



CITY HALL
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012

Date: May 16, 2025

To: The Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
Attn: Councilmember Nazarian, Chair, Energy and Environment Committee

From: Office of Public Accountability – Citizens Committee for the Selection of the Executive Director

Subject: **SELECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CANDIDATE**

RECOMMENDATION

That the Mayor and the City Council confirm the appointment of Tim O'Connor to serve as the Executive Director of the Office of Public Accountability for a five-year term.

SUMMARY

On April 28, 2025, the Office of Public Accountability (OPA) - Citizens Committee (Committee) for the Selection of the Executive Director unanimously selected Tim O'Connor to serve as the Executive Director of the OPA for a five-year term, subject to confirmation by the Mayor and the City Council.

Mr. O'Connor has over 25 years of experience in utility investment planning, decarbonization strategies, clean technologies and capital, sustainable design/operation and alternative transportation and fuels. In addition, Mr. O'Connor has extensive experience in utility rate design, having worked on electric and gas rate-setting proceedings before the California Public Utilities Commission on behalf of a non-governmental organization. He has expertise in, and has taught, California environmental law and policy, including emerging issues in California water systems and management.

Mr. O'Connor currently works with Deloitte Consulting, leading its Power, Utilities, and Renewable Energy engagements within the firm's Sustainability Strategy and Transactions Commercial Practice. Prior to this role, he served as Senior Attorney and Senior Director for the Environmental Defense Fund managing its California Energy and Climate Programs, and

national Zero Emissions Vehicles and Building Electrification Programs. Mr. O'Connor has also served as a visiting Professor for Pitzer College lecturing in related fields, and compliance inspector of energy and wastewater facilities in northern California.

In terms of educational background, Mr. O'Connor holds a Juris Doctor in Environmental Law & Public Interest Law from Golden Gate University, School of Law, and a Master of Environmental Management with a concentration in Toxicology, Chemistry, and Risk Management from Duke University. Mr. O'Connor holds multiple certifications in sustainability related to accounting and business management, and received a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Studies from the University of Oregon (refer to the attached Resume).

Mr. O'Connor is a native Angeleno who resides in the City of Los Angeles with his family.

If confirmed, Mr. O'Connor will replace Frederick H. Pickel, Ph.D. (Dr. Pickel), the first Executive Director of the OPA, who retired in April 2025. Dr. Pickel was instrumental in defining the Office and its role in City government. He retired after serving two consecutive terms.

BACKGROUND

Charter Amendment I

Charter Amendment I, approved by the voters on March 8, 2011, is codified in Section 683 of the City Charter. The Charter Amendment established the OPA to provide public independent analysis of Department of Water and Power (DWP) actions associated with water and electricity rates and operations. The Charter Amendment also requires the OPA to maintain a Ratepayer Advocate function.

Charter Amendment I states that the OPA is to be headed by an Executive Director who is selected by a Citizens Committee and confirmed by the Mayor and City Council. The Charter Amendment provides that the Executive Director shall be appointed to a five-year term and conduct a variety of Charter-listed duties related to the operation of the OPA.

Under the OPA's "operations" Ordinance, the Executive Director has the discretion to make recommendations on ways to improve the reasonableness and transparency of DWP policies and rates. In addition, the Ordinance grants the Executive Director the discretion to audit individual ratepayer cases and obtain customer data to assess DWP customer service performance. The Ordinance is codified in Los Angeles Administrative Code Section 23.144.

Citizens Committee Panel

As prescribed in the City Charter and Administrative Code, the Citizens Committee consisted of five members as follows:

- Two Mayoral Appointees – Both appointed on October 30, 2023:
 - John Murray, Jr.
 - Corissa Hernandez
- Two Council President Appointees – Appointed on September 28, 2023 and August 25, 2023, respectively:

- Michael Mahdesian
- David Nahai
- One Appointee from the Chair of the Energy and Environment Committee – Appointed on April 18, 2023:
 - Caryn Mandlebaum

The Committee was provided administrative support by the Office of the Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA), the City Administrative Officer (CAO), the Personnel Department and the City Attorney. These Offices ensured comprehensive assistance for the Committee and adherence to City procedural requirements throughout the selection process. The Personnel Department was the primary administrator of the executive search process which included collaboration and management of the selected executive search firm.

