

METROPOLITAN WATER RECLAMATION DISTRICT OF GREATER CHICAGO
2024 ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
CIVIL SERVICE BOARD

The Civil Service Board ("Board") held twelve regular meetings and no special meetings during 2024. Three members served on the Board. John S. Kendall served as Chair from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024. John Kendall's term expires January 31, 2026. Karina Ayala-Bermejo served as Vice Chair from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024. Karina Ayala-Bermejo's term expires January 31, 2028. Donald J. Storino served as Secretary from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024. Donald Storino's term expires January 31, 2030.

At its regular meetings, the Board ratified 389 requests for leaves of absence.

During 2024, the District filed termination charges against eight employees. Of those eight discharge actions, two employees entered into Stipulations with the District, one employee resigned, and five employees remain on suspension with their cases pending before the Board. Details of these cases are as follows:

- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in March 2024 for not possessing a valid Illinois driver's license as required for the Maintenance Laborer Class B classification. Charges were filed in April 2024. The employee entered into a Stipulation with the District and was reinstated. This case remains pending before the Board to monitor the employee's compliance with the Stipulation.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in March 2024 for leaving the plant without authorization or prior approval on multiple occasions. Charges were filed in April 2024. This case proceeded to hearing before the Board. The hearing concluded in November 2024 and is pending a decision by the Board.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in August 2024 for failing to maintain the minimum standard of performance. Charges were filed in September 2024. This case is currently pending before the Board.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in August 2024 as a result of an investigation by the Office of the Independent Inspector General (OIIG) determining the employee engaged in fraud with respect to a federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan. Charges were filed in August 2024. The employee retired effective November 16, 2024.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in August 2024 as a result of an investigation by the Office of the Independent Inspector General (OIIG) determining the employee engaged in fraud with respect to a federal Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan. Charges were filed in September 2024. This case is currently pending before the Board.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in September 2024 for being absent without leave (AWOL) from his District employment continuously since March 2024 and failing to attend investigatory pre-disciplinary meetings. Charges were filed in October 2024. This case is currently pending before the Board.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in September 2024 for not possessing a valid Illinois driver's license as required for the Maintenance Laborer Class

A classification. Charges were filed in October 2024. The employee entered into a Stipulation with the District and was reinstated. This case is currently pending before the Board to monitor the employee's compliance with the Stipulation.

- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in December 2024 for being absent without leave (AWOL) from his District employment continuously since June 2024 and failing to attend investigatory pre-disciplinary meetings. Charges were filed in December 2024. This case is currently pending before the Board.

One discharge case was carried over from 2020 and three discharge cases were carried over from 2023. In the 2020 case, the employee returned to work pursuant to an Agreed Order and Stipulation, but he has since been on ordinary disability and has not satisfied the terms of the Stipulation. In the 2023 cases, one employee resigned, and two employees were discharged. Details of these cases are as follows:

2020 Discharge Case

- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in November 2020 for being absent without leave. Charges were filed in December 2020. The employee entered into a Stipulation with the District and was reinstated. The employee has since been on ordinary disability. The employee's compliance with the Stipulation will be assessed upon his return to work.

2023 Discharge Cases

- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in December 2022 for being under the influence of marijuana while at work, possessing a loaded firearm, failing to comply with orders of the District Police, and resisting a Police Officer. Charges were filed in January 2023. This case proceeded to hearing before the Board. The Board issued a written decision on March 20, 2024 discharging the employee.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in October 2023 for failing to maintain the minimum standard of performance. Charges were filed in October 2023. The employee entered into a Stipulation with the District and was reinstated. Pursuant to the Stipulation and Agreed Order, the employee resigned on June 28, 2024.
- The District suspended one employee pending discharge in October 2023 for being absent without leave on multiple occasions. Charges were filed in November 2023. This case proceeded to hearing before the Board. The Board issued a written decision on February 21, 2024 discharging the employee.

In 2024, eight employees filed a total of eleven appeals with the Board in which they challenged some action regarding their employment. Six of these appeals are currently pending. The details of these appeals are as follows:

- One employee appealed a 1-day suspension. This appeal proceeded to hearing before the Board. On June 12, 2024, the Board rendered a decision denying the appeal.
- One employee appealed her performance review. This appeal is currently pending before the Board.
- One employee appealed the omission of her name from a promotional list. This appeal proceeded to hearing before the Board. On May 22, 2024, the Board rendered a decision

denying the appeal. On June 11, 2024, the employee filed a petition for rehearing. The Board denied the petition for rehearing on July 17, 2024.

- One employee appealed his performance review. This appeal is currently pending before the Board.
- One employee appealed a 3-day suspension. This employee resigned on November 5, 2024.
- One employee appealed his performance review. This employee resigned on November 5, 2024.
- A former employee attempted to appeal his performance evaluation after resigning. The District filed a motion to dismiss, which the Board granted determining it did not have jurisdiction over the appeal.
- One employee appealed a 30-day suspension. This appeal is currently pending before the Board.
- One employee appealed a written warning. This appeal is currently pending before the Board.
- One employee appealed his performance review. This appeal is currently pending before the Board.
- One employee appealed a 30-day suspension. This appeal is currently pending before the Board.

Eight appeals to the Board were carried over from 2023. One of these appeals is still pending. Details of these appeals are as follows:

- One employee appealed the District's denial of the employee's request to rescind her resignation. This case proceeded to argument before the Board. The Board denied this appeal.
- One employee appealed her performance review. This employee withdrew her appeal.
- One employee appealed her performance review. The employee withdrew her appeal as part of a Stipulation she entered into with the District.
- One employee appealed his performance review. This appeal is currently pending before the Board.
- One employee appealed a 3-day suspension he received in August 2023 for inappropriate conduct towards a co-worker. This case proceeded to hearing before the Board. On September 11, 2024, the Board rendered a decision denying this appeal. The employee filed a petition for rehearing, which the Board denied on November 20, 2024.
- One employee appealed the qualifications of other candidates on an eligible list. This employee withdrew his appeal.
- One employee appealed his timecoding. This appeal proceeded to hearing before the Board. On June 12, 2024, the Board rendered a decision denying this appeal. The employee filed a petition for rehearing, which the Board denied on July 17, 2024.
- One employee appealed her performance review. This appeal proceeded to hearing before the Board. The Board granted the District's motion for a directed verdict and denied the appeal.

The District presented and requested the Board's approval of six Amendments to the District's Classification Plan and Lines of Promotion. The Board approved these proposed Amendments. There were no Amendments to the Personnel Rules.

John S. Kendall

John S. Kendall
Chair of the Civil Service Board