



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

REGULAR SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Minutes *May 26, 2021*

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

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

Excused Absences: Commissioner John Carter

Also in attendance: Tage Aaker, FCS Group
Gordon Wilson, FCS Group
Sam Ault, FCS Group
Jenny Signs

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.

Consent Agenda

Action Taken

McRoberts moved, Ford seconded, approval of:

- Minutes for the May 12, 2021 Regular Board Meeting
- Payroll for Pay Period #10 (05/01/2020 through 05/14/2021) totaling \$46,470.11
- Payroll Benefits for Pay Period #10 totaling \$51,745.52
- Accounts Payable Vouchers totaling \$71,675.29

Motion passed.

District Water and Sewer Utility Rate Study Update

Denton explained that every five years the District reviews its utility rates to ensure that they are sufficiently set to finance both inflationary, and projected operating and capital costs into the foreseeable future. The last comprehensive rate review was completed in 2014, with an update performed in 2016. The resulting multi-year rate structure that was adopted by the Board provided annual adjustments, with the last adjustment becoming effective on January 1, 2021.

To conduct a rate analysis for the next five years (2022-2026), the Board authorized the execution of a personal services agreement with FCS Group during its regularly scheduled meeting on November 25, 2020. Similar to prior studies, the District is developing a long range financial forecast that funds each utility on a standalone basis, considering each utility's operating and maintenance expenditures, debt service, fiscal policy achievement, and capital project needs.

Tage Aaker of FCS Group provided a presentation on the status of their efforts to-date and opened the floor for discussion and policy-level input from the Board as they proceed with refinement of the study. Discussion followed.

Inflow & Infiltration Unit Price Contract Work Order Approval

Hunter recalled that on September 9, 2020, the Board of Commissioners authorized the execution of a 12-month unit price on-call contract with Olson Brothers Pro-Vac. The contract allows for periodic repairs to District assets to reduce inflow and infiltration (I&I) entering the sanitary sewer collection system.

Work Orders #1 and #2 were executed in the fall of 2020. During routine televising of sewer mains over the past several months additional sewer collection system defects have been identified and compiled into proposed Work Order #3. A detailed cost estimate using contract unit prices is attached. Defects needing repair included:

- Sewer mains needing a cured-in-place sectional liner
- "Top Hat" repair where a lateral connects to the sewer main
- Chemical grout injection at pipe joints and lateral-to-main connections
- Chemical grout injection at sewer manholes and pump station wet wells
- Smoke testing of suspected high I&I sewer main segments that may have roof drains connected to the public sewer system.

Action Taken

Citron moved, McRoberts seconded, to allocate additional \$50,000 for 2021 Miscellaneous I&I Repairs from unallocated sewer capital project funds (approximately \$320,055). Motion passed.

Citron moved, McRoberts seconded, to authorize the General Manager to execute Work Order #3 under the unit price contract with Olson Brothers Pro-Vac for maximum cost of \$70,000, which includes 8.5% sales tax, as presented. Motion passed.

Sudden Valley Water Treatment Plan Master Plan – Stakeholder Engagement Process

Hunter recounted that over the last eight months, Gray & Osborne (G&O) has presented a series of alternatives broken down by major systems included in the Sudden Valley Water Treatment Plan (SVWTP) master plan. For each system, G&O developed alternatives and documented each in the form of a technical memorandum. During this time, six long-term goals and objectives were introduced for consideration and discussion. Staff continues to invite the Board and interested public to consider these goals, edit/refine them, and suggest additional ones.

As the District begins the process of selecting alternatives and developing the 20-year capital improvement plan, input from stakeholders is a critical component of the process. Staff presented the board with two diagrams highlighting stakeholder input. Discussion followed.

Board President Abele departed the meeting at 9:57 a.m. and Board Secretary Citron stepped in as meeting chair.

General Manager's Report

Clary updated the Board on several topics, including the District's continued response to the COVID-19 pandemic and staff vaccinations, guidance for in-person vs. virtual board meetings, and the District Finance Manager transition. Discussion followed.

Engineering Department Report

Hunter highlighted several areas, including a successful startup at the updated Agate Heights Water Treatment Plant, and upcoming startups at the Dellesta and Edgewater sewer lift stations. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Citron recognized staff's ongoing efforts to reduce Inflow & Infiltration; and expressed appreciation from the Board for the hard work being done within the district on research and identification of I&I.

Finance Department Report

Denton reported on the District's revenues and expenditures for April, as well as giving an update on the transition process for her retirement.

Operations & Maintenance Department Report

Winters gave a brief report on field crew operations, including ongoing safety training, status of the District's treatment plants, and the beginning of building season. Discussion followed.

Clary recognized Winters, as well as District Construction Engineer Kristin Hemenway and District Accounting Clerk Trish Gilmore for their work in coordinating with the Sudden Valley Community Association to streamline permitting, inspection, and construction processes and improve communication between organizations.

With no further business, Citron adjourned the Regular Session 10:33 a.m.



Board President, Laura Abele

Attest: 

Recording Secretary, Rachael Hope

Minutes approved by motion at Regular Special Board Meeting on June 30, 2021
Date Minutes Approved