M E M O R A N D U M

EUGENE WATER & ELECTRIC BOARD

Rely on us.

TO: Commissioners Carlson, Barofsky, McRae, Schlossberg, and Brown

FROM: Rod Price, Assistant General Manager; Kelly Hoell, Climate Policy Analyst/Advisor

DATE: June 14, 2023

SUBJECT: Work Session for Development of DEI Policy for EWEB

OBJECTIVE: Information

Issue

Based on Board discussions started in 2022, and in support of 2023 Organizational Goal #2 Workforce and Culture (see below), Commissioners and Management wish to develop a guiding Board Policy focused on issues of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

In support of 2023 Organizational Goal 2, Commissioners and staff wish to develop a guiding DEI Board-level Policy. EWEB's 2023 Goal 2 states: "***Workforce and Culture:*** *Build and inspire a workforce and a workplace culture to fulfill ongoing business obligations and strategic initiatives in alignment with our organizational values by…. working with the Board of Commissioners to develop and deploy policies that will weave **principles of DEI** (diversity, equity, and inclusion) and resiliency into our work.*"

Background

Under Strategic Direction Board Policy #1 (SD1), Mission, Vision, Values and Legacy, EWEB defines its five organizational values: Safe, Reliable, Affordable, Environmental, and Community/Culture. (last updated Oct 5, 2021)

The Community/Culture value is defined as: "We value a culture of intentional actions and outcomes, continuous improvement, diverse perspectives, that is trustworthy, respectful, equitable, and inclusive to employees and community members. We are dedicated to our public service, professions, local governance, and commitment to serve our community honestly and with integrity."

In 2021, as part of Commissioners' annual policy review, along with work on revisions to SD15 Climate Change policy, it was recognized that "equity considerations" were not included within EWEB Board policy. Simultaneously, beginning in the second half of 2021, EWEB management engaged in facilitated discussions of what diversity, equity, and inclusion could mean to the organization. Consistent with best practice, it was determined that diversity, equity, and inclusion are interrelated and should be considered holistically.

In pursuit of the 2023 Organizational Goal 2, the Board has been reviewing information and in Board meetings to help develop a DEI policy. For the March 7, 2023 Regular Board meeting, Management submitted a correspondence memo providing details on EWEB's many years of participation in the Equity and Community Consortium (ECC) and the ECC's objectives and focus areas.

For the April 4, 2023 Regular Board meeting, Management submitted a correspondence memo providing details on individual interviews with each Commissioner about EWEB's ongoing effort to create a DEI policy.

The April 18, 2023 Work Session focused on 4 elements:

1. Describe the commitments and actions EWEB has engaged in to this date to support DEI.
2. Provide statements from other entities as examples of policies or information that informs the creation of policies.
3. Facilitate a discussion:
   a. What did you notice about the example statements? What struck you? What components did you think relate most to EWEB?
   b. Why does DEI matter to EWEB? What is the business case for doing this work?
4. Roadmap for DEI work
   a. Phase 1 – through August 2023: work with a local strategy consultant to gain insight into concepts, role of governance in DEI, clarity of why this work matters to EWEB and our communities.
   b. Phase 2 – through December 2023: Develop and adopt DEI Board-Level Policy.
   c. Phase 3 – calendar year 2024: beyond the introductory level, working with a DEI specialty consulting firm for the adoption of policies, evaluation methods and metrics.

Discussion

During the April 18th work session, the Board expressed a desire to understand why EWEB would be investing in DEI policy as well as requesting a training focused on understanding DEI related terms concepts before reviewing specific DEI policy language. Staff have contracted a local consultant with experience helping public and private Boards explore DEI and related policy issues.

This work session will offer an Introduction to DEI training. The agenda for the training will include:
- Review the purpose of DEI work at EWEB.
- Provide a short glossary of DEI related terms.
- Discuss how aspects of identity and experience reflect diversity.
- Discuss discrimination using "Levels of Racism" framework (Attachment A) as an example.
- Discuss how different aspects of identity and experience might impact how people interact with the EWEB Board of Commissioners, such as via public comment.
- Discuss how intentional inclusion supports the work of the Board of Commissioners and the mission of EWEB.

