



Our Region's Trusted Water Leader
San Diego County Water Authority

4677 Overland Avenue, San Diego, CA 92123

News Release

Media Contact:

Mike Lee
(858) 522-6703 office
(760) 208-0588 cell
mlee@sdewa.org

Nov. 15, 2019

Sandra L. Kerl Finalist for Water Authority GM Post

Board officers start contract negotiations for full Board vote on Nov. 21

The Board officers of the San Diego County Water Authority announced today that they are negotiating contract terms with Sandra L. Kerl to be the next general manager of the region's wholesale water agency, following a months-long national search. The contract would be voted on in open session during the regular Board meeting scheduled for 2:30 p.m. on Nov. 21 at Water Authority headquarters.

"We are excited about what Sandy brings to the Water Authority – deep experience with water issues and her top-notch skills managing an agency that's so critical to San Diego County," said Board Chair Jim Madaffer. "Sandy has the knowledge, temperament and vision to begin a new, collaborative era of extraordinary achievements for our agency and our region."

The Water Authority hired the executive search firm William Avery & Associates to manage the recruitment and selection process to fill the position vacated in March by the retirement of longtime General Manager Maureen Stapleton. Thirty-two applications were received, with six candidates being interviewed by a panel of civic, business, and community stakeholders. The process included a vetting of finalists by the Water Authority's 36-member Board of Directors, representing 24 member agencies across San Diego County.

"We had a long and transparent process that brought out the best – and I'm thankful for the extra effort by our Board and civic leaders," said Vice Chair Gary Croucher. "We are thrilled that Sandy is the finalist and we hope to conclude a contract with her in the next week for a vote by the Board."

“This was a thoughtful, exhaustive effort that attracted interest from across the country,” said Board Secretary Christy Guerin. “I’m confident that Sandy is the right person for the job and eager to begin working with her in her new role.”

Kerl has served as the agency’s acting general manager since Stapleton’s departure, working closely with the Board to lead a staff of approximately 250 employees at offices in Kearny Mesa, Escondido, Imperial Valley and Sacramento. Kerl has more than 25 years of progressively responsible experience in all aspects of municipal management, including the past decade at the Water Authority. Before joining the Water Authority as deputy general manager in November 2009, Kerl served as city manager of La Mesa.

During her years at the Water Authority, Kerl played a pivotal role in securing financing for the nation’s largest seawater desalination plant, which started commercial operations in Carlsbad in 2015 and produces approximately 50 million gallons of water a day for the San Diego region. As acting general manager, Kerl has launched an era of increased engagement with the Water Authority’s 24 member agencies. She took a similar approach with staff, issuing the first agency-wide employee survey and using the results to focus on areas of improvement.

Throughout Kerl’s career, she has been active in the International County Management Association, and has served as chair of the San Diego City/County Managers Association and San Diego Regional Training Center. Kerl received her Bachelor of Political Science from California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo and her Master of Business Administration from the University of Redlands.

###

The San Diego County Water Authority sustains a \$231 billion regional economy and the quality of life for 3.3 million residents through a multi-decade water supply diversification plan, major infrastructure investments and forward-thinking policies that promote fiscal and environmental responsibility. A public agency created in 1944, the Water Authority delivers wholesale water supplies to 24 retail water providers, including cities, special districts and a military base.



Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/sdcwa>



[@sdcwa](http://www.twitter.com/sdcwa)



<http://www.facebook.com/SanDiegoCountyWaterAuthority>



<http://www.youtube.com/SDCWAvideo>