

Application Form**Profile****Office Use Only:**☒ Ward 4**Which Boards would you like to apply for?**

Board of Public Utilities: Submitted

Ms./Mr.

Ms.

Deborah

First Name

S

Middle Initial

Cherney

Last Name

Home Address

Suite or Apt

Riverside

City

CA

State

Postal Code

Mobile:

Primary Phone

Alternate Phone

Email Address

San Bernardino County
Employees' Retirement
Association

Employer

Chief Executive Officer

Job Title

Business Address**Business Phone****Length of residence in City of Riverside**

9 years

Are you a registered voter of the City of Riverside?☒ Yes ☐ No**Have you ever been convicted of a crime of moral turpitude?**☐ Yes ☒ No

Do you have adequate time to serve?

☒ Yes ☐ No

*Eligibility requirements per City Charter Article VIII Section 805.

Applications may be screened on the basis of information submitted with this form.

You are welcome to provide a resume and/or letters of endorsement.

Interests & Experiences

WHY YOU WANT TO SERVE ON A CITY BOARD OR COMMISSION:

I would appreciate the opportunity to work with Riverside Public Utilities staff to ensure an appropriate balance between keeping rates low and ensuring that we are investing in our infrastructure for the long-term.

EXPERIENCE OR SPECIAL KNOWLEDGE PERTAINING TO AREA(S) OF INTEREST:

I worked as the Deputy General Manager of the Eastern Municipal Water District (serving over 800,000 people) for six years prior to joining the San Bernardino County Employees' Retirement Association as their Chief Executive Officer. Prior to EMWD, I was the Executive Director of Finance and Administration for the Irvine Ranch Water District. I have strong experience in water and wastewater management.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

MBA - University of California, Irvine (1999) BA - Claremont McKenna College (1990)

OCCUPATIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Please see my resume attached.

PROFESSIONAL OR TECHNICAL ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIPS:

Please see my resume attached. Most recently, I served on the Executive Board of the Government Finance Officers Association of the U.S. and Canada. This was an 18 member Board of Directors serving an organization of more than 21,000 members.

CIVIC OR COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE, MEMBERSHIPS, OR PREVIOUS PUBLIC SERVICE APPOINTMENTS:

Staff-level experience, but no experience on community organization Boards. No prior public service appointments.

COMMISSION ON AGING
AIRPORT COMMISSION *
BUDGET ENGAGEMENT COMMISSION
COMMUNITY POLICE REVIEW COMMISSION
CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD *
COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES
BOARD OF ETHICS
HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION
HUMAN RESOURCES BOARD
BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES *
METROPOLITAN MUSEUM BOARD
PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION *
PLANNING COMMISSION *
BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES *
TRANSPORTATION BOARD *

*A Statement of Economic Interests is required. Any information listed on this application is a matter of public record and will be disclosed upon request.

Under existing California law, a member of a board or commission may not make, participate in making, or attempt to influence a governmental decision if it is reasonably foreseeable that the decision could have a material financial effect on that member, the member's immediate family, or any of his or her financial interests. There is also a special category of conflicts of interest which strictly forbids members and/or their employers from having financial interests in city contracts. Careful consideration should be given to this issue and applicants are encouraged to contact the City Clerk's Office if they have any questions.

NOTICE REGARDING INCOMPATIBLE OFFICES

Under existing California law, no member of City boards or commissions may simultaneously hold two public offices that are incompatible. (California Government Code Section 1099)

Offices are incompatible if one of the offices has supervisory, auditory or removal power over the other, if there would be any significant clash of duties or loyalties between the offices, or if public policy considerations make it improper for one person to hold both offices.

Do you currently hold a position as an appointed or elected member of a governmental board, commission, committee, or other body?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If "Yes", please state position:

Members of boards and commissions are covered by Workers' Compensation insurance while serving. If appointed, completion of a LiveScan background screening is required prior to commencement of service.

Please call the City Clerk's Office at 826-5557 or visit RiversideCA.gov/city_clerk for more information. City Clerk's Office, City Hall, 3900 Main Street, 7th floor, Riverside, CA 92522

[cherney-debby_resume_Jan_2021_final.pdf](#)

Upload a Resume

Additional document(s)

How did you learn about the Board and Commission vacancies?

☒ Referred by

Are you interested in being contacted by the Registrar of Voters to volunteer as a poll worker?