Upon appointment of the Committee, representatives from these Offices met with the members to provide background information about the OPA, guidance regarding the Brown Act, ethics requirements and conflicts of interest standards.

Committee Meetings

The Committee first met in public on January 31, 2024, and concluded its selection on April 28, 2025. Over the course of this period, a total of 20 public meetings were held where public input was solicited to assist the process.

The first several Committee meetings consisted of presentations regarding the DWP and the duties and responsibilities of the OPA. The presentations were provided by the CLA, the CAO, the City Attorney; including the current and past DWP General Manager(s) and the President of the Board of Water and Power Commissioners. Dr. Pickel also provided testimony about the OPA's operations and workplan.

Community Stakeholder Input

The Citizens Committee held a special meeting at Grace E. Simons Lodge in November 2024 to solicit input from stakeholders, neighborhood organizations and the public to help guide the Committee in identifying key qualities for the Executive Director search. Public speakers at the meeting emphasized the importance of a strong financial background, experience as a ratepayer advocate and expertise in clean energy initiatives.

To further promote transparency and public access to its activities, the Committee established a website—OPACSC.lacity.gov—where all agendas, presentations, and other related materials were made available to the public. The website also facilitated the submittal of electronic communications from the public wishing to provide input.

Procurement of Professional Services – Korn Ferry

After thorough review of this information and acknowledgment of the specialized function of the Executive Director, the Committee requested the Personnel Department to procure an executive search firm to aid in the selection process. As such, the Personnel Department conducted a four month competitive solicitation(s) process to find a firm with relevant expertise in the utility sector to meet the Committee's needs.

Upon conclusion of the final solicitation, the Committee and Personnel Department selected the executive search firm Korn Ferry. The firm was selected given its utility sector expertise, ability to conduct an immediate and comprehensive search; and attract a highly qualified and diverse candidate pool for the OPA position. The firm had previously conducted the search for the current General Manager of the DWP.

Thereafter, Korn Ferry began its work with the Committee in earnest in September 2024. It presented its strategic plan to meet the Committee's search objectives and a timeline for presenting qualified candidates. Korn Ferry also worked with the Committee on the development of position specifications, recruitment brochure language and candidate sourcing strategies.

Citizens Committee Evaluation Process

Korn Ferry conducted an extensive nationwide recruitment effort which included posting/advertising with utility-oriented organizations, advocacy groups and general employment sites. This effort also included targeted outreach to potential applicants with relevant utility experience and executive leadership backgrounds within Korn Ferry's resource pool.

At the close of the application period in late 2024, Korn Ferry provided the Citizens Committee with a slate of twelve highly qualified candidates, and a list of additional potential candidates. The Citizens Committee reviewed all highly qualified candidates and decided to interview nine candidates from the slate.

In early 2025, the Committee initiated two rounds of confidential interviews in closed session to thoroughly vet the candidates. The first round of interviews consisted of 50-minute sessions with each candidate where the Committee queried their knowledge of utility operations, rate design and related subjects. The second round of interviews, administered in March 2025, involved intense 90-minute sessions with the top candidates; including the evaluation of reports prepared by the candidates, under strict deadline, on various OPA-related issues and challenges.

The candidate review and interview process was managed in a manner consistent with the practices and procedures employed by the Personnel Department for executive level recruitment matters.

Citizens Committee Selection

After this comprehensive search and rigorous interview process, the Citizens Committee selected Tim O'Connor as the most qualified candidate to serve as the Executive Director of the OPA; and to ensure the interests of the City and ratepayers are upheld. Mr. O'Connor has demonstrated a strong commitment to balancing stakeholder interests while ensuring fiscal accountability in complex utility operations. The Citizens Committee urges the Mayor and the City Council to confirm the appointment of Tim O'Connor for a five-year term.

