



625 St. Joseph Street
New Orleans, LA 70165
504.529.2837 or 52.WATER

October 8, 2025

The Governance Committee met on Wednesday, October 8, 2025, in the Executive Boardroom. The meeting convened at approximately 11:15 a.m.

Present

Director Chadrick Kennedy, Chair
Director Janet Howard – Vice Chair
Director Kimberly Thomas
Director Courtney Scrubbs

Members Absent

Director H. Davis Cole

Non-Members Present

Director Joseph Peychaud

PRESENTATION ITEMS

A. House Resolution 305 of the 2025 Regular Session, Task Force on Southeast Louisiana Regional Water Purification Operations – Randy E. Hayman, Executive Director

Mr. Hayman provided an overview of House Resolution 305, which creates a task force to study the feasibility of building a water purification facility to serve Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, and St. Charles Parishes. Mr. Hayman shared that the task force must provide a report with findings and recommendations regarding the operations and management of a regional water purification facility by March 15, 2026.

The task force is comprised of 12 members from the mentioned parishes. The committee discussed that a SWBNO representative is not included on the task force, although the utility is responsible for the city's water purification efforts.

The task force held its first meeting on September 29, 2025. Mr. Nelson, SWBNO General Superintendent, shared that he attended the meeting and provided the group with an overview of the utility's water purification process and infrastructure. Mr. Nelson also noted that the meeting's discussion focused largely on saltwater intrusion.



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The committee expressed the need to develop a legislative strategy to help the utility proactively navigate future legislative sessions and the filing of bills that affect SWBNO. Mr. Hayman agreed and confirmed that the development of such a strategy is in progress.

B. Act 384 Section 2 of the 2024 Regular Session, Transfer of SWBNO Employees to State Civil Service - Randy E. Hayman, Executive Director

Mr. Hayman provided an overview of several pieces of legislation authored by Representative Hilferty.

- Act 384 of the 2024 Regular Session states that SWBNO employees are subject to civil service exams administered by New Orleans City Civil Service but also requires the transfer of SWBNO employees to State Civil Service by August 1, 2025.
- House Resolution 334 of the 2024 Regular Session states that the Legislature will work to repeal the transfer language of Act 384 and instructs State Civil Service and City Civil Service to not follow through with the development and implementation of a transfer plan.
- House Bill 190 of the 2025 Regular Session was filed to repeal the transfer language but failed to move through the assigned House committee. As a result, the session ended with the transfer language still included as part of the law.

Mr. Hayman shared that the State Civil Service Commission is now working to enforce implementation of the transfer plan.

The committee engaged in a robust discussion about the legislative history and process that led to the current situation, issues that would need to be considered with a transfer to the State Civil Service System (such as a \$1 million direct cost to SWBNO), and the possibility of revisiting some of the workforce options analyzed in the People Plan.

The committee advised that a discussion of Act 384 and related legislation should take place at the next full board meeting and asked for an accompanying resolution that reflects the Board's position on House Bill 190 and its failure to be adopted during the 2025 session. The committee also discussed that the Board's position on House Bill 190 should not preclude future research or analysis on other workforce-related issues.

The committee shared the importance of sending a unified message and having a unified front.



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PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Mubashir Maqbool, a SWBNO employee, shared comments on the legislation, past efforts by the Legislature to implement changes at the utility, and an upcoming constitutional amendment relative to State Civil Service employees.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- **Director Kennedy presented a motion to enter executive session. Director Thomas moved. Director Scrubbs seconded. The motion carried.**

Pursuant to La. R.S. 42:19, 42:17(A)(2) and 42:17(A)(10), the Governance Committee of the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans met in executive session to discuss its strategic approach to develop a process to evaluate the character, professional competence, and fitness of its Special Counsel and General Superintendent.

- **Director Kennedy presented a motion to exit the executive session. Director Thomas moved. Director Howard seconded. The motion carried.**

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Governance Committee, Director Howard moved to adjourn. Director Thomas seconded. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:14 p.m.