



## LAKE WHATCOM WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT

1220 Lakeway Drive  
Bellingham, WA 98229

### SPECIAL SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

## Minutes

*January 10, 2024*

Board President Todd Citron called the Special Session to order at 5:30 p.m.

<b>Attendees:</b> Commissioner Todd Citron	General Manager Justin Clary
Commissioner John Carter	Engineering Manager Greg Nicoll
Commissioner Bruce Ford	Finance Manager Jenny Signs
Commissioner Jeff Knakal (v)	Operations Manager Jason Dahlstrom
Commissioner David Holland	District Legal Counsel Bob Carmichael
	Recording Secretary Rachael Hope

Attendees noted with a (v) attended the meeting virtually.

#### **On-site Sewage System Policy Review**

Clary recalled that the District was formed as Water District 10 in 1968 with a mission including stewardship and protection of the Lake Whatcom Watershed. Though the District has compelled people within 200 feet to connect, there are still nearly 100 septic systems in use along the north shore of Lake Whatcom.

In 2017 and again in 2020, Herrera Environmental Consultants, Inc. (Herrera) conducted a series of monitoring events along the north shore of Lake Whatcom to assess the impact of existing on-site sewage systems (OSS; commonly referred to as septic systems) on the water quality of the lake. In a findings report issued by Herrera in September 2020, results were consistent with the 2017 study relative to the presence of target analytes in OSS-served drainages; however, the presence of human DNA biomarkers did not correlate with loadings of phosphorus or live fecal coliform bacteria. As a result, Herrera concluded phosphorus and fecal coliform bacteria are effectively removed from OSS effluent by soils before entering the lake. The study did note the presence of human DNA biomarkers in District sewer-served drainage No. 485, indicating a possible leaking sewer pipe. The District subsequently performed inspection of sewer mains in the drainage, which confirmed the integrity of the sewer system.

In January, 2021, the Board ultimately determined it infeasible to pursue sewer system expansion to remove OSS and rather to focus on OSS compliance. Clary provided a summary of the identified actions, and District efforts undertaken to implement each. Actions included requested actions from Whatcom

County Health Department regarding OSS maintenance, inspection, and enforcement; from Whatcom County Public Works regarding source tracing; and from Whatcom County Council regarding self-evaluation of individually owned OSS. Discussion followed.

With no further business, Citron adjourned the Special Session at 6:37 p.m.



Board President, Todd Citron

Attest:



Recording Secretary, Rachael Hope

Minutes approved by motion at ☒ Regular ☐ Special Board Meeting on 1/31/2024  
Date Minutes Approved