

May 19, 2026

Ara Azhderian
General Manager
Monterey County Water Resources Agency
1441 Schilling Place, North Building
Salinas, CA 93901

Subject: Employee Satisfaction Survey

Dear Mr. Azhderian:

We appreciate the Monterey County Water Resource Agency's (Agency) interest in having Raftelis conduct an employee satisfaction survey to complement the existing evaluation process for the General Manager. The Board of Directors is interested in a staff survey that can bring intra-Agency perspectives to inform the General Manager's annual evaluation.

Our team has direct experience with this type of work, having designed and conducted staff surveys as part of executives' annual performance evaluations, as well as stand-alone employee satisfaction surveys. Raftelis' team members are knowledgeable about the Agency through our previous work, including the General Manager's annual performance evaluation, which involved working with the Board of Directors, and the Agency's Strategic Plan.

We would be pleased to work with both you and your team. The purpose of this letter is to discuss the potential for this engagement.

Background

Monterey County Water Resource Agency was created by the State of California pursuant to the Monterey County Water Resources Agency Act. The Agency provides services related to the control of flood and storm waters in Monterey County, conservation, protection of water quality, reclamation of water, and the exchange of water. Fundamental to the Agency's mission to sustainably manage water resources while minimizing impacts from flooding, the Agency owns and operates two dams on principal tributaries to the Salinas River (Nacimiento and San Antonio), along with associated reservoirs.

A General Manager is appointed by the Monterey County Board of Supervisors. The Agency is governed by a nine-member Board of Directors, appointed by the Board of Supervisors. The Agency's FY 2025-2026 budget totaled approximately \$43.5 million in expenses. The Agency's FY 2026 budget shows a total of 44 funded positions, which is fewer than the 53 positions funded in FY 2025.

Approach

Raftelis will design, administer, and prepare a report on the results of a confidential employee survey to complement the General Manager's annual performance evaluation. We will serve as a neutral third-party in gathering structured, anonymous feedback from Agency employees regarding the General Manager, Board of Directors, and organization. Results will be compiled into a formal written report delivered to the Agency. Our work will be conducted remotely for this engagement.

In designing the survey, we will collaborate with appropriate Agency staff in refining the survey categories. In your report to the Board of Directors dated April 28, 2026, you cited several categories as important for consideration: Leadership and Governance; Strategic Planning; Financial Management; Staff Management, Development, and Ethics; Operational Performance; Community Relations; and Emergency Response and Risk Management.

We will refine the categories and create appropriate specific factors for the survey. We will reference the competency framework established by the American Water Works Association (AWWA) Leadership and Workforce Development Program, supplemented by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) Practices for Effective Local Government Leadership. Together, these frameworks reflect current best practice for water agency executive evaluation and are well-suited to a California public agency of this size and mission.

Scope of Work

We have outlined four key Activities below to carry out this project for the Agency. These are subject to refinement in our first activity.

Activity 1: Project Initiation

In Activity 1, we will conduct a kickoff meeting with designated Agency staff. At this meeting, we will:

- Confirm project scope, timeline, survey population, and intended use of results.
- Confirm who will receive the final report.
- Obtain relevant materials (such as prior surveys, for context).
- Discuss survey categories.

We will also review core practices that are important in employee surveys. These are:

- **Confidentiality:** Responses come directly to Raftelis for consolidation. No comments are attributed to any employee.
- **Clear Purpose:** Purpose of the survey and how the results will be used must be clear for employees to feel confident in participating.
- **Voluntary Participation:** All employees should be encouraged to respond, but not required.
- **Limited Survey Size:** To combat "survey fatigue," it is important to limit the number of survey factors to 20 – 30, plus no more than two open-ended questions.

Raftelis will also discuss with the Agency whether results should be disaggregated by employee group (e.g., supervisory vs. non-supervisory), subject to anonymity thresholds being met.

Following this kickoff meeting, Raftelis will prepare a memorandum that can go to the Board of Directors regarding the project schedule and scope.

<p>Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kickoff meeting 	<p>Deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project schedule • Kick off meeting agenda • Memorandum to Board of Directors
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Activity 2: Design Survey Instrument

In Activity 2, we will design the survey instrument. We will develop a draft online survey instrument tailored to the Agency's organizational context. The instrument will include:

- Scaled rating items for each factor (limit of 30 factors).
- Up to two open-ended comment opportunities.

