

## **Metro Water Changes Leadership**

January 14, 2014 - Metro Water District makes major transition in its management with a new General Manager and Chief Financial Officer. This change also means saying goodbye to two long-term managers.

Metro Water has selected Joseph Olsen to be its new General Manager starting February 3, 2014. The Board of Directors made its decision following an extensive search to find a candidate to succeed Mark Stratton, who is retiring as Metro's General Manager.

Prior to joining Metro Water, Olsen filled many roles at Tucson Water including interim Deputy Director, Planning Administrator, and Engineering Manager. Olsen also served in the United States Air Force at numerous state-side and overseas locations where he led utility and facility maintenance/sustainment efforts. He is currently a Major in the Air Force Reserve and serves at the Reserve Civil Engineer Squadron Commander at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base.

"The Board of Directors selected Joseph Olsen as the next General Manager," said Judy Scrivener, Chair of Metro's Board, "because of his solid knowledge, varied water experience, and strong character to lead Metro Water successfully for many years."

Olsen graduated from the University of Arizona with a Bachelor's of Science in Civil Engineering and then obtained a Masters of Military Operational Art and Science from Air University.

Metro's finances are now overseen by Diane Bracken as the new Chief Financial Officer. Prior to working for Metro Water, Bracken was a Finance Accounting Supervisor at Pima County. She worked for Pima County in different financial positions over the last 15 years. Before moving to Arizona, Bracken administered finances for private industry in Pennsylvania.

Bracken has a Master's Degree in Public Management from Northern Arizona University. She obtained her Bachelor's of Science in Business Administration from Liberty University in Virginia.

Olsen and Bracken succeed two individuals with a combined 40 years of experience at Metro Water. Mark Stratton retires March 5, 2014 after being Metro's General Manager for 20 years. Mike Land retires January 15, 2014 after serving as Chief Financial Officer since 1995.

During his tenure as General Manager, Stratton oversaw major improvements to Metro's water system including a \$23 million and then a \$28 million Capital Improvement Programs. Land ensured Metro's finances remained strong during the various bond issuances and financing for these projects. These numerous enhancements provided a more reliable infrastructure with increased 16.5 million gallons of storage capacity and over 14 miles of transmission main that allows large volumes of water to be moved throughout the system.

Under Stratton, Metro Water secured its allocation of Central Arizona Project water and put it to use through acquiring the Avra Valley Recharge Project. Also, Metro Water expanded with the acquisition of the Metro-Hub service area in 1999 and the Metro-Southwest service areas in 2009, without impacting existing customers.

Stratton and Land are active members of the AZ Water Association and the American Water Works Association. Stratton served as President of the AZ Water Association, a 2,200 member organization of Arizona's water professionals. Stratton also found time to raise money for the non-profit international organization, Water For People, for which his efforts were recognized at last year's annual conference of American Water Works Association.