Recommendation/Requested Board Action

Commissioner concurrence or input regarding the proposed goals and information as outlined in this correspondence is requested.

Attachment A: *WHAT IS RACIAL EQUITY? UNDERSTANDING KEY CONCEPTS RELATED TO RACE* (This information comes directly from www.raceforward.org.)

WHAT IS RACIAL EQUITY?

UNDERSTANDING KEY CONCEPTS RELATED TO RACE

"Racial equity is about applying justice and a little bit of common sense to a system that's been out of balance. When a system is out of balance, people of color feel the impacts most acutely, but to be clear, an imbalanced system makes all of us pay."

~ Glenn Harris, President, Race Forward and Publisher, Colorlines

Learn about racial equity, other race-related terms and concepts, and how they relate and differ to one another with the following definitions, comparisons, and examples provided in this primer. For a deeper understanding and to learn how to apply this knowledge, attend one of our trainings.

Key Terms and Concepts:

RACIAL EQUITY AND RACIAL JUSTICE   DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION   EQUITY AND EQUALITY

RACIAL BIAS   RACIALLY EQUITABLE ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

What is the difference between Racial Equity and Racial Justice?

Racial Justice is a vision and transformation of society to eliminate racial hierarchies and advance collective liberation, where Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders, in particular, have the dignity, resources, power, and self-determination to fully thrive.

Racial equity is a process of eliminating racial disparities and improving outcomes for everyone. It is the intentional and continual practice of changing policies, practices, systems, and structures by prioritizing measurable change in the lives of people of color.

Distinction between Racial Equity and Racial Justice: Racial equity is the process for moving towards the vision of racial justice. Racial equity seeks measurable milestones and outcomes that can be achieved on the road to racial justice. Racial equity is necessary, but not sufficient, for racial justice.

The chart below provides definitions and distinctions between other key terms and concepts related to Race.

Diversity and Inclusion

Diversity	Inclusion
A variety of racial identities or characteristics (e.g. African Americans, Native Americans, Latinx). Diversity is a quantitative measure of representation.	The measure of the quality of representation, such as full access, authentic representation, empowered participation, true belonging and power-sharing. Inclusion is a qualitative measure of representation and participation.

Distinction between Diversity and Inclusion

You can have diversity without inclusion (e.g. tokenism, assimilation). You can't have inclusion without diversity. Focusing on inclusion gets you further than just focusing on diversity.

Equity and Equality

Equity
Ensures that outcomes in the conditions of well-being are improved for marginalized groups, lifting outcomes for all. Equity is a measure of justice.

Equality
Is sameness; everyone gets the same thing. Equality focuses on everyone getting the same opportunity, but often ignores the realities of historical exclusion and power differentials among whites and other racialized groups.

Distinction Between Equity and Equality

Equality uses the same strategies for everyone, but because people are situated differently, they are not likely to get to the same outcomes. Equity uses differentiated and targeted strategies to address different needs and to get to fair outcomes. Equality-focused strategies don't work for, or benefit, everyone – e.g. teaching everyone the same way does not work for different kinds of learners—each must be taught the appropriate way for them. Using targeted or differentiated strategies to achieve universal goals is referred to as "targeted universalism."

Note: You can have diversity (variety), but not equity (fairness). For example, you may have a diverse classroom or school, but if mostly white students are in the advanced classes, while kids of color are mostly placed into remedial classes and face disproportionate suspensions, you don't have equity. Focusing on diversity, without addressing equity, can be superficial and problematic. Centering equity can benefit everyone.

Racial Bias

Explicit Racial Bias / Conscious Bias
Conscious attitudes and beliefs about a person or group; also known as overt and intentional racial bias.

Implicit Racial Bias / Unconscious Bias
Attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, decisions and actions in an unconscious manner.

Individual Racial Bias
Bias by individuals. But if the individual is acting in an institutional capacity (e.g. a teacher or a police officer) their individual bias is also a manifestation of institutional bias.

Institutional Racial Bias
Bias by institutions—such as patterns, practices, policies, or cultural norms that advantage or disadvantage people of color.

Debiasing Strategies
Interventions to eliminate, mitigate or prevent bias are often focused on the individual level, rather than at the institutional level, where interventions are most needed. Debiasing strategies focused on individual change (e.g. "just be aware of your bias)," have dubious impacts and success. Debiasing strategies focused at the institutional levels can help prevent and remove opportunities for bias by instituting practices, policies, and protocols that require institutional actors to address institutional racism.

