



New era begins at Sewer District Ciaccia Takes Reigns; Board Hires New Law Director

November 21, 2007

CLEVELAND – The Board of Trustees of the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District marked Julius Ciaccia’s first day as Executive Director by rounding out the District’s leadership team, hiring Marlene Sundheimer as its new Law Director.

“This is the beginning of a new era at the Sewer District,” said Darnell Brown, President of the NEORSD Board of Trustees, “and we had an obligation to ensure Julius Ciaccia has the people he needs to make the district even more effective in protecting Northeast Ohio’s water resources and the investment of our ratepayers. By hiring Marlene Sundheimer, we’ve met that obligation.”

The NEORSD Board began the search for a new Law Director in September 2007, setting stringent requirements for the legal skill set that its next Law Director would need to have. These requirements include a minimum of ten years of experience with regulatory and compliance issues involving the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Ohio EPA and ten years of diverse experience in governmental utility construction law.

“We have high expectations for our new Law Director and you can’t have high expectations without first having high standards for the person you hire,” Brown added.

Of the 21 people who applied for the position, only three candidates fulfilled the Board’s requirements for the position. After an interview process, the Board chose Sundheimer for the position.

Sundheimer currently serves as Deputy Commissioner of Water for the City of Cleveland, a position to which she was appointed to in 2002 by Julius Ciaccia. Sundheimer’s primary task as Deputy Commissioner of Water has been to set the strategic direction for the Division of Water. Her responsibilities also have included assuring fiscal responsibility related construction contracts, and capital and financial planning.

Prior to her appointment as Deputy Commissioner, Sundheimer won accolades as Director of the Sangre De Cristo Water Division in Santa Fe, New Mexico, where she was responsible for transitioning the once-private water division to municipal ownership. Additionally, in a city threatened by drought-like conditions, Sundheimer led the development of a program designed to supplement Santa Fe’s water supply.

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Unlike previous NEORSD Law Directors, Sundheimer, who will begin her tenure with the District on November 26, 2007, will report to the Executive Director, not the NEORSD Board of Trustees.

“I’m excited to be working with Marlene again – she’s just what we need,” said new NEORSD Executive Director Julius Ciaccia. “I wouldn’t have worked so hard to persuade her to move back to Cleveland from New Mexico if I didn’t think she was one of the country’s best legal minds when it comes to water and water protection. I’m gratified the Board of Trustees agrees with me.”

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