MASSACHUSETTS WATER RESOURCES AUTHORITY

Meeting of the Board of Directors

Morning Session

October 21, 2026

A meeting of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) Board of Directors was held on October 21, 2026 at MWRA Headquarters at Deer Island, Boston, and via remote participation.

Chair Tepper presided from MWRA Headquarters. Board Members Flanagan, Pappastergion, Taverna, Peña, Swett, Vitale, Patrick Walsh and Wolowicz participated at MWRA Headquarters. Board Members Foti and Jack Walsh participated remotely via Webex.

MWRA Executive Director Stephen Estes-Smargiassi; General Counsel Carolyn Franciso Murphy; Chief Operating Officer Kathy Murtagh; Deputy Chief Operating Officers Stephen Cullen and Rebecca Weidman; Director of Finance Thomas Durkin; Director of Administration Michele Gillen; Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer (AACU) Wendy Chu; Associate General Counsel Angela Atchue; IT Asset and Configuration Manager Michael Curtis; and, Assistant Secretary Kristin MacDougall were among those attending at MWRA Headquarters.

Vandana Rao, EEA, attended at MWRA headquarters and Matt Romero, MWRA Advisory Board, attended remotely.

Chair Tepper called the meeting to order at 10:31am.

ROLL CALL

Assistant Secretary Kristin MacDougall took roll call of Board Members in attendance and announced that Mr. Jack Walsh was participating remotely.

(Mr. Foti also participated remotely; he was inaudible during Roll Call.)

The Chair announced that the meeting was being held at MWRA Headquarters and virtually via a link posted on MWRA's website. She added that the meeting was being recorded, and the agenda and meeting materials were available on MWRA's website.

SELECTION OF MWRA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Chair Tepper announced that the purpose of this meeting was to appoint a new MWRA Executive Director. She then described the comprehensive Executive Director search process in which a national search firm, Isaacson, Miller, contacted 230 individuals across the country; the position was also widely advertised; the Preliminary Screening Committee ("PSC") received nearly 50 resumes for review; nine candidates were interviewed during the PCS's first round of interviews; four were subsequently interviewed during a second round; and two finalists from the second-round candidates were selected: Matt Brown, the Interim Chief Executive Officer and General Manager, Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President of Operations and Engineering, District of Columbia Water and Sewer Authority (DC Water); and Jonathan Gulliver, Undersecretary of Transportation and Highway Administrator, Massachusetts Department of Transportation. She relayed that the Committee believes that both final candidates were imminently qualified for the Executive Director role.

Documents used for this meeting and cited in these minutes, including meeting materials/staff summaries, presentations, and approved minutes, are posted on MWRA's website. https://www.mwra.com/about-mwra/governance-management/board-directors/archive-agendas-and-minutes

The Chair added that Board members were invited to meet with Messrs. Brown and Gulliver since the final candidates were selected by the PSC on October 14, 2026; further, the Board had received the finalists' resumes and cover letters as well as summaries of their references.

Discussion

Secretary Tepper, who served as the PSC Chair, invited the Board, starting with the PSC members (Mr. Pappastergion, Mr. Swett and Ms. Wolowicz), to share their thoughts about who they supported as the next MWRA Executive Director, and which points they found compelling about their preferred candidate's experience and background.

Board Vice Chair Pappastergion

Mr. Pappastergion expressed appreciation for the Isaacson, Miller team and praised their professionalism and maintenance of confidentiality throughout the PSC process; advised that selecting the new Executive Director was a very difficult task; and noted the quality of the applicants, particularly the nine interviewed remotely and the four semifinalists, made the decision extremely difficult. He added that he was not a member of the original PSC and, therefore, did not take part in the original review of all applicants; however, he joined the PSC before any interviews took place.

Mr. Pappastergion then thanked the PSC Chair and members; discussed the PSC members' hours of participation, homework, reading and follow-up analysis, how the PSC and Isaacson, Miller made a challenging task easier, and how the process was well handled and respectful to the candidates. He relayed that the finalists, Messrs. Brown and Gulliver, were very competent and qualified; and discussed Mr. Brown's fine character and significant experience in the water and wastewater sector, including at DC Water.

Next, Mr. Pappastergion noted that Mr. Gulliver was likely known to some Board members; Mr. Gulliver showed a depth of knowledge about MWRA, with a career that began in the water and wastewater fields; highlighted Mr. Gulliver's vision for MWRA as discussed with the PSC, his well thought out presentation that indicated due diligence and consideration of where the Authority should be in terms of continuing former Executive Director Fred Laskey's legacy as well as MWRA's future steps, and a framework and timeline that Mr. Gulliver had laid out for what the Board could expect under his leadership, and for setting milestones and targets to assess his performance.

In conclusion, Mr. Pappastergion advised that his choice was to appoint Mr. Gulliver as the next MWRA Executive Director because of his forward vision; and he expressed confidence in Mr. Gulliver's ability to lead MWRA into the future.

Chair Tepper remarked on the value of Mr. Pappastergion's historical knowledge about MWRA and the Board of Directors to the PSC, his unique perspective, and the diverse viewpoints of the PSC members. She agreed that it was a well-orchestrated and thoughtful process that involved significant time, thought and discussion.

Board Member Wolowicz

Ms. Wolowicz echoed remarks about the well-conducted process and the positive experience working with Isaacson, Miller; noted that it was labor-intensive for the PSC members; and discussed the members' seriousness with respect to discussion and consideration of MWRA's present and future.

Ms. Wolowicz relayed that the world has changed over 25 years and that in her view, the MWRA was in a generational time of maintaining and fixing the system under Mr. Laskey's leadership; MWRA was now in a different space in time; and she was currently focused on the future. She recognized the importance of a strong and experienced leader to guide MWRA's mission and attend the needs of the communities and residents who depend on the Authority's services on a daily basis. She added that water and sewer services were sometimes taken for granted and noted the level of trust put into MWRA.

Next, Ms. Wolowicz noted the high quality of both finalists; how Mr. Gulliver's experience in public service and transportation infrastructure leadership brought a valuable perspective to the Executive Director position; explained that she was unfamiliar with either finalist prior to her participation in the PSC; and described her unique perspective as a resident of a town located further West.

Ms. Wolowicz relayed that she was very impressed by the materials that Mr. Gulliver presented in his interviews; and that MWRA now faces important responsibilities including maintaining as well as modernizing the critical infrastructure that protects the public health and environment, always exercising fiscal reasonability for ratepayers, and ensuring the long-term reliability and sustainably of MWRA's water and wastewater systems.

Ms. Wolowicz then advised that the Executive Director must be able to work collaboratively with the Board, staff, member communities and regional partners; provide strategic direction and accountability; serve as the public face of state-level interactions including the public and the players; and understand processes and channels.

Ms. Wolowicz also relayed that Mr. Gulliver demonstrated that history and those responsibilities; the Executive Director position required a commitment to serving the public interest and clear understanding of the challenges facing public agencies including climate change, where MWRA stands on those matters, and whether the MWRA would be part of that change, lead different things, and provide something more on the environmental side going forward. She affirmed that Mr. Gulliver demonstrated clarity on these matters during the PSC's questioning; expressed appreciation of the significance of appointing a new Executive Director and the responsibility the Board would entrust in the next leader. Finally, Ms. Wolowicz stated her support to select Mr. Gulliver for the position.

Board Member Swett

Mr. Swett noted that he had been part of a number of executive director hiring processes and found this PSC process to be the most rigorous and thoughtful process by far; described the dozens of hours spent by PSC members and the challenges and rewards of working on a matter of such significance; and thanked the PSC and Secretary Tepper for this responsibility.

Mr. Swett noted that thanks to the Isaacson, Miller team the PSC had the luxury of speaking and learning from a lot of very qualified applicants; thanked the candidates for putting themselves forward through a challenging, highly regulated selection process; and discussed the nine impressive individuals who took part in interviews, including the four highly talented semifinalists.

He explained that due to the large number of high-quality candidates, the PSC was able to make decisions that were not based simply on qualifications but also included consideration of who would be the right leader for this moment in time with respect to challenges and opportunities that MWRA faced;

two candidates, Messrs. Brown and Gulliver, met the moment and qualifications; and the Board was now in the position to really choose a leader going forward.

Mr. Swett acknowledged the importance of the candidates' depth and expertise and relayed that in his view MWRA was currently at a critical juncture and clearly building off of a very strong foundation, with a talented team, good built infrastructure and great stakeholder relationships; and, going forward MWRA's critical capital projects would need to be managed in a much more challenging environment than in version one; further, a number of these projects are very important to MWRA's success.