☐ Yes ☒ No

DEBORAH S. CHERNEY

Riverside, California

SUMMARY

Proactive, collaborative leader with 13 years of executive management experience at large, complex water, wastewater and recycled water service agencies. In-depth experience utilizing financial, legal, technological, and operational approaches to advance organizational goals. Recognized for innovative problem solving and a proven track record as a prudent executive who can command public trust. Skillful in troubleshooting, negotiations, managing multiple projects, challenging the status quo and implementing business process resolutions. Energetic, effective communicator who motivates people and stimulates creative thinking.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION, San Bernardino, CA 2018 to present **Chief Executive Officer**

Organizational leader for independent multiple employer defined benefit plan. Responsible for administering service retirement, disability retirement and death benefits on behalf of nearly 42,000 members and 18 public employers throughout San Bernardino County.

- Chief liaison to the 12-member Board of Trustees consisting of directly elected and appointed members; responsible to advise and confer with the Board on financial, economic and political trends and developments.
- Architect of a Triennial Strategic Plan, with specific actionable projects and programs, designed to achieve common purpose among the staff and Board and to assist in identifying resource and budget needs.
- Leader of successful efforts to improve organizational culture, employee morale and member service levels; negotiated inaugural labor agreements.
- Executive director responsible for overseeing planning, organization, and administration of all program areas for which SBCERA is statutorily responsible.
- Performance monitor for the \$11.5 billion investment portfolio, ensuring contributions and income are invested in accordance with established policies, and that proper controls are in place to safeguard assets.
- Flag bearer for open and effective relationships with member groups, labor organizations, plan sponsors, and other key stakeholders.

EASTERN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT, Perris, CA **Deputy General Manager**

2012 to 2018

A senior executive in the District with oversight responsibility for over 200 employees in Finance, Purchasing and Contracts, Customer Service and Meters, Information Technology, Development Services, Human Resources, and Safety and Risk Management, and oversight of \$400 million annual operating and capital budget.

- Developed and maintained relationships with other agencies and negotiated key contracts.
- Regularly wrote and presented complex materials to elected officials in public meetings.
- Key labor negotiator on two multi-year Memoranda of Understanding with a union representing over 400 employees; achieved significant concessions from the union on retiree health care benefits with a net present value savings to the District in excess of \$100 million.

EASTERN MUNICIPAL WATER DISTRICT, Perris, CA

2012 to 2018

Deputy General Manager

(Continued)

- Restructured debt portfolio to achieve significant savings for the benefit of ratepayers; achieved ratings upgrades from Fitch Ratings and Standard & Poor's to AAA and AA+, respectively.
- Reorganized department staff using strategic outsourcing opportunities and adjusting workload distribution among existing staff. Implemented process changes to improve external and internal customer service and organizational excellence.
- Co-authored and facilitated of the District's Standards of Excellence, Triennial Strategic Plan and Strategic Priorities.
- Actively participated on legislative and regulatory issues as a Statewide leader on water financing, system consolidations and ratepayer affordability.

IRVINE RANCH WATER DISTRICT, Irvine, CA

2005 - 2012

Executive Director of Finance

A senior leader in the District with responsibility for the efficient operations of the Finance Department and Administrative Services Departments including Customer Service, Information Services and Purchasing. Active oversight of public financings including issuing new debt in both fixed and variable rate modes, negotiating letters of credit, and interfacing with rating agencies. Responsible for financial reporting, annual budgeting and rate setting processes, including communications required under Proposition 218.

- Restructured debt portfolio to include general obligation fixed-rate Build America Bonds, variable-rate bonds supported by traditional letters of credit, SIFMA-indexed notes, and fixed-rate Certificates of Participation; achieved the first SIFMA-indexed notes priced at a negative spread to the index.
- Raised the District's bond ratings to AAA/Aa1/AAA.
- Worked with legislative advocacy team to pass bipartisan legislation to permit the District to provide a general revenue pledge directly to bondholders, eliminating the banks as middlemen and saving taxpayers nearly a million dollars in first year of use.
- Received the award for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association each year a Comprehensive Annual Financial Report was prepared.

SQUAR MILNER, LLP, Newport Beach, CA

2002 - 2005

Senior Manager, Consulting, Litigation & Forensics Practice

Responsibilities included managing an active, varied caseload of consulting, bankruptcy and litigation matters, including fraud and forensic accounting investigations, and a variety of business consulting matters.