The total survey length will be designed for completion in approximately 15–20 minutes to support strong participation among field and office staff alike.

Raftelis will share the draft instrument with the designated Agency contact for review and comment. If desired, we will conduct one meeting with a subcommittee of the Board of Directors to review the draft and obtain input.

One round of revisions is included in this scope. The final instrument will require written approval from the Agency before administration begins.

<p>Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review survey instrument with staff and Board subcommittee 	<p>Deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft survey (Word version) • Final survey (Online version)
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Activity 3: Administer Survey

Raftelis will deploy the survey through a secure, web-based platform. The platform will be configured to collect responses anonymously; no personally identifying information, IP addresses, or device data will be recorded or reported. The survey link will be accessible on desktop and mobile devices to accommodate both office-based and field employees.

Employee Email Addresses: The Agency will provide a list of employees and their emails to Raftelis. We will use this information to send out the survey to staff. Alternatively, if the Agency would prefer to send the link out to employees, that is also an option.

Draft Emails from Agency to Employees: Raftelis will prepare a draft email for the Agency to modify as needed and use to communicate with employees. It will include an **invitation to participate**, explaining the survey's purpose, confidentiality protections, how results will be used, and the response deadline.

Raftelis will send a mid-point reminder, and we encourage the Agency to do the same to reinforce its interest in participation midway through the survey response period.

All communications will reinforce anonymity protections, which is the single most important factor in achieving candid and representative responses.

Administration Window: The survey will remain open for two weeks. Raftelis will monitor aggregate response rates throughout the window and advise the Agency if conditions warrant a brief extension.

<p>Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone calls, if needed 	<p>Deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft communication from Agency to employees about survey • Email with link to survey • Email mid-point reminder
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Activity 4: Conduct Data Analysis and Prepare Report

Raftelis will analyze the results. This will include:

- Response rate summary, including total responses and participation rate.
- Scaled rating responses with mean scores, score distributions, and response frequency by competency domain.
- Systematic thematic analysis of open-ended responses. No direct quotes will be attributed to individuals; qualitative findings will be presented as synthesized themes with illustrative, anonymized language.

Raftelis will prepare a written report which will include:

- **Executive Summary:** Key findings, overall rating, and principal themes from qualitative responses.
- **Methodology:** Survey design, administration approach, response rate, and anonymity protections.
- **Category Analysis:** Summary for each of the categories.
- **Strengths and Development Areas:** Cross-domain synthesis identifying clear areas of strength and areas warranting attention or development.
- **Appendix A / Full Quantitative Data Tables:** Complete response tables for all scaled items.
- **Appendix B / Survey Instrument:** Final survey as administered.

A draft will be provided to the Agency for review before the final version is issued. One round of revisions to the draft is included in this scope.

<p>Meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review draft report 	<p>Deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft report • Final report
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Proposed Schedule

Raftelis will prepare a specific schedule once a contract is approved. We have offered estimated timing below based on our experience designing and administering employee surveys.

Activities	Estimated Timing
1 Project Initiation	Weeks 1–2
2 Design Survey Instrument	Weeks 2–4
3 Administer Survey	Weeks 5–6
4 Conduct Data Analysis and Prepare Report	Weeks 7–9

Project Team

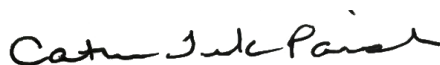
Raftelis has an experienced project team. The project manager will be Jan Perkins, who coordinates the firm’s executive performance evaluation practice. Don White, lead facilitator for the Monterey County performance evaluations, is part of the team to add important context. They will be supplemented by a team member who will administer the online survey. Resumes for Jan and Don are attached.

Fee

The services outlined in this proposal will be provided for a fee of \$18,900, which includes all of our expenses. It is our practice to invoice monthly. All services will be provided remotely.

We look forward to the opportunity to serve the Monterey County Water Resources Agency. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Jan using the following contact information:
 Jan Perkins, Vice President / Phone: 949.202.8870 / Email: jperkins@raftelis.com

Sincerely,



Catherine Tuck Parrish, *Senior Vice President*

Monterey County Water Resources Agency accepts the terms of this engagement letter.

