



TO: Orange County Sanitation District

FROM: Whittingham Public Affairs Advisors

DATE: August 22, 2025

SUBJECT: Local Legislative Report

Following are a few of the more notable developments and issues that have transpired in Orange County over the last several weeks:

- The Orange County (County) Board of Supervisors (Board) has approved updates to its code of ethics following revelations of former Supervisor Andrew Do's criminal misuse of COVID-19 meal program funds. Key changes include:
  - New protections for whistleblowers
  - A requirement that Supervisors review and sign the code of ethics when taking office
  - An explicit rule that county officials and employees "shall not act for personal gain"
- The same week the Board adopted the revised code of ethics, a federal judge ordered former 1st District Supervisor Andrew Do to repay about \$878,000 to the County. Do also reported to the federal penitentiary in Tucson, Arizona, to begin serving his five-year prison sentence.
- The Board also approved a plan to fold the District Attorney's Human Resources (HR) Department into the County's Central Administration. The change follows a civil lawsuit in which a jury awarded \$3 million to a former prosecutor who claimed she was pushed out after trying to protect junior colleagues. Eight HR positions from the District Attorney's office will be transferred as part of the move.
- Across the County, several cities are experiencing leadership changes. Former Laguna Hills City Manager Jared Hildebrand has taken the top role in Orange. In Fullerton, former Westminster City Manager Eddie Manfro has been appointed Interim City Manager after serving as the city's Human Resources Director. Mike Egan continues as Interim City Manager in La Palma.
- Elsewhere in the county, the Yorba Linda City Council is reviewing candidates to replace City Manager Mark Pulone, who will retire in September. In Newport

Beach, the City Council announced that Assistant City Manager Seimone Jurjis will step into the City Manager role on January 1, 2026, succeeding Grace Leung.

- Negotiations continue between the County of Orange and a coalition of cities and sanitation districts regarding landfill tipping fees. The goal is to finalize an agreement by October. The next County Waste Management Commission meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 11.
- Advocates for the long-awaited Orange County Veterans Cemetery at Gypsum Canyon celebrated the passage of Assembly Bill 571. The bill exempts the cemetery site from unnecessary environmental reviews that could delay the project. The Federal Veterans Administration has identified Gypsum Canyon as the only suitable site for a veterans cemetery in Orange County. The project, which has received \$55 million in state and county funding, now needs to secure placement on the Federal VA priority list.
- County management staff recently met with representatives from the State Natural Resources Agency to discuss funding through Proposition 4, the \$10 billion water, wildfire, and climate project bond passed by voters in 2024. Proposition 4 will fund projects designed to prevent and mitigate the impacts of droughts, flooding, wildfires, extreme heat, sea level rise, and carbon pollution. The Governor and State Legislature have been developing the criteria and process for grant applications for local government agencies, including special districts.
- Longtime Costa Mesa Sanitary District (CMSD) Board member Arlene Schafer announced her retirement, effective August 1. Board member Schafer began her public service career in 1978 when she was elected to and served for eight years on the Costa Mesa City Council, including serving as Mayor from 1980-1982. She first served on the CMSD Board of Directors from 1994-2010, was subsequently appointed back to the Board in 2013 and was re-elected to serve three consecutive terms from 2014 through 2026.
- Phase II of Orange County's Climate Action Plan, a comprehensive roadmap detailing potential projects and programs to reduce greenhouse gas and other emissions from various sources, is on track to come to the Board of Supervisors on November 4. Key initiatives within CAP included increasing stormwater capture and infiltration, reducing the amount of organic waste going to landfills by 75 percent and improving edible food recovery by 20 percent, and exploring the feasibility of regional anaerobic digestion and conversion technology facilities.

As part of our scope of work, Whittingham Public Affairs Advisors has continued to monitor the various City Council agendas and highlighted issues and items of relevance to OC San. We also continue to monitor activities at the South Coast Air Quality Management District, Orange County Water District, and South Orange County Wastewater Authority.

It is a pleasure to work with you and to represent the Orange County Sanitation District.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Peter Whittingham', with a stylized, cursive script.

Peter Whittingham