

Administrative Committee

Summary Notes

Meeting Date:	June 4, 2015	Start Time:	10:00 a.m.
Directors Present:	Dick Quigley Bill Stevens Jim McGrail	Staff Present:	Jill Duerig

Director Quigley called the meeting to order at 10 a.m.

1. Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

None.

2. Board Policy on Conducting Business

Director Ramirez Holmes began the discussion stating that she considered the “Guiding Principles” to be a PR document and that it seems backwards to put a PR document into the Board Policy on Conducting Business. Ms. Duerig clarified that the board had adopted the Guiding Principles as board policy.

Director Figuers stated that it was his opinion that the Guiding Principles violate the First Amendment based on recent US Supreme Court decisions. Therefore, the Guiding Principles cannot be enforced.

Director Quigley said that he agreed that the First Amendment allows board members to individually state their opinions but that there is a certain duty as elected representatives of the public to be respectful and to act with decorum. He said that the policies are deliberately vague to allow the board to apply reason and to deal with issues that arise. The Association of California Water Agencies has similar policies to avoid dysfunction.

Director Figuers said that dissidence is not necessarily a bad thing but that limitations on free speech are simply wrong. A certain level of incivility is needed for change to happen.

Director Ramirez Holmes said that the censure policy should be for serious ethical violations, only. It should not be applied for lack of teamwork, respect, or not doing one’s homework.

Director Quigley said that sometimes boards need to adopt policies like the “gentleperson’s agreement” to improve efficiency and enhance respectful behavior.

Director Ramirez Holmes said that the Guiding Principles had already been adopted so there is no need for further action. She suggested that, as a stand-alone policy, they are good enough. There is no reason to change the Board Policy on Conducting Business.

Director Quigley said that he agrees. An inordinate amount of time has been wasted on this issue, without much benefit.

Director Figuers said that he continues to protest the whole thing. Strict procedures are needed for censure and enforcement.

Director Ramirez Holmes said that without a process that has been adopted for censure, the Guiding Principles are not legally enforceable.

Director Quigley said that the documents, as is, are good enough. If nothing's broken and nobody's identified a redeeming value to change something, there is no need to move forward.

Director Quigley and Director Ramirez Holmes agreed that it is not a bad thing to revisit policies periodically but that changes need not always be made.

Led by Director Figuers, the committee voted 3-0 not to "make a bad situation worse" and directed staff not to bring this policy back to the board for changes at this time.

3. Verbal Reports

None.

4. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:25 a.m.