

Chairwoman Gray's Comments for Executive Committee Meeting
Tuesday, February 23, 2021

- I would like to offer a few comments in response to the recent Los Angeles Times stories about Metropolitan.
- Like all of you, I have been profoundly affected by the issues our employees have raised at recent meetings, including those discussed in the articles.
- We are also aware that Los Angeles City Council president Martinez has introduced a motion asking for a report on the city's relationship with Metropolitan relative to the allegations.
- And over the weekend, there was a request for the State Auditor to conduct an independent audit to investigate issues of workplace safety, harassment, and retaliation at Metropolitan.
- We have responded to both of these inquiries and will be providing you with copies of our letters.
- We know this behavior does not reflect the culture we strive for here at Metropolitan - nor the experience of most employees.
- But any complaint raises concerns and compels us to act.
- Accordingly, this Board directed our Ethics Officer to oversee an independent and thorough external review.
- The respected Shaw Law Group, which we will hear from today, is doing that review, looking at Metropolitan's actions and policies regarding EEO complaints.
- Their work will help determine whether Metropolitan has used best practices regarding employee complaints and investigations...
- ... whether any additional steps are required on past cases,
- ... and whether any of Metropolitan's policies, practices and procedures need to be improved or reformed.
- Given the nature of the complaints, we were told this review would take several months.
- I know we are all anxious to address this situation. But I encourage each of you to respect this process.
- To protect the integrity of the investigation, I am refraining from making public comments about the circumstances of particular allegations.
- But don't equate our respect for this important process with complacency.
- To those of you who have raised issues about misconduct and told your stories, I want you to know you are heard.
- As someone with a proud history as a union member, I recognize the important part that employee unions play in advocating for your members.
- At the same time, I have seen the benefits that come from a philosophy of cooperation and collaboration. And it is my hope that we can work together to achieve the results we all want for Metropolitan.
- When the Board-directed review is complete, the results and recommendations will be provided to us for consideration and action.
- And act we will.
- I look forward to working with all of you - at that time - to do what is right. And take the necessary steps to address these specific issues - and our broader responsibility to ensure we have a fair, equitable and productive workplace here at Metropolitan.
- This Board is committed to safeguarding a work environment we can be proud of. Thank you.