Approved: _____	Date: _____
Name of Signatory: _____	Title: _____

Jan Perkins ICMA CM

PROJECT MANAGER Vice President

PROFILE

Jan has 30 years of management experience in a range of local governments in two states, including as a city manager in two cities. Her years as a consultant serving cities, counties, and special districts enable her to bring strategic and thoughtful approaches to clients. Jan is an expert facilitator and organization development consultant. She helps governing body members and executives create alignment and direction for the future and set the path for effective working relationships.

Jan facilitates performance evaluations for executives with their governing bodies and coordinates Raftelis' executive coaching practice. Jan has held leadership positions in ICMA, Women Leading Government, and other local government associations. She is a frequent speaker and moderator at professional conferences. Jan has authored many articles on leadership and effective management practices, appearing in ICMA's PM and Western City Magazine (a publication of the League of California Cities).

KEY PROJECT EXPERIENCE

Jan's management consulting experience is broad. Key projects include:

- Facilitating performance evaluations for officials appointed by city councils and county boards in multiple local governments. Many of these include 360 surveys of direct reports.
- Providing executive coaching to city managers.
- Facilitating governing body retreats. Examples include the County of Monterey and the cities of Long Beach, Sacramento, Palm Springs, Napa, Garden Grove, Grover Beach, Chino, Chino Hills, Elk Grove, Emeryville, San Leandro, Glendale, Newark, Sunnyvale, Victorville, Rohnert Park, and Stockton.
- Facilitating development of strategic plans. Examples include the County of Monterey's first Strategic Plan, Placer County Human Resources Department Strategic Plan, the City of Victorville Citywide Strategic Plan, the City of Glendale's Organizational Strategic Plan, the City of Santa Monica Organizational Roadmap, the City of Pleasanton Citywide Strategic Plan, and the City of Pleasanton Library and Recreation Strategic Plan.



Specialties

- Strategic planning and facilitation
- Executive coaching
- Executive performance evaluation
- Organization assessment
- Change management
- Elected official/executive relationships

Professional History

- Raftelis: Vice President (2023-present)
- Bakertilly: Managing Director (2022-2023) (acquisition of Management Partners)
- Management Partners: Vice President, Senior Partner (2005 – 2022)
- City of Fremont, CA: City Manager and Acting City Manager (1993-2004)
- City of Morgan Hill, CA: City Manager (1990-1993)
- City of Santa Ana, CA: Assistant City Manager (1984-1990)
- City of Grand Rapids, MI: Deputy City Manager (1981-1984); Analyst (1975-1979)
- City of Adrian, MI: Community Development Director/Assistant City Administrator (1979-1981)

Education

- Master of Public Administration – University of Kansas (1976)
- Bachelor of Science/Sociology (1974) – University of Kansas

Certifications

- Certificate from Harvard University's Program for Senior Executives in State and Local Government
- ICMA Credentialed Manager

Professional Memberships

- International City/County Management Association
- Women Leading Government, Founding Member
- California City Management Foundation, Past President
- National Academy for Public Administration