Mr. Swett added that the Authority's mission is currently under stress and increased attention, in particular with respect to climate change; the world is changing, and the MWRA must adapt and evolve how it addresses the needs of the community and members as well as the role this talented agency can play in helping the Commonwealth address its needs given the talent available; and that the pressure is on to continue to evolve.

He also advised that MWRA's work is more visible than ever with regards to stakeholder engagement, and while the Authority had been able to stay out of the limelight in a positive way for decades, every decision about MWRA's growth, infrastructure investments, and responsibilities to ratepayers in current member communities and the Commonwealth was getting more attention and would receive more attention going forward.

Next, Mr. Swett relayed that he appreciated getting to know the two excellent finalists; and while he was initially less familiar with Mr. Brown, he was very impressed with his crisis management and leadership abilities, which are critical to the MWRA Executive Director role.

Reiterating that both finalists were highly qualified, Mr. Swett indicated his preference to select Mr. Gulliver for the position, and discussed some reasons for his choice, including Mr. Gulliver's ability and demonstrated leadership in managing major capital projects in the Commonwealth, which were expected to become more complex and require the management of challenging procedures and procurement laws while also ensuring the efficient and effective use of capital funds over the next several decades; his greatly impressive strategic vision, command for details, and data-driven leadership approach; ability to deal with politics to get through decisions while also being driven by science in terms of where MWRA should go; demonstrated leadership of stakeholder engagements in Massachusetts; and impressive ability to help the Commonwealth talk through some challenging decisions.

Finally, Mr. Swett complemented the Isaacson, Miller team for its assistance with reference checks to ensure that the candidates presented to the PSC were represented through the lived experiences of their colleagues across key stakeholders in the Commonwealth and beyond, thanked the PSC team, and reiterated the importance of this decision.

Board Taverna

Mr. Taverna relayed that he spoke with each of the two finalists on Zoom and found both to be very qualified; he found that Mr. Gulliver knew Massachusetts and the players involved and understands MWRA and its mission; while Mr. Brown was not as familiar with Massachusetts, spoke in generalities, but he had a strong financial background and made good public presentations; Mr. Gulliver was strong in operations engineering and had a solid public vision; and Mr. Gulliver presented a specific approach

for recruiting and retaining employees that would benefit MWRA. Lastly, Mr. Taverna reiterated that both candidates were impressive and well-qualified, with mostly pros and very few cons, and advised that he was leaning toward selecting Mr. Gulliver because he is local to Massachusetts, checks all the necessary boxes, and has all the qualifications, including knowledge of MWRA issues including the Quabbin, CSOs and Deer Island.

Board Secretary Peña

Mr. Peña acknowledged the work the PSC team put into selecting the two finalists and the difficulty of their decisions; expressed gratitude to the PSC for recommending two final candidates who were, in his view, very different on paper; and noted that he had read through the information provided by Isaacson, Miller and was not swayed one way or another until after he had the opportunity to meet Messrs. Brown and Gulliver.

Mr. Peña then relayed that he would support the selection of Mr. Gulliver because as impressive as both candidates were, Mr. Gulliver's conversation showed that he was prepared, but not rehearsed; Mr. Gulliver demonstrated understanding of the Authority's challenges because of his 30 years of active involvement in service to the Commonwealth; and that he was particularly struck by Mr. Gulliver's passion for MWRA's success, which is also the Commonwealth's success.

Mr. Peña also described Mr. Gulliver's experience managing capital projects and how he brought the most relevant experience in that arena; and noted decades of capital construction ahead for MWRA, including for the Tunnel Redundancy and CSO Control Programs. He discussed Mr. Gulliver's record of leadership in a crisis, and his belief that Mr. Gulliver would be the best-equipped candidate in the event of an emergency at MWRA. Finally, Mr. Peña discussed his positive impression of Mr. Gulliver's plans for staff recruitment and retention and reiterated his support to appoint Mr. Gulliver after meeting with both finalists.