John W. Murray, Jr

John Murray, Jr.
Chair, Citizens Committee

David Nahai

David Nahai
Vice-Chair, Citizens Committee

Corissa Hernandez
Member, Citizens Committee

Michael Mahdesian
Member, Citizens Committee

Caryn Mandelbaum
Member, Citizens Committee

Attachment - Tim O'Connor Resume

TIM O'CONNOR

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ABOUT ME

- Data and evidence-driven energy and accountability expert with over 25 years of experience developing and advocating for balanced and pragmatic solutions to complex societal challenges.
- Los Angeles native who successfully built teams across world-class private, government, and non-profit sectors to execute energy, climate and sustainability related strategy.
- Extensive expertise in utility investment planning, decarbonization strategies, emerging clean technologies, green building design and operation, transportation fuels and vehicles.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Specialist Leader, Sustainability Strategy and Transformation

Deloitte Consulting, Los Angeles, CA (April 2022 – Present)

- Leading Deloitte's Power, Utilities, and Renewable Energy engagements within the firm's Sustainability Strategy and Transactions Commercial Practice.
- Design and execution of strategies for net-zero roadmaps, advanced metering systems, water and energy efficiency, renewable natural gas, sustainability for the 2028 Olympics, methane monitoring and verification, and sustainable aviation fuel.
 - *See below for additional information on select consulting projects and client engagements*

Senior Attorney and Senior Director, Energy Decarbonization Strategy

Environmental Defense Fund, Los Angeles, CA (2007 – April 2022)

- Directly appeared before energy and environmental agencies and courts in California on climate, energy, transport, air pollution and sustainability related matters.
- Led legal and regulatory teams focused on solutions for clean energy deployment, access, and affordability before state energy commissions in New York, New Jersey, Illinois and Texas.
- Authored and passed multiple pieces of groundbreaking legislation in the California legislature on GHG accounting, methane, oil wells, energy market manipulation, and natural gas policy
- Designed and led advocacy campaigns, and conducted original technical analysis on vehicle and building electrification, methane emission, smart grid and clean energy, cap-and-trade and LCFS
 - *See below for additional information on select appearances and cases*

Assistant Visiting Professor

Pitzer College, Environmental Analysis (2017-2018)

Senior Air Quality Inspector

Bay Area Air Quality Management District, San Francisco (2001 - 2006)

- Conducted environmental compliance audits and investigations at major industrial facilities.
- Collaborated on rulemaking, enforcement actions, and cross-agency task forces.

EDUCATION

- J.D. Environmental & Public Interest Law, Golden Gate University (2006)
- M.E.M. Environmental Management, Duke University (2001)
- B.S. Environmental Studies, University of Oregon (1998)
- Executive Education Programs: MIT Sloan (2024), Arizona State University (2023), Harvard Business School (2019)
- LLM in Energy Law candidate, Vermont Law School

CERTIFICATIONS

- Licensed Attorney, California State Bar (Active)
- U.S. Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit (Active)
- District of Columbia Court of Appeals, (Inactive)
- LEED Green Associate, USGBC (Active)
- Fundamentals of Sustainability Accounting Level II candidate, SASB (Active)
- Sustainability Excellence Assoc., ISSP (Active)
- Qualified Environmental Professional, IPEP (Active)
- Certified Sustainable Development Professional, AEE (Active)

SELECT MEMBERSHIPS & VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

- Los Angeles Community Forest Advisory Committee (2015–2022)
- Los Angeles County Oil and Gas Strike Team Advisory Panel (2016– 2021)
- California Lawyers Association Environmental Law Section Exec. Committee, (2018–2022)
- California League of Conservation Voters Education Fund Board Member (2017–2021)
- City of Los Angeles 100% Renewables Advisory Committee Member (2016–2021)
- California Foundation on Economy and the Environment Board Member (2015 – 2020)
- Bay Area Air Quality Management District Advisory Council (2012–2015)