SAMPLE PUBLICATIONS

- “One on Ones with Your Elected Officials: How to Really Make Them Count,” co-authored with Tamara Letourneau, City Manager, Laguna Niguel, CA, *ICMA’s Public Management*, April 2026
- “How to Maintain Control and Decorum During City Council Meetings,” co-authored with Mayor Caren Ray Russom (Arroyo Grande), Mayor Bobbie Singh-Allen (Elk Grove), and City Manager Jason Behrmann (Elk Grove), *Western City Magazine*, March 2026
- “Beyond the Title: What Makes a Professional City/County Manager,” co-authored with Rod Gould and Frank Benest, *ICMA’s Public Management*, January 2026
- “Building Your Executive Team,” co-authored with Rod Gould and Frank Benest, *ICMA’s Public Management*, November 2025
- “A Disruptive Elected Official: What Can the Chief Executive do to Bring the Outlier into the Fold and Help the Governing Body Function Well?” co-authored with Keith Metzler, City Manager/Victorville, CA; *ICMA’s Public Management*, August 2025
- “A Word About Leadership: Leading Through Uncertainty,” co-authored with Tamara Letourneau, City Manager/Laguna Niguel, CA; *ICMA’s Public Management*, August 2025
- “The Value of Work Plans: Give Yourself Back Some Time,” co-authored with Tamara Letourneau, City Manager/Laguna Niguel, CA; *ICMA’s Public Management*, August 2025
- “The Golden Rules for New Council Members,” co-authored with Barbara Halliday, *Western City Magazine*, January 2025
- “Goal Setting for Traction,” co-authored with Rod Gould and Frank Benest, *ICMA’s Public Management*, December 2024
- “Tips for Effective Governing Body Meetings,” co-authored with Tamara Letourneau, *ICMA’s Public Management*, December 2024
- “Onboarding Beyond Orientation,” co-authored with Julia Novak, *ICMA’s Public Management*, December 2024
- “Defining the Roles of Elected Officials and City/County Managers,” co-authored with Julia Novak, Tanisha Briley, and Dr. John Nalbandian, *ICMA’s Public Management*, December 2024
- “New City/County Manager? Focus on the Fundamentals!” co-authored with Rod Gould, *ICMA’s Public Management*, January 2024
- “Essential Tips for Effective Council Meetings,” co-authored with Dan Keen, *Western City Magazine*, January 2024
- “A Better Way: The Facilitated CAO Performance Review,” co-authored with Dan Keen, *ICMA’s Public Management*, August 2022

Don White

PROJECT ADVISOR Senior Advisor

PROFILE

Don has 40 years of local government experience in two California cities, where he served in numerous capacities and departments, including 26 years as Human Resources Director. He retired as City Manager in 2021.

Since then, he has provided consulting services for several cities. His assignments have included executive coaching, workshop facilitation, team building, goal setting, strategic planning, organizational analysis, and financial sustainability. He also served as an interim Deputy City Manager for Lake Forest, CA, where he oversaw the Community Services Department and the Marketing and Communications Department, conducted an organizational analysis, and assisted in the recruitment of the new Deputy City Manager.

Don's most recent direct local government experience was with Laguna Hills, California, where he served for 29 years. He started with the newly incorporated city in 1991 as the Director of Administrative Services and was promoted to Assistant City Manager in 1994. From 2018 to 2021, he served as City Manager. Prior to being named City Manager, he managed human resources, finance, risk management, information technology, public information, economic development, and parks and recreation. As Human Resources Director, he oversaw all recruitments, including multiple executive-level recruitments for Finance Director, Community Development Director, Public Works Director, Community Services Director, and City Clerk.

He conducted numerous organizational analyses and was the team lead on strategic and long-term financial planning. He was consistently recognized by the Government Finance Officers Association for award-winning budgets and financial reporting, and navigated the City through the Great Recession and the pandemic.

Before joining Laguna Hills, Don served as Economic Development Director in La Mirada, California, where he managed the City's Redevelopment Agency. He started his local government career in La Mirada as an Administrative Intern while completing his college studies. During his 11 years with La Mirada, he served in various capacities, including Assistant to the City Manager.



Specialties

- Executive coaching
- Executive recruitment
- Facilitated performance evaluations
- Workshop facilitation
- Organizational analysis
- Strategic planning
- Goal setting and team building
- Fiscal sustainability
- Human resources

Professional History

- Raftelis: Senior Advisor (2024-present)
- Management Partners/BakerTilly: Special Advisor (2022-2023)
- City of Lake Forest: Interim Deputy City Manager (6/2023-9/2023)
- Management Partners: Special Advisor (2022)
- Laguna Hills, California: City Manager (2018-2021); Assistant City Manager (1994-2018); Director of Administrative Services (1991-1994)
- La Mirada, California: Economic Development Director (1989-1991); Redevelopment Manager (1987-1988); Assistant to the City Manager (1986); Various Management Analyst/Intern Positions (1981-1985)

Education

- Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration – Whittier College, Whittier, CA (1981)

Professional Memberships

- International City/County Management Association, 30 Year Service Award Recipient
- Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada
- League of California Cities Revenue and Taxation Policy Committee
- Exclusive Risk Management Authority of California, Chair