MASSACHUSETTS WATER RESOURCES AUTHORITY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meeting of the Preliminary Screening Committee

May 18, 2026

A meeting of the Preliminary Screening Committee of the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) Board of Directors was held on May 18, 2026 remotely, via Webex.

Chair Tepper presided remotely. Committee Members Foti, Swett and Wolowicz participated remotely.

MWRA Executive Director Stephen-Estes Smargiassi, General Counsel Carolyn Francisco Murphy, Associate General Counsel Angela Atchue, Technical Support Manager Michael Curtis, and Assistant Secretary Kristin MacDougall attended remotely.

Jeff Kessner and Tatiana Oberkoetter of Isaacson, Miller also attended remotely.

Chair Tepper called the meeting to order at 4:02pm.

ROLL CALL

Assistant Secretary Kristin MacDougall took roll call of members in attendance, all of whom attended remotely. The Chair announced that the meeting was being held virtually, via a link posted on MWRA's website, and the agenda was also available on MWRA's website.

APPROVAL OF APRIL 9, 2026 COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

A motion was duly made and seconded to approve the minutes of the April 9, 2026 meeting of the Preliminary Screening Committee.

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

Yes	No	Abstain
Tepper		
Foti		
Swett		
Wolowicz		

(ref. I)

MEET WITH ISAACSON, MILLER; POSITION PROFILE AND SALARY RANGE (VOTE)

Position Profile

Isaacson, Miller Partner Jeff Kessner updated the Committee on the process of developing a draft position profile ("draft profile") for the MWRA Executive Director position including the completion of a series of helpful listening sessions to inform the draft profile conducted with stakeholders including Board members, Advisory Board staff, MWRA senior staff, the current and recently retired Executive Directors, union leadership and others.

Mr. Kessner noted that the MWRA General Counsel Francisco Murphy and some MWRA staff reviewed the draft profile for factual accuracy and suggested some minor, non-substantive edits. He requested

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 Committee's feedback on the draft profile and explained that its *Key Opportunities and Challenges for the Executive Director* section (p. 2-5) was expected to be of high interest to potential candidates.

Chair Tepper offered that the draft profile was well prepared and accurately captures the position's responsibilities and requirements. Messrs. Foti Swett agreed. Mr. Foti noted that the draft profile captured his discussion with Isaccson, Miller and believed it is what the Board is looking for.

In response to a question from Mr. Swett with respect to whether it should include further details regarding the Authority, Mr. Kessner referred the Committee to the draft profile's Appendix (p. 7-12), which describes MWRA's organization, initiatives and history (Appendix, p. 7-12). Mr. Swett reviewed the Appendix and indicated approval. There was brief, general discussion about the placement of the information in the Appendix. Mr. Swett suggested that maps of the service area be included in the profile, and the Chair agreed. Mr. Kessner requested Ms. Francisco Murphy's assistance with obtaining appropriate maps for the final profile.

With respect to the draft profile's *Qualifications and Characteristics for the Executive Director* section (p. 5-6), Ms. Wolowicz asked whether experience working with a unionized workforce should be preferred for the top position given that staff have such experience. Secretary Tepper commented on the benefit of such experience, Mr. Foti generally agreed and Mr. Kessner commented that he would not expect a candidate to self-select out of consideration due to that preference. Ms. Wolowicz added that she appreciated that what Mr. Laskey brought to the agency as a person was also captured in the draft profile. Mr. Swett asked about the requirement for "a person professionally skilled and experienced in law, finance, public works or public utility programs, or public administration with significant experience in wastewater pollution abatement," (p. 5). Ms. Francisco Murphy confirmed that such experience is in the Enabling Act and discussed the wastewater pollution abatement provision.

<u>Salary Range</u>

Noting that she had reviewed salaries for the leaders of comparable Massachusetts public agencies such as Mass Development and Mass Tech, Chair Tepper advised that her general view is that the pay range for MWRA's recently retired Executive Director Fred Laskey ($160,000-$320,000) was markedly low in comparison and suggested a salary range of $290,000-$365,000 for the MWRA Executive Director position. Chair Tepper invited discussion. Mr. Foti noted that this made sense and that the prior low end of the salary range was too low. Ms. Wolowicz remarked that she thought the proposed range looked good. After discussion about Mr. Laskey's salary and those of leaders at other comparable organizations, the Committee reached a consensus to recommend a range of $290,000-$365,000 to the MWRA Board of Directors for approval.

A motion was duly made and seconded to recommend approval of the draft profile, and a salary range of $290,000-$365,000 for the MWRA Executive Director position.

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

<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Tepper		
Foti		
Swett		

Yes	No	Abstain
Wolowicz		

Next Steps
Mr. Kessler outlined the next steps of the Executive Director position profile process, including the Isaacson, Miller's incorporation of edits, distribution of the final profile to the full Board for review and, subject to Board approval, going live into the market with the profile.

Isaacson, Miller Managing Associate Tatiana Oberkoetter briefly reviewed progress on the draft work plan as of May 2026 and outlined upcoming milestones including presentation of the draft profile and updated Executive Director salary range to the MWRA Board for approval; narrowing the field; the first and second presentation of candidates; and the introduction of finalists to Board members. Chair Tepper and Mr. Foti expressed approval for this plan.

Mr. Swett discussed the planned networking and outreach schedule and approach, and requested the Isaacson, Miller team's general thoughts on the potential candidate pool. Mr. Kessler relayed that the candidate pool is expected to include qualified candidates in a wide range of positions who would meet the profile's requirements. Mr. Kessler also noted that he is encouraged by MWRA's stellar reputation and that this position is a good opportunity to lead a strong organization into its next chapter.

Ms. Wolowicz requested more information about where the position profile would be advertised. Mr. Kessler explained that it would be posted on Isaacson, Miller's website and shared among its networks, and encouraged Committee members and MWRA staff to do the same. Ms. Wolowicz recommended advertising the position with the Massachusetts Municipal Association. Mr. Kessler agreed and noted that Ms. Francisco Murphy had also recommended some sites. Mr. Kessner noted that the firm will be actively recruiting and that everyone with whom they spoke was asked for potential candidates and sources of candidates. Ms. Wolowicz asked if Stephen Estes-Smagiassi, MWRA Executive Director serving in the interim, had been consulted about the position profile. Mr. Estes-Smargiassi responded in the affirmative and noted that he would like to share the profile with his professional network contacts. Mr. Kessler requested that Committee members and MWRA staff forward any contacts or networks to Isaacson, Miller staff, who would perform outreach. (ref. II)

OTHER BUSINESS
There was brief discussion about the agenda for the May 20, 2026 Board of Directors meeting, noting that the draft profile and recommended salary range would be presented for approval.

ADJOURNMENT
Hearing no further discussion or questions from the Committee Chair Tepper requested a motion to adjourn.

A motion was duly made and seconded to adjourn.

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

Yes	No	Abstain
Tepper		

Yes	No	Abstain
Foti		
Swett		
Wolowicz		

(ref. III)

The meeting adjourned at 4:33pm.

Approved: July 8, 2026

Attest: Kristin MacDougall

Kristin MacDougall, Assistant Secretary

LIST OF DOCUMENTS AND EXHIBITS USED

- Draft Minutes of the 4/9/26 Preliminary Screening Committee Meeting (ref. I)
- 5/18/26 Draft Profile prepared by Isaacson, Miller (ref. II)
- 5/18/26 Isaacson, Miller Presentation – Draft Work Plan (ref. II)