SELECT PUBLICATIONS & PRESENTATIONS

- Grant, Ritthaler, James, and O'Connor, Proactive Utility Engagement on Energy Equity, (In dev.)
- Karas, Colvin, Kelly, Murphy, O'Connor, Electricity Journal, Aligning gas regulation with climate goals (2021)
- O'Connor and Mathers, Assessment of Medium & Heavy-Duty ZEV Supply Chain (2021)
- Nowlan, Fine, and O'Connor, Sustainability Journal, Air Emissions & Impacts of Heavy Duty Transportation Choices (2021)
- MacDougall and O'Connor, Infrastructure and Charging Cost Assessment for Heavy-Duty Trucks (2021)
- Bilich, Colvin and O'Connor, Proactive Solutions for Stranded Gas Asset Risk (2019)
- Herter, O'Connor and Navarro, Evaluation Framework for Smart Grid Deployment Plans (2011)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

SELECT CONSULTING PROJECTS AND CLIENT ENGAGEMENTS

- U.S.-based public utilities strategy design for path-to-net zero roadmaps, inclusive of review and design of investment prioritization frameworks, management systems and operating models.
- Advanced metering and analytics systems deployment in commercial and residential buildings for electric and gas utilities, inclusive of use-case assessment and prioritization, business case and technical roadmaps, business process design, risk management, and vendor engagement.
- Grant application support for federal co-investment in over \$200 million in utility infrastructure projects in Southern California under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, resulting in over \$50 million in awarded project funding.
- Sustainability strategy development for the 2028 Olympics with a focus on emissions accounting, energy, transportation and decarbonization.
- Advising the Governor's Office of Energy for a U.S. state related to water and energy efficiency improvements and associated capital planning processes for over 2000 state owned buildings.
- Expert-level support for a U.S. Federal agency on the development of fossil energy related methane measurement, monitoring, reporting and verification standards.
- Technical and operational assessments, and roadmaps for GHG reporting platforms used in advisory services by a Fortune 200 North American energy company.
- Strategic investment and decision analysis, and operating model frameworks for renewable natural gas development and utilization across the North American operations of 1) a global energy company and 2) a global consumer goods apparel company.
- Advising the government affairs and sustainability team for a Fortune 200 global airline, and the sustainability team for a global sports organization on sustainable aviation fuel strategy.

SELECT APPEARANCES IN PROCEEDINGS & CASES

- CPUC, So. Cal. Gas and SDG&E Renewable Natural Gas Tariff (2019-2021)
- CPUC, So. Cal. Gas and SDG&E General Rate Case (2017-2019)
- CPUC, So. Cal. Gas and SDG&E application to incorporate advanced meter data into the core balancing process (2017-2019)
- CPUC, SB380 proceeding on minimizing or eliminating the use of the Aliso Canyon (2017-2019)
- CPUC, SB1371 rulemaking to adopt rules related to natural gas leakage (2015 - 2019)
- US District Court, 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, US Supreme Court, Rocky Mountain Farmers Union v. Corey in defense of California's Low Carbon Fuel Standard (2015 - 2018)
- CEC, Application for the Hydrogen Energy California Power Plant Project (2012 - 2016)
- CA Superior Court and CA Court of Appeals, Our Children's Earth et al., v. California Air Resources Board in defense of CARB Cap-and-trade regulation (2012 - 2015)
- FERC, Order 741 tariff filing by the California Independent System Operator (2012 - 2013)
- CPUC, Application of state IOUs for adoption of Smart Grid Deployment Plans (2011)
- CPUC, Application of So. Cal. Ed. to sell Four Corners Generating Station interest (2010 - 2011)
- CPUC, AB2514 proceeding on adoption of energy storage procurement targets (2010 - 2011)