



1220 Lakeway Dr • Bellingham, WA 98229

REGULAR SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Minutes

April 9, 2025

Commissioner Citron called the Regular Session to order at 6:30 p.m.

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

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

Consent Agenda

Action Taken

Holland moved, Knakal seconded, approval of:

- Minutes for the 03.12.2025 Regular Board Meeting
- Minutes for the 03.26.2025 Regular Board Meeting
- Payroll for Pay Period #07 (03.15.2025 through 03.28.2025) totaling \$52,642.15
- Benefits for Pay Period #07 totaling \$63,241.59
- Payroll taxes for 1st quarter of 2025 totaling \$12,707.12
- Accounts Payable Vouchers totaling \$492,685.75

Motion passed.

Scenic Ave. Intertie Water Main Replacement Project Small Works Contract Award

Nicoll recalled that the District maintains an intertie with the City of Bellingham's water distribution system to allow the District to serve portions of the District's Geneva service area with water purchased from the City in the event of an emergency or during maintenance activities that require removing the Geneva reservoir from service. In 2021, District staff discovered a leak in the system between the City's flow meter vault and the District's pressure reducing valve (PRV) building located at the southeast corner of Lakeway Drive and Scenic Avenue. Following replacement of the leaking valves and fittings, staff determined that the piping upstream was also leaking, rendering the intertie unusable. To restore this intertie to operation, it is necessary to replace approximately 40 linear feet of pipe located within the eastbound lane of Lakeway Drive approximately 9 feet below grade.

Due to the depth and location of this pipe, Lakeway Drive will need to be reduced to a single lane and traffic control provided throughout construction along with substantial shoring to complete the project. The District solicited bids from the MRSC Small Works Roster on March 4, 2025 and a total of six bids were received. The lowest responsive bid was submitted by Honcoop Gravel, Inc. of Lynden, Washington. Staff has completed a

review of the mandatory and supplemental bidder criteria and determined that Honcoop Gravel, Inc. meets all criteria and is a responsible contractor; and recommended awarding the contract to Honcoop Gravel, Inc. Discussion followed.

Action Taken

Carter moved, Knakal seconded, to award the Scenic Avenue Intertie Water Main Replacement public works contract to Honcoop Gravel, Inc. for a total contract price of \$65,824.00, including 8.8% sales tax and authorize the general manager to execute the contract. Motion passed.

Amendment No. 3 to Hazard Mitigation Grant Agreement for FEMA Funding Supporting the Division 7 Reservoir Replacement Project

Clary explained that in 2018, the District submitted a FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant application to replace the Division 7 Reservoir with two new reservoirs constructed to meet seismic standards, and to implement ShakeAlert (earthquake early warning system) on the new reservoirs. The grant application was developed in conjunction with Washington State Emergency Management Division (WA-EMD) of the Washington State Military Department and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as a hazard mitigation project. The cost sharing is as follows: FEMA 75% (\$1,710,750), WA-EMD 12.5% (\$285,125), and Lake Whatcom Water and Sewer District 12.5% (\$285,125).

The District's formal award of a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency community grant through congressionally directed spending (Congressman Larsen earmark) in November 2024 will fund demolition and site restoration activities. With receipt of this funding, FEMA HMG scope and funding can be revised to remove these activities. FEMA provided formal approval of these revisions in January 2024, and Amendment No. 3 from WA-EMD was received April 3. Discussion followed.

Action Taken

Knakal moved, Carter seconded, to authorize the general manager to execute Amendment No. 3 to Hazard Mitigation Grant Agreement No. D24-016 with the Washington State Military Department associated with the Division 7 Reservoir Replacement Project as presented. Motion passed.

District Personnel Policies Manual Update

Clary outlined that the District's personnel policies manual defines the District's employment philosophy, practices, policies, and benefits provided to all District staff. As state and case law evolves and new issues arise, the manual has been revised to keep abreast of current practices and laws. The last revision of the manual was completed in July 2023. District staff presented a revised draft personnel policies manual for Board consideration that incorporates policy overlap with changes in the 2025-2028 AFSCME agreement, as well as defines password protection requirements to enhance District cybersecurity measures. Discussion followed, during which the Board requested amendment to increase the number of characters required in employee passwords.

Action Taken

Holland moved, Ford seconded, to approve the personnel policies manual as amended. Motion passed.

District Mission, Vision, Values and Goals Adoption

Clary recalled that one goal within the District's 2025-2030 strategic business plan is to obtain accreditation through the American Public Works Association (APWA). APWA accreditation is a process that a public works agency may undergo that promotes excellence in all aspects of the agency's management, operations, programs, and employees. A business practice under the APWA accreditation Organization and Strategic Planning functional area is the periodic review of the agency's mission, vision, and values statements. The District's current mission and goals were adopted by the Board in August 2024, however a vision statement had never adopted and the most recent revision of District values was completed in 2011. Following Board

discussion at the March 26 regular meeting, a proposed vision statement as well as a compilation of the 2024-approved mission and goals and the 2011 values was presented to the Board for approval. Discussion followed, wherein the Board amended the Vision statement to "Trusted [provider and] steward of a life-sustaining resource."

Action Taken

Carter moved, Holland seconded, to adopt the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals, as amended. Motion passed.

General Manager's Report

Clary updated the Board on several topics, including the recent Lake Whatcom Management Program Joint Councils & Commissions meeting on April 2, a recent ergonomics evaluation provided by the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries, and an upcoming City Council meeting to include discussion of 10-20 year planning horizon for water and sewer capital expenditures. Discussion followed.

With no further business, Citron adjourned the regular session at 7:15 p.m.


Board President, Todd Citron

Attest: 
Recording Secretary, Rachael Hope

Minutes approved by motion at ☒ Regular ☐ Special Board Meeting on April 30, 2025