- Served as Interim Restructuring Officer for a \$200 million company. Responsible for design and management of internal controls systems, cash flow forecasting, and senior level negotiations with critical vendors and government agencies.
- Key expert witness in matters related to interest rates, feasibility of plans and payments to creditors, business health, business damages and lost profits, ponzi schemes, and internal controls. Trials and hearings resulted in jury verdicts and significant bench rulings in favor of clients.

XTIME INC., San Mateo, CA

2000 - 2002

Director, Professional Services

Led professional services team for services automation startup company, including software implementation, customization and configuration. Built teams in consulting, professional services engineering, operations, training and customer support, and managed those teams to develop innovative and cost-effective customer-centric solutions.

- Managed multiple phased implementation projects, with emphasis on cost control, risk management, and problem solving. Demonstrated proficiency at evaluating economic returns for the projects,

XTIME INC., San Mateo, CA

2000 - 2002

Director, Professional Services

(Continued)

defining problems, finding root causes and generating solutions, and working with teams to create realistic plans and budgets.

- Developed strong client relationships and demonstrated expertise in navigating complex political environments. Extensive experience in executive-level and senior management-level relationship management and development.

DELOITTE & TOUCHE, San Francisco, CA

1999 – 2000

Manager, Enterprise Risk Services – Controls Assurance

A national healthcare industry leader, with responsibility for developing, marketing, and delivering risk management and information systems services to healthcare organizations. Led engagements to assess and document manual and automated internal controls for a variety of business processes, including revenue cycles, expenditure cycles, payroll cycles, and specialized cycles in the managed health care environment, including premium revenue and claims processing.

- Led first engagement to assess compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), particularly the security and privacy aspects of individually identifiable health information.
- Performed and managed information technology audit component of financial audits, including reviewing and testing controls for systems security and applications development and maintenance.

MARSHACK, SHULMAN & HODGES LLP, Irvine, CA

1991 – 1999

Director of Firm Development; Director of Trustee & Receivership Services

Dual role responsibilities for case management and client development. Performed troubleshooting and financial practice intervention involving over \$300 million in assets; fast-paced caseload and “hands-on” accountability. Responsible for training employees on business issues and building strong client relationships.

- Added services and increased profit by more than 300% as a result of effective design of marketing and strategic plans for growth and quality assurance within the firm.
- Identified software solutions to align technology with business goals, managed change process on technology implementations.
- Built team and managed process of producing corporate communications including webpage and networking resources for inter-office communication.

EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, IRVINE

1999

Master of Business Administration, Cum Laude, Beta Sigma Gamma Honor Society

CLAREMONT MCKENNA COLLEGE

1990

Bachelor of Arts, Cum Laude

PROFESSIONAL DESIGNATIONS & LEADERSHIP

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT, State of California

CERTIFIED INSOLVENCY & RESTRUCTURING ADVISOR, Inactive

GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

- Executive Board of Directors – 2017-2020
- Advisory Committee on Retirement and Benefits Administration – 2012-2015; Chair 2016-2017
- Women's Public Finance Network – Chair 2016-2018
- Special Review Committee for the Awards for Excellence in Financial Reporting – 2010-2012

CALIFORNIA SPECIAL DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION

- 2018 Winner of Ralph Heim Exceptional Outreach & Advocacy Award

ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA WATER AGENCIES

WOMEN IN PUBLIC FINANCE, Los Angeles Chapter

FREQUENT SPEAKER AT INDUSTRY CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

- Topics:
 - Value of preserving tax exempt municipal bonds
 - Debt issuance considerations and best practices
 - Water affordability and rate design
 - Water system consolidation
 - Fraud detection and prevention
 - Pension funding, standards and best practices
 - OPEB funding, standards and best practices
 - Deferred compensation best practices
 - Labor negotiations
- Associations and Events:
 - Government Finance Officers Association of the U.S. and Canada
 - California Society of Municipal Finance Officers
 - Public Pension Financial Forum
 - Association of California Water Agencies
 - California Water Policy Conference
 - State Water Resources Control Board – Symposium Speaker
 - Western States Institutional Investor Conference
 - State Association of County Retirement Systems
 - California Association of Public Employee Retirement Systems