



1220 Lakeway Dr • Bellingham, WA 98229

REGULAR SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Minutes

July 30, 2025

Board President Todd Citron called the Regular Session to order at 8:00 a.m.

Attendees:	Commissioner Todd Citron (v)	General Manager Justin Clary
	Commissioner John Carter (v)	Engineering Manager Greg Nicoll
	Commissioner Bruce Ford	Finance Manager Jenny Signs
	Commissioner Jeff Knakal	Operations Manager Jason Dahlstrom
	Commissioner David Holland (v)	Recording Secretary Rachael Hope

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

Consent Agenda

Action Taken

Knakal moved, Holland seconded, approval of:

- **Minutes for the 7.09.2025 Regular Board Meeting**
- **Benefits for Pay Period #14 totaling \$63,063.90**
- **Payroll for Pay Period #15 (7.05.2025 through 7.18.2025) totaling \$60,841.16**
- **Benefits for Pay Period #15 totaling \$62,456.50**
- **Accounts Payable Vouchers totaling 341,273.63**

Motion passed.

Customer Appeal – Suspension of Sewer Service Requirements

Clary explained that the District previously served a single-family residence at 2125 North Shore Rd which was uninhabited from approximately 2001 until 2015. In 2015, Tim and Leslie Farris, owners of a neighboring property, purchased the property and demolished the house. At that time, Mr. Farris inquired about termination of sewer service to the 2125 North Shore Road property, and was informed that per the District Administrative Code, the side sewer would require capping at the point at which it enters North Shore Road right-of-way to be eligible for service suspension. The Farris's determined that the side sewer connects to side sewers serving neighboring connections under a joint-use driveway, and chose not to pursue capping of the side sewer and continued paying the bimonthly sewer service bill for the property.

In November of 2023, Commissioner Ford received an email from Mr. Farris requesting that the District reconsider suspension of sewer service to the subject property subject to capping the side sewer at the prior location of the demolished home rather than at the road right-of-way. The General Manager provided a response, citing the District Administrative Code specification regarding capping requirements for suspension of sewer services. In July of 2025, Mr. Farris requested that the District reconsider his request, or consider

revising the Administrative Code to provide a reduced sewer service rate for properties connected to the District's sewage conveyance system that do not have structures.

Staff highlighted the three primary options for the Board related to the appeal: development of a resolution revising the Administrative Code to allow for capping of side sewers at locations other than at the right-of-way or as close to the sewer main as possible, development of a resolution revising the Master Fees and Charges Schedule to create a customer class for connections to District sewer service that do not serve a structure, or uphold the General Manager's interpretation of the Administrative Code. The Board discussed these options, recognizing potential issues related to unused side sewer/sewer laterals and capping locations.

Action Taken

Knakal moved, Holland seconded, to uphold the District Administrative Code as written and implemented by the General Manager and decline Mr. Farris's appeal to revise the Administrative Code. Motion passed.

Rocky Ridge/Lakewood Sewer Lift Stations Improvements Project Public Works Contract Close Out

Nicoll recalled that the Lakewood and Rocky Ridge sewer lift stations are located along the southerly shore of Lake Whatcom along Lake Whatcom Boulevard. Both stations had not been significantly upgraded since their original installation in the 1970s. The public works project consisted of the replacement of pumps, motors, controls and power drops at both stations. Following a public bid process, the District Board awarded the construction contract to Red Point Contracting during a regularly scheduled meeting on May 8, 2024. The contractor has now completed all work and contