



LAKE WHATCOM WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT

1220 Lakeway Drive
Bellingham, WA 98229

REGULAR SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS Minutes

August 9, 2023

Board President Todd Citron called the Regular Session to order at 6:30 p.m.

Attendees: Commissioner Todd Citron (v) General Manager Justin Clary
 Commissioner John Carter (v) Finance Manager Jenny Signs
 Commissioner Jeff Knakal Operations & Maintenance Manager Jason Dahlstrom
 Commissioner David Holland (v) Recording Secretary Rachael Hope
 District Legal Counsel Bob Carmichael

No public were in attendance. Attendees noted with (v) attended the meeting virtually.

Consent Agenda

Action Taken

Carter moved, Knakal seconded, approval of:

- Payroll taxes for 2023 Q2 totaling \$12,213.60
- Payroll for Pay Period #16 (07.22.2023 through 08.04.23) totaling \$44,902.02
- Benefits for Pay Period #16 totaling \$49,787.95
- Accounts Payable Vouchers totaling \$153,729.86

Motion passed.

Resolution No. 894 - Utility Bill Payment Period Policy Revision

Signs explained that District Administrative Code Section 2.10.3, Water and Sewer Service Billing, defines District policy regarding the length of the billing cycle, and associated due dates and actions in the case of delinquency. The utility bill payment period policy was reviewed and discussed by the Board of Commissioners during its regularly scheduled meeting held on July 26, 2023. During that meeting, the Board directed staff to revise the policy to reflect a shortened bill payment period from 50 days to 25 days to pay, and reduce the number of days before potential shut-off from about 100 to about 60 days. Staff presented Resolution No. 894 for Board consideration. Discussion followed, including an overview of staff's transition plan and notification methods that will be used to inform customers of the changes over the next four months.

Action Taken

Knakal moved, Holland seconded, to adopt Resolution No. 894 as presented. Motion passed.

Presentation: Overview of District Water Rights

Clary recalled that the Lake Whatcom Water and Sewer District (District) owns and operates three Group A and one Group B water systems. Two of the Group A water systems (South Shore and Agate Heights) rely on District-owned water rights, which are regulated by the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology). The District is in Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 1 (commonly referred to as the Nooksack River Basin), which has a long history of disputed water right claims.

In 2020, Ecology identified WRIA 1 as a priority for water right adjudication, which is a process to determine the legality of each water right on a source, how much water may be used under that right, and its priority relative to other rights. With the State Legislature’s subsequent funding of WRIA 1 adjudication, Ecology has initiated the early stages of the adjudication process, which is anticipated to take up to 20 years to complete. Though the most contentious claims in WRIA 1 focus on rights specific to the Nooksack River, the District’s rights in the Lake Whatcom Watershed will also be adjudicated.

Clary and Carmichael provided the Board with an overview of the District’s water rights, anticipated water needs, and its role in the adjudication process. Discussion followed.

Manager’s Report

Clary updated the Board on several topics, including upcoming scheduled interviews for the vacant District Engineer position, progress on the Lake Louise Road Sewer Interceptor repair, and the Euclid Sewer Pump Station Improvements project.

With no further business, Citron adjourned the Regular Session at 8:00 p.m.



Board President, Todd Citron

Attest: 

Recording Secretary, Rachael Hope

Minutes approved by motion at Regular Special Board Meeting on 8/30/2023
Date Minutes Approved