



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

REGULAR SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Minutes

December 8, 2021

Board President Laura Abele called the Regular Session to order at 6:30 p.m.

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

Also in attendance was Melanie Mankamyer of Wilson Engineering. 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

Carter moved, Citron seconded, approval of:

- Minutes for the November 10, 2021 Regular Board Meeting
- Minutes for the November 24, 2021 Regular Board Meeting
- Payroll for Pay Period #24 (11/13/2021 through 11/26/2021) totaling \$55,226.31
- Payroll Benefits for Pay Period #24 totaling \$56,770.42
- Accounts Payable Vouchers totaling \$104,151.48

Motion passed.

2022 Budget Presentation

Signs presented an updated draft of the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget for consideration. This budget was developed using projected revenues based upon rate increases adopted by Resolution No. 879 (increases of 4.5% and 3.75% to water and sewer rates, respectively), actual 2021 operating expenses, and projects defined in the District's water and sewer capital improvement plans. Earlier revisions of the budget were presented during regularly scheduled meetings of the Board held on November 10, 2021, and November 24, 2021. Comments

provided by the Board during those meetings were incorporated into the presented draft Fiscal Year 2022 Budget. Discussion followed.

Action Taken

Carter moved, Citron seconded, to adopt the 2022 Fiscal Year Budget, as presented. Motion passed.

2022-2027 Six-Year Strategic Business Plan

Clary explained that District management, in collaboration with staff, developed a draft six-year strategic business plan that was presented for Board comment during a work session held on September 8, 2021, and further refined through ongoing board discussion relative to the 2022-2026 rate study, updated six-year capital improvement programs for each utility, and current operational revenue and expenditure projections. The updated business plan included incorporation of Board comments and adjustment to reflect fiscal constraints. Discussion followed.

Action Taken

Citron moved, McRoberts seconded, to adopt the 2022-2027 Six-year Strategic Business Plan as presented. Motion passed.

Water Use Efficiency Plan Update

Clary recalled that in 2003, the Washington State Legislature adopted the Municipal Water Law, the goal of which was to address increasing demand on our state's water resources. The Municipal Water Law also directed the state Department of Health (DOH) to adopt an enforceable Water Use Efficiency (WUE) program. In 2007, DOH created the Washington State WUE Program to meet these requirements through ensuring safe and reliable drinking water by achieving a consistently high level of stewardship among all municipal water suppliers.

Following creation of the Washington State WUE Program, the District developed a WUE Plan specific to its three Group A water systems. With the District's current WUE Plan revision adopted in 2015, Staff embarked on an update to the Plan in 2021 to meet the review requirements and ensure that all DOH requirements remain met. A required component of the update process is to seek public input on the goals defined within the revised plan. The District provided notice on November 18 of the public comment opportunity via DOH's public forum process (meeting the two-week notice requirement). The revised Water Use Efficiency Plan was presented to the Board for discussion and consideration of adoption. Discussion followed.

Action Taken

McRoberts moved, Citron seconded, to adopt the 2021 Water Use Efficiency Plan as presented. Motion passed.

2022-2024 AFSCME Council 2 Local 114WD Collective Bargaining Agreement

Clary recounted that the majority of District staff are represented by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council 2 Local 114WD, which has a long history of partnering with the District in executing mutually beneficial collective bargaining agreements. With the current agreement (2019-2021) set to expire December 31, District management and union representatives embarked on negotiation of a successor agreement this past July. Following six negotiation sessions the two sides tentatively agreed upon a collective bargain agreement for January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2024. Union membership ratified the agreement the evening of December 2, 2021, and it was subsequently presented to the Board for consideration of approval.

Action Taken

McRoberts moved, Ford seconded, to authorize the general manager and Board President to execute the 2022 - 2024 collective bargaining agreement between the Lake Whatcom Water and Sewer District and AFSCME Council 2 Local 114WD as presented. Motion passed.

2022 Non-represented Staff Cost-of-Living-Adjustment

Clary explained that traditionally, District non-represented employees have received the same annual cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) increase as the represented (union) employees. Non-union employees include the General Manager, District Engineer/Assistant General Manager, Finance Manager/Treasurer, Operations & Maintenance Manager, and Administrative Assistant. For 2022 the represented employee's COLA will be 4%, per the collective bargaining agreement between AFSCME and the District. Discussion followed.

Action Taken

Citron moved, Carter seconded, to approve a salary adjustment for all non-represented District staff that is equal to an increase of 4% and effective January 1, 2022. Motion passed.

2022 Wilson Engineering Rates

Wilson Engineering provides on-call engineering services to the District through a professional services agreement executed on September 2, 2021, and effective through July 31, 2026. Per Section 8.4 of the agreement, Wilson Engineering may annually request revision to the approved rates to accommodate inflation and market conditions. Clary presented a letter from Wilson Engineering dated November 24, 2021 requesting revision to its rates and fees for 2022 for approval.

Action Taken

Carter moved, Citron seconded, to approve rates and fees to be effective January 1, 2022, for professional services performed by Wilson Engineering under the existing on-call professional services contract with the District, as presented in the November 24, 2021 letter from Wilson Engineering. Motion passed.

General Manager's Report

Clary updated the Board on several topics, including the District's continued response to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as an update on work after the November flood event, the District's receipt of the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant for Division 7 Reservoir Replacement, and the recent theft of a District vehicle. Clary proposed that the Board consider cancelling the December 29, 2021 Regular Board Meeting due to lack of agenda items. Discussion followed.

Action Taken

Carter moved, McRoberts seconded, to cancel the December 29, 2021 Regular Board Meeting. Motion passed.

With no further business, Abele adjourned the Regular Session 7:45 p.m.



Board President, Laura Abele

Attest: 

Recording Secretary, Rachael Hope

Minutes approved by motion at Regular Special Board Meeting on January 12, 2022
Date Minutes Approved