CMSD with the Independent Special Districts of Orange County (ISDOC) and served on the California Special Districts Association (CSDA) Board of Directors. She is also active with the Harbor Mesa Lion's Club, Costa Mesa Chamber of Commerce, and the Costa Mesa and Orange County Republican Women's Federation.

Throughout her career, Director Schafer spearheaded numerous programs and projects which will have a lasting impact on her community for years to come, including launching Southern California's first curbside organics recycling program to convert food scraps and green waste into renewable natural gas (RNG), establishing door-to-door household hazardous waste collection,



and ensuring emergency power redundancy at CMSD's 20 wastewater pump stations. She was also instrumental in the land acquisition for and construction of Robin Hamers Yard, Costa Mesa's first LEED-certified facility.

In recognition of her incredible contributions, Director Schafer was named as the Orange County Board of Supervisors' "Honored Citizen of Orange County," was a recipient of the Newport-Mesa Unified School District's Beacon Award, and was recognized as the Costa Mesa Chamber of Commerce's "Woman of the Year".

Director Schafer's commitment and vision have fundamentally improved her Costa Mesa community and the lives of the people she served, and she will long be remembered as a driving force for positive change and growth.

#### FINANCIAL IMPACT

None.

#### ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Draft Proclamation

DRAFT

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Executive Committee  
FROM: Paul E. Shoenberger, P.E., General Manager  
DATE: August 11, 2025  
SUBJECT: General Legal Counsel Services

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### RECOMMENDATION

Recommend that the Board of Directors amend the General Legal Services contract with Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo to revise the fee schedule, effective September 1, 2025.

### STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal #1: Provide an abundant, local, reliable and safe water supply.  
Goal #2: Perpetually renew and improve our infrastructure.  
Goal #3: Be financially responsible and transparent.  
Goal #4: Increase public awareness of Mesa Water.  
Goal #5: Attract, develop and retain skilled employees.  
Goal #6: Provide excellent customer service.  
Goal #7: Actively participate in regional and statewide water issues.  
Goal #8: Practice continual business improvement.

### PRIOR BOARD ACTION/DISCUSSION

At its September 8, 2021 meeting, after an extensive selection process, the Board of Directors (Board) approved a five-year contract with Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo (AALRR) to provide General Legal Counsel Services, and authorized the General Manager to execute the contract.

At its July 26, 2022 Committee meeting, the Board amended the General Legal Counsel Services contract with AALRR to revise the fee schedule, effective September 1, 2022.

At its September 27, 2023 meeting, the Board amended the General Legal Counsel Services agreement with AALRR to revise the fee schedule effective October 1, 2023; removed the billing cap for attendance at regular Board meetings; and removed language from the agreement regarding participation in the Association of California Water Agencies Legal Affairs Committee and CalWater PAC meetings.

### DISCUSSION

AALRR currently represents Mesa Water District (Mesa Water®) as General Legal Counsel and in various legal roles.

On July 7, 2025, staff received correspondence from AALRR requesting the Board's consideration of a revised legal services fee schedule. Staff recommends the Board amend AALRR's contract to revise the fee schedule, effective September 1, 2025.



#### FINANCIAL IMPACT

In Fiscal Year 2026, \$213,000 has been budgeted for Legal Services; no funds have been spent to date this fiscal year with Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo.

#### ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo Correspondence



ATKINSON, ANDELSON, LOYA, RUUD & ROMO

A PROFESSIONAL LAW CORPORATION

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

20 PACIFICA, SUITE 1100  
IRVINE, CALIFORNIA 92618-3371  
(949) 453-4260

FAX (949) 453-4262  
WWW.AALRR.COM

CERRITOS

(562) 653-3200

FRESNO

(559) 225-6700

MARIN

(628) 234-6200

PASADENA

(626) 583-8600

PLEASANTON

(925) 227-9200

RIVERSIDE

(951) 683-1122

SACRAMENTO

(916) 923-1200

SAN DIEGO

(858) 485-9526

OUR FILE NUMBER:

53792904.1/006315.00001

July 7, 2025

**VIA E-MAIL & U.S. MAIL**

Ms. Marice H. DePasquale, Board President  
& Members of the Board of Directors  
Mesa Water District  
1965 Placentia Ave.  
Costa Mesa, CA 92627

Mr. Paul Shoenberger, P.E., General Manager  
Mesa Water District  
1965 Placentia Ave.  
Costa Mesa, CA 92627

Re: Mesa Water District - Request for Consideration of Revised Fees for General Legal Services

Dear Marice, Members of the Board & Paul:

Our Firm is appreciative of the confidence that the Mesa Water District ("Mesa Water") Board of Directors has shown in us through the retention of our Firm to serve as Mesa Water's General Legal Counsel. As we are sure Mesa Water is aware, recent inflationary trends have impacted prices of goods and services throughout the United States, including, but not limited to the Orange County area, which has impacted the products and services that Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo ("Firm"), obtains or uses as part of providing our legal services to Mesa Water. Examples of recent costs impacts to the Firm include increased staffing costs (including benefits costs such as medical coverage) of 17.2% over the past two years, increased associate attorney costs of 23.4% over the year, non-exempt staff costs increased on average person of 9.5% over the past 18 months, increased rental and utilities costs and similar cost impacts as a result of recent cost inflation.

ATKINSON, ANDELSON, LOYA, RUUD & ROMO

Ms. Marice H. DePasquale, Board President  
Members of the Board of Directors  
Mr. Paul Shoenberger, P.E., General Manager  
Mesa Water District  
July 7, 2025  
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In order to keep pace with the pace of inflation, it is our request that the Board consider the following revised rates for the provision of general legal services by our Firm to Mesa Water:

	<u>Existing Rates</u>	<u>Proposed Rates</u>
Partners	\$300.00 per hour	\$325.00 per hour
Senior Associates	\$280.00 per hour	\$310.00 per hour
Associates	\$265.00 per hour	\$295.00 per hour
Law Clerks	\$150.00 per hour	\$175.00 per hour
Paralegals	\$150.00 per hour	\$175.00 per hour

In reviewing the proposed legal rates for general legal services provided by other similar public agencies within Orange County, we believe that the proposed rates are reasonable, and are in fact, below the rates charged for similar legal services to a number of public agencies within the County.

We are proposing that, if approved by the Board, that the new rates would be effective for services rendered on or after September 1, 2025.

As always, it has been our pleasure serving Mesa Water for so many years and we look forward to continuing to do so well into the future. If you have specific questions with regard to the increases in goods and services which the Firm is required to obtain and utilize as part of providing services to Mesa Water we would be most pleased to provide that information to you.

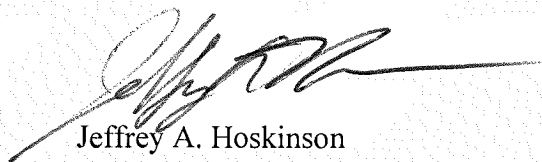
Thank you very much for your consideration in regard to this matter.

Sincerely,

ATKINSON, ANDELSON, LOYA, RUUD & ROMO



Robert E. Anslow



Jeffrey A. Hoskinson



Wendy Wiles

REA/JAH/WHW:tlb

cc: Denise Khalifa



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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Executive Committee  
FROM: Paul E. Shoenberger, P.E., General Manager  
DATE: August 11, 2025  
SUBJECT: Future Agenda Topics

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### RECOMMENDATION

Review future agenda topics.

### STRATEGIC PLAN

Goal #1: Provide an abundant, local, reliable and safe water supply.  
Goal #2: Perpetually renew and improve our infrastructure.  
Goal #3: Be financially responsible and transparent.  
Goal #4: Increase public awareness of Mesa Water.  
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Goal #7: Actively participate in regional and statewide water issues.  
Goal #8: Practice continual business improvement.

### PRIOR BOARD ACTION/DISCUSSION

None.

### DISCUSSION

Staff will provide a list of future agenda topics at the Executive Committee meeting.

### FINANCIAL IMPACT

None.

### ATTACHMENTS

None.

**REPORTS:**

5. REPORT OF THE GENERAL MANAGER

**REPORTS:**

6. DIRECTORS' REPORTS AND COMMENTS