



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

# Press Release

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## New leadership among MWRD board vaults Kari K. Steele to president



*From L to R: MWRD Commissioners Debra Shore, Mariyana Spyropoulos, Frank Avila, Josina Morita, Kari K. Steele, Barbara McGowan, Marcelino Garcia, Kimberly Du Buclet and Cameron Davis unanimously elected Commissioner Steele as President, Commissioner McGowan as Vice President and Commissioner Avila as Chairman of Finance.*



*From L to R: Chairman of Finance Frank Avila, President Kari K. Steele and Vice President Barbara McGowan will lead the MWRD in its ambitious endeavors to protect the water environment of the region.*

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) Board of Commissioners has elected new leadership officers among its nine-member governing body.

Commissioner Kari K. Steele was nominated by outgoing President Mariyana Spyropoulos and elected president by unanimous decision, culminating a meteoric rise at the MWRD that began as a laborer, water sampler and lab technician to eventually the top of the MWRD boardroom.

Thanking the Board of Commissioners and staff for support, newly elected President Steele said she was humbled by the honor to lead the MWRD.

“This is much more than a job for me,” President Steele said. “The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago is part of what makes me who I am and represents the people and places that I

am proud to serve. I thank my fellow commissioners and staff members for their support and look forward to carrying on the excellent tradition of the MWRD and working hand in hand with our exceptional clean water team.”

Included in her team of elected officers for the two-year term positions will be Vice President Barbara McGowan and Chairman of Finance Frank Avila, who both were both elected unanimously to continue serving in their current position.

“I thank my fellow commissioners and our talented staff for their support and hard work in maintaining one of the most well-run government agencies,” said Vice President Barbara McGowan, who is the longest tenured member of the Board of Commissioners, serving since 1998. “As vice president, I look forward to working together to improve the quality of life for Cook County residents and taxpayers.” *(continued)*

## New leadership among MWRD board vaults Kari K. Steele *(cont.)*

Commissioner Avila is the second longest-tenured member of the Board, having been first elected in 2002 and re-elected again in 2008 and 2014.

“As chairman of Finance, I am proud to serve an important role to improve our water environment while managing a fiscally responsible agency that develops innovative technology to better serve both the taxpayers and environment,” said Commissioner Avila. “I am humbled for the support from my fellow commissioners.”

President Steele was recently re-elected to her second term on the Board, having been first elected in 2012. She has served as chairman of the Budget and Employment Committee, the Information Technology Committee and the Monitoring and Research Committee, and also as chairman of the MWRD Employees Credit Union Board of Directors. In addition, President Steele has served as vice chairman of the Stormwater Management, Finance and Real Estate Development committees. Commissioner Steele is a chemist, an environmentalist and a community leader. She has worked at both the Jardine Water Purification Plant as a water chemist and for the MWRD as a water sampler and lab technician.

Passing off the presidential role of leadership to President Steele, Commissioner Spyropoulos said she was

honored to serve as president for the last four years. She was previously chairman of Finance for two years, having been first elected in 2010 and re-elected in 2016.

In addition to electing new officers, the MWRD also recently welcomed three new commissioners and hired a new executive director. Those three new commissioners, Kimberly Du Buclet, Cameron Davis and Marcelino Garcia, were installed in December as the MWRD also announced Brian A. Perkovich as the new executive director. They join President Steele, Vice President McGowan, Chairman of Finance Avila, and Commissioners Spyropoulos, Debra Shore, and Josina Morita to govern the agency responsible for protecting the local water environment and area waterways, treating and cleaning 1.3 billion gallons of water per day and shielding Cook County from stormwater.

We welcome President Kari K. Steele to her new role. Her unique qualification as the only chemist serving on the nine member board and years of experience as an environmentalist and community leader is an asset to fulfilling our mission.

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### ***Recovering Resources, Transforming Water***

*Established in 1889, the MWRD ([www.mwrdd.org](http://www.mwrdd.org)) is an award winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois.*