



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

REGULAR SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Minutes

March 13, 2024

Board President Todd Citron called the Regular Session to order at 6:00 p.m.

Attendees:

Commissioner Todd Citron	General Manager Justin Clary
Commissioner John Carter	Engineering Manager Greg Nicoll
Commissioner Bruce Ford	Finance Manager Jenny Signs
Commissioner Jeff Knakal	Operations Manager Jason Dahlstrom
Recording Secretary Rachael Hope	Legal Counsel Bob Carmichael

Excused Absence: Commissioner David Holland

Also in attendance were Lachlan Hunter(v) & Grange Gordon(v) of Waterworth. An un-named member of the public was also present for a portion of the meeting. Attendees noted with a (v) attended the meeting virtually.

Consent Agenda

Action Taken

Knakal moved, Carter seconded, approval of:

- **Payroll for Pay Period #5 (02.17.2024 through 03.01.2024) totaling \$49,382.72**
- **Benefits for Pay Period #5 totaling \$54,941.22**
- **Accounts Payable Vouchers totaling \$241,775.90**

Motion passed.

Division 7 Reservoir Replacement Project Public Works Contract Award

Nicoll explained that following seismic vulnerability analyses done in 2016 and subsequent alternatives analysis and sizing calculations, the District opted to move forward with the construction of two 46-foot-tall concrete reservoirs with a combined volume of 476,000 gallons.

The District published an advertisement for bids in the Bellingham Herald on January 10, 2024. Bids were due on February 27, 2024. The Board was provided with the bid summary. Nine bids were received, including the bid alternate and excluding Washington State sales tax, ranging from \$2,324,115 to \$3,076,883. The lowest responsive bid was provided by Tiger Construction of Bellingham, Washington. District staff and Wilson Engineering completed a review of the mandatory and supplemental bidder criteria and contacted references provided by Tiger Construction, allowing for determination that Tiger Construction meets all responsibility criteria. Start of active on-site

construction is anticipated to begin at the start of the 2024 Lake Whatcom Watershed land disturbance window, which opens on June 1, 2024, with project completion anticipated by the end of the 2025 work window on September 30, 2025. Discussion followed.

Action Taken

Ford moved, Knakal seconded, to award the Division 7 Reservoir Replacement Project public works contract to Tiger Construction for a total contract price of \$2,523,988.89, including 8.6% sales tax, and authorize the general manager to execute the contract. Motion passed.

Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan Update Comments

Clary recalled that the Growth Management Act (GMA) is a series of Washington State statutes that requires fast-growing cities and counties to develop a comprehensive plan to manage their population growth. The GMA establishes 13 goals which serve as a basis for all comprehensive plans; including enhancement of natural resource industries and open space/recreation, protection of the environment, and ensuring adequate public facilities and services.

An update to the current Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan is required by June 30, 2025, and the County is soliciting comments from its public agency partners, including the District. The Board discussed draft comments during its regularly scheduled meetings held on February 14 and February 18th. Based upon those dialogues, Clary presented the Board with a letter for consideration. Discussion followed.

Action Taken

Carter moved, Knakal seconded, to authorize submittal of the Lake Whatcom Water and Sewer District's comments on the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan to the Whatcom County Council, as presented. Motion passed.

Rate Modeling Software Presentation

Signs explained that it has been the practice of the District to perform a full utility rate study for both the water utility and sewer utility funds approximately every five years to review its rates and fees as well as a mid-cycle review of those rates to ensure they are still sufficient to meet operational and capital costs as well as fund any potential changes that may arise during that time. District rates were last reviewed in 2021 and formally adopted in the Master Fees and Charges Schedule 28 effective January 1, 2022, which set rates through the end of 2026.

At the approach to the mid-cycle point of the current rate study, the District has faced challenges including inflation, supply chain delays, and other economic factors which have impacted costs. With these challenges in mind, as well as significant rising costs in consulting services, staff sought alternative, high-quality options. During this research, staff was recommended a company called Waterworth.

Waterworth is a cloud-based rate analysis and forecasting solution that offers the capability of continuous utility rate management enabling proactive capital reinvestment and adaptability to change. Lachlan Hunter and Grange Gordon from Waterworth provided the Board with a presentation and demonstration of the system's abilities. Discussion followed.


Action Taken

Carter moved, Ford seconded, to authorize the Finance Manager to move forward with purchasing of licensing rights for Waterworth rate modeling software, funded by previously allocated funds in the existing 2023-2024 budget. Motion passed.

General Manager's Report

Clary updated the Board on several topics, including official announcement of the \$220,000 earmark from U.S. Representative Larsen's office, the upcoming Joint Councils meeting for Lake Whatcom Management Program on March 27, and recognized District employees Ken Zangari and Cyrus Gates for completion of the ongoing project of replacing all florescent bulbs in District facilities with LED bulbs. Clary also recognized District employees Jenny Signs and Norma Rowland for significant work in conversion of a new timesheet system.

With no further business, Citron adjourned the regular session at 7:47 p.m.



Board President, Todd Citron

Attest: 

Recording Secretary, Rachael Hope pre

Minutes approved by motion at Regular Special Board Meeting on March 27, 2024