Board Member Patrick Walsh

Mr. Patrick Walsh relayed that he had the opportunity to speak with both finalists and was impressed with Mr. Brown's finance background, cleanup of the Potomac River, crisis management, and experience with tunnelling; Mr. Gulliver hit it out of the park because he dove into recruitment and retention matters, understood the construction world, and demonstrated knowledge and interest in Career and Technical Education programs. He also noted Mr. Gulliver's capital strategy with respect to MWRA's Tunnel and CSO programs, which would benefit MWRA's great financial position. Finally, Mr. Walsh expressed his support of Mr. Gulliver as the appointee for the Executive Director position.

Board Member Vitale

Mr. Vitale thanked the PSC and the Chair; agreed that the process was very well done; and expressed appreciation for the work of MWRA staff. He advised that he spoke with both finalists; in his view both were qualified for the MWRA Executive Director position; and he and Mr. Gulliver had discussed issues related to CSO Control, Deer Island, and the Quabbin. In conclusion, Mr. Vitale reiterated that both finalists were very well qualified and impressive, and expressed his support for appointing Mr. Gulliver as the next Executive Director.

Board Member Jack Walsh

Mr. Jack Walsh thanked the PSC and advised that he had reviewed the finalists' qualifications and materials provided by Isaacson, Miller, although he was unable to speak with Messrs. Brown and Gulliver. He explained that in his view both finalists were very capable of performing the Executive Director job; discussed Messrs. Brown's and Gulliver's talents and respective backgrounds in finance and construction; noted that he found the facilities managed by Mr. Brown to be smaller than MWRA's; and credited Mr. Gulliver's experience handling many jobs at different levels. Mr. Walsh then discussed Mr. Brown's current interim position at DC Water; noted the potential for Mr. Brown to apply to the full GM position; expressed slight concern about the number of jobs Mr. Gulliver has held; and praised Mr. Gulliver's construction background and qualifications. Finally, Mr. Walsh explained that he would not cast a vote until he had heard all Board members' viewpoints since he was not able to meet with the finalists directly.

Chair Tepper thanked Mr. Walsh for reviewing the materials and for joining the meeting to listen and share his perspectives.

Board Member Flanagan

Mr. Flanagan relayed that he thoroughly enjoyed speaking with Messrs. Brown and Gulliver; briefly discussed his own tenure on the Board representing Winthrop since 2012 , noting the importance of being involved in the day-to-day operations of the Town; and recognized points made by Board members so far. He noted that MWRA's accomplishments were a credit to the team, described former Executive Director Fred Laskey's confidence in staff's expertise during Board meetings as staff responded to Board questions; and added that he had advised both finalists that if selected as Executive Director, they would bring their own expertise and make necessary adjustments, however, in his view, the MWRA is not broken.

Next, Mr. Flanagan noted that when asked what would be some of the changes he would make as Executive Director, Mr. Gulliver responded that MWRA needed to sell itself better. He briefly described MWRA's early history ("four no more") with respect to public outcry about rate increases to fund infrastructure improvements and highlighted Mr. Gulliver's strong interest in public outreach such as for water supply and CSO matters.

Mr. Flanagan then described discussions that he had with four public works directors; noted Mr. Gulliver's approach to ratepayer outreach; and added that during his conversation, Mr. Gulliver had indicated that selecting and hiring qualified people usually leads to success, and that his team was part of the success for Mass Highway and Mass DOT.

In conclusion, Mr. Flanagan advised that he supported the recommendation of Mr. Gulliver to the Executive Director position; emphasized taking care of staff because staff took care of the Board and Executive Director including answering questions; reviewed Mr. Gulliver's qualifications including knowledge of the players and understanding of community construction impacts such as from road work; and encouraged Chair Tepper to have a further conversation with each finalist.

Chair Secretary Tepper

Chair Tepper advised that while both finalists for the MWRA Executive Director position were accomplished professionals who would be terrific in the role, in her view Mr. Gulliver was the candidate who would best serve MWRA, its member communities, and the Commonwealth at large at this time.

She relayed that in his interview Mr. Gulliver noted the impressive fiscal strength of the MWRA and its nationally recognized workforce performance and excellence; that Mr. Gulliver knew that MWRA is well run, the staff is great, and MWRA was also at an inflection point, with major capital projects to work on and the need to address climate adaptation and resilience while maintaining affordability; and Mr. Gulliver had talked about his vision for the Authority and emphasized the need for maintaining and building public trust and credibility.