What are the Different Levels of Racism?

The "Different Levels of Racism" Framework is an analytical tool for unpacking different types of racism that are often interacting and operating simultaneously. It is helpful to distinguish between individual and systemic racism in order to focus needed and distinct attention, analysis, and strategies on institutional and structural racism. It points toward needed systemic change-focused strategies which address root causes and can result in more transformative and lasting change. We need to invest more in institutional and structural change strategies to get to racial justice. Strategies to address individual racism are not sufficient for dismantling structural racism.

Individual racism includes internalized and interpersonal racism.

Internalized racism lies *within individuals*. These are private beliefs and biases about race that reside inside our own minds and bodies. For White people, this can be internalized privilege, entitlement, and superiority; for people of color, this can be internalized oppression. Examples: prejudice, xenophobia, conscious and unconscious bias about race, influenced by the white supremacy.

Interpersonal Racism occurs *between individuals*. Bias, bigotry, and discrimination based on race. Once we bring our private beliefs about race into our interactions with others, we are now in the interpersonal realm. Examples: public expressions of prejudice and hate, microaggressions, bias and bigotry between individuals.

Systemic Racism includes institutional and structural racism.

Institutional racism occurs *within institutions*. It involves unjust policies, practices, procedures, and outcomes that work better for White people than people of color, whether intentional or not. Example: A school district that concentrates students of color in the most overcrowded, under-funded schools with the least experienced teachers.

Structural racism is racial inequities *across* institutions, policies, social structures, history, and culture. Structural racism highlights how racism operates as a system of power with multiple interconnected, reinforcing, and self-perpetuating components which result in racial inequities across all indicators for success. Structural racism is the racial inequity that is deeply rooted and embedded in our history and culture and our economic, political, and legal systems. Examples: The "racial wealth gap," where Whites have many times the wealth of people of color, resulting from the history and current reality of institutional racism in multiple systems.

Imagine two neighborhoods.

In one neighborhood is a family of four, the Smiths. The Smiths' neighborhood is stagnating, with abandoned homes, poor schools, and over-policing. Most of their neighbors, including themselves, are people of color.

In the adjoining neighborhood is another family of four, the Jones. The Jones' neighborhood has plenty of fresh food markets, a robust bus system, parks, health centers and good schools. Families flock there because all these services translate to economic opportunity and good health. Most of the families who live in this neighborhood, including the Jones, are White.

The racial composition of their neighborhoods did not just happen on their own. Who lives in which neighborhood and whether that neighborhood has decent housing, good schools, and well-paying jobs is determined by multiple, institutional policies and practices. Whether intentionally or not, these policies and practices have often discriminated by race, which is why we see so much difference in life outcomes based on race.

For example, in King County, Washington, there is a 10-year life expectancy difference between zip codes where residents are predominantly White and zip codes where residents are predominantly people of color.

We call this reality structural racial inequity.

Elements of Racially Equitable Organizational Change

The movement of an organization from one state to another involves many facets such as shifting power, changing policies and practices, and transforming values and culture. Race Forward and its core program, the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), uses a model of organizational change that includes four key components:

Visioning involves building *shared values* that move us towards a vision for racial justice.

Normalizing involves building *shared understanding* through ongoing conversations about the history of race, using common definitions and key concepts, such as racial equity and inequity; racial justice; structural, institutional, interpersonal, and internalized racism; and implicit and explicit bias, that help to center racial equity and people of color through an intersectional and inclusive framework.

Operationalizing involves building *shared relationships* within and across the breadth (all functions) and depth (up and down hierarchy) of organizations and sectors to shift power to advance transformative and equitable systems' change. Together, this changes the norms, practices, culture, and habits of thoughts within an organization and the outcomes produced by the organization.

Organizing to achieve racial equity, including across the breadth (all functions) and depth (up and down hierarchy) of an organization. Together this changes the norms, practices, culture, and habits of thoughts within an organization and the outcomes produced by the organization. Organizing involves building *shared relationships* within and across organizations and sectors to shift power to advance transformative and equitable systems' change.