



LAKE WHATCOM WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT
1220 Lakeway Drive
Bellingham, WA 98229

REGULAR SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Minutes

December 30, 2020

Board President Laura Abele called the Regular Session to order at 8:00 a.m.

Attendees: Commissioner Laura Abele General Manager Justin Clary
Commissioner Todd Citron District Engineer/Assistant GM Bill Hunter
Commissioner John Carter Finance Manager/Treasurer Debi Denton
Commissioner Bruce Ford Operations & Maintenance Manager Brent Winters
Commissioner Leslie McRoberts Recording Secretary Rachael Hope

Also present were Brian Smith of Wilson Engineering, and Keith Stewart and Russ Porter of Gray & Osborne.

All attendees participated remotely by phone or video conferencing.

Roll Call

General Manager Justin Clary performed a roll call to identify those in attendance, and then verbally confirmed that the meeting was noticed in accordance with Resolution No. 859 allowing remote meeting attendance as well as in compliance with current statutory requirements. It was confirmed that all participants were able to be heard and hear each other clearly.

Changes to Agenda

Clary requested the addition of Business Item 7.C: Families First Coronavirus Response Act Benefits Extension. The Board agreed.

Consent Agenda

Action Taken

Citron moved, Ford seconded, approval of:

- Minutes from the November 25, 2020 Regular Board Meeting
- Minutes from the December 09, 2020 Regular Board Meeting
- Payroll for Pay Period #25 (11/28/2020 through 12/11/2020) totaling \$47,270.72
- Payroll Benefits for Pay Period #25 totaling \$49,847.51
- Payroll for Pay Period #26 (12/12/2020 through 12/25/2020) totaling \$50,059.07
- Payroll Benefits for Pay Period #26 totaling \$33,532.24
- Accounts Payable Vouchers totaling \$61,948.86

Motion passed.

Sudden Valley Water Treatment Plant Alternatives Analysis Briefing #3

Hunter recalled that Gray & Osborne was contracted after an initial condition assessment in July 2020, to perform an alternatives analysis of work to be done at the District's Sudden Valley Water Treatment Plant. The assessment identified high and low priority items that were subsequently broken down by major system.

The major systems as written in the scope of work agreement are:

- Pump Performance Test (Presented to Board 9/30/2020, Briefing #1)
- Chemical Systems Analysis (Presented to Board 11/25/2020, Briefing #2)
- Disinfection Systems Analysis
- Backwash Systems Analysis
- Filtration System Analysis (presented to Board as part of this agenda item)
- Tier 2/3 Seismic and Structural Analysis (Presented to Board 11/25/2020, Briefing #2)
- Structural/Architectural Workspace Analysis
- NACE III Coating Inspection (Presented to Board 9/30/2020, Briefing #1)

For this meeting, Gray & Osborne presented the findings of the Filtration System Analysis. Keith Stewart of Gray & Osborne provided a presentation with visuals to summarize their findings and recommendations and collect Board comments. Discussion followed.

Agate Heights Water Treatment Plant Upgrades Public Works Contract Award

This project upgrades the Agate Heights Water Treatment Plant manganese water treatment equipment and associated automation and supervisory control systems. These 2021 upgrades increase the number of equivalent residential units (ERU) that can be served from 57 ERU to 81 ERU. The upgrade provides capacity for future growth and extensions through developer extension agreements, utility local improvement districts, or other means. The upgrade also replaces 20+ year old automation and supervisor control systems that are in need of replacement. Hunter explained that the District received two bids for this project, with Equity Builders as the apparent low bidder. Staff recommended awarding the contract to the apparent low bidder, whose bid was within the budgeted amount for this project. Discussion followed.

Action Taken

Citron moved, McRoberts seconded, to award the Agate Heights Water Treatment Plant Upgrades public works contract to Equity Builders for a total contract price of \$215,915 including 8.5% sales tax, and authorize the general manager to execute the contract. Motion passed.

Families First Coronavirus Response Act Benefits Extension

Clary recalled that at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, President Trump signed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) relief bill into law. The FFCRA requires private employers with less than 500 employees and certain public employers (which includes the District) to provide employees with 80 hours of paid leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19 and up to 10 weeks of paid, job-protected leave for employees who are unable to work due to the need to care for a son or daughter whose school is closed or the unavailability of a child care provider due to COVID-19. The FFCRA expires December 31, 2020.

On December 21, 2020, lawmakers decided they would not extend the FFCRA, but instead will allow employers to decide whether or not to continue to provide paid leave relief relative to the pandemic. As currently drafted, this option is available until March 31, 2021. District management has consulted with District legal counsel, who has concluded that, should the Board elect to extend the provisions of the FFCRA through March 31, 2021, it may legally do so.

Action Taken

Abele moved, McRoberts seconded, to extend the paid leave relief provisions provided under the Families First Coronavirus Relief Act to District employees, as eligible, through March 31, 2021. Motion passed.

General Manager’s Report

Clary updated the Board on several topics, including the District’s continued response to the COVID-19 pandemic, upcoming agenda items for January 2021, and the passing of former District employee Randy Craker. Discussion followed.

Engineering Department Report

Hunter highlighted several projects, including an overview of the list of District projects completed in 2020, averaging around two per month, and the upcoming bid for the Euclid Sewer Pump Station public works construction project. Discussion followed.


Finance Department Report

Denton reported that revenues and expenditures for November tracked well with the budget. She explained that the impact of the pandemic on past due accounts has been minimal, but that some of the accounts that are past due have larger balances. Future discussion will be needed regarding payment plans when the Governor’s proclamation suspending locks and late fees ends. Denton also mentioned several upcoming projects for the Finance Department, including review of low income/senior discount accounts policy, annual audit, and rate study. Discussion followed.

Operations & Maintenance Department Report

Winters reported on ongoing projects and development in the Operations Department, including recent annual confined space rescue training and practice, new water service installations, and response to a power outage on December 22. Discussion followed.

With no further business, Abele adjourned the Regular Session 9:22 a.m.


Board President, Laura Abele

Attest: 
Recording Secretary, Rachael Hope

Minutes approved by motion at Regular Special Board Meeting on January 13, 2021
Date Minutes Approved