The Chair reported that Mr. Gulliver's references emphasized his commitment to public safety and excellence in design and execution and described him as a relationship builder who is responsive to a wide array of stakeholders. She highlighted references' description of Mr. Gulliver as a leader who gets people to "yes" together and his ability to lead a large agency sometimes outside of its comfort zone and do what's right for the people of Massachusetts and the lands and the water that we steward.

Chair Tepper added that Mr. Gulliver also brought the perspective of a long-time Central Massachusetts resident who recognizes the opportunities that the MWRA has to serve the Commonwealth as a whole and expressed her belief that Mr. Gulliver was the right person at the right time to lead this agency.

Finally, the Chair noted Board consensus to select Mr. Gulliver as the next MWRA Executive Director and invited further discussion.

Mr. Pappastergion suggested that the Board members discuss the recommended term of Mr. Gulliver's contract, and Chair Tepper agreed.

The Board then noted former Executive Director Fred Laskey's contract term started at three years and was later increased to five years. There was general discussion with questions and answers, and MWRA General Counsel Carolyn Franciso Muprhy affirmed that the Enabling Act provides for a five-year cap on the Executive Director's term. After further discussion, the Board reached consensus on a three-year term, with the potential to lengthen it in the future.

Next, the Board members discussed Mr. Gulliver's recommended salary and the advertised annual salary range of $290,000 to $365,000, which Chair Tepper noted was considered below industry standard by many interviewees.

Mr. Pappastergion suggested that the Board give Chair Tepper the discretion to conduct contract negotiations with Mr. Gulliver, and the members expressed consensus.

There was discussion how the posted salary range was determined, the potential to adjust the Executive Director salary in the future, keeping the starting salary within the advertised range for fairness to the applicants and any interested parties who did not apply due to the posted salary, some reasons why the advertised range was below the average, and the need to take future steps to ensure that the MWRA Executive Director's salary is on par with the position's peers nationally.

There was further discussion about the Board's discretion to adjust the Executive Director's salary at future annual reviews and the Non-Union Managers Compensation Study. The members also discussed the wording of a motion to appoint Mr. Gulliver as the MWRA Executive Director and the need to discuss benefits such as vacation time and vehicle allowances during contract negotiations.

A motion was duly made and seconded to appoint Jonathan Gulliver to the position of Executive Director of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority for a term of three years, effective on a date to be determined by the Chair of the Board of Directors and contingent upon completion of background and screening requirements and execution of a contract of employment, and to further authorize the Chair, on behalf of the Authority, to negotiate and execute a contract of employment with Jonathan Gulliver providing for an annual salary within the range of $290,000 to $365,000 annually and other reasonable terms and conditions and finally for the Chair to provide an update to the Board of Directors at the next Board of Directors' meeting.

Hearing no further discussion or question from the Board, Chair Tepper requested a roll call vote in which the members were recorded as follows:

Yes	No	Abstain
Flanagan		
		Foti
Pappastergion		
Peña		
Swett		
Taverna		
Vitale		
J. Walsh		
P. Walsh		
Wolowicz		
Tepper		

(ref. I)

Closing Discussion

MWRA Advisory Board Executive Director Matt Romero expressed that the Advisory Board is excited about working with Mr. Gulliver in his new role; Mr. Taverna requested that the Board hold a meet-and-greet session with Mr. Gulliver, and Chair Tepper agreed; there was brief, general discussion about Mr. Gulliver's transition process; Mr. Pappastergion asked Chair Tepper to express the Board's appreciation to the Isaacson, Miller team; and Chair Tepper noted she would contact the finalists about this meeting's outcome.

Next, Mr. Estes-Smargiassi invited Board members to take a tour of the Deer Island Treatment Plant after this meeting, and Ms. MacDougall noted that flu shots were available.

Lastly, Mr. Vitale thanked MWRA Estes-Smargiassi for serving as Executive Director in the interim, and the Board echoed his remarks.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was duly made and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

A roll call vote was taken in which the members were recorded as follows:

Yes	No	Abstain
Flanagan		
Foti		
Pappastergion		
Peña		
Swett		
Taverna		
Vitale		
J. Walsh		
P. Walsh		
Wolowicz		
Tepper		

The meeting adjourned at 11:25am.

Approved: November 18, 2026

Attest: Kristin MacDougall for

Brian Peña, Secretary

LIST OF DOCUMENTS AND EXHIBITS USED

- Finalist Candidate Bios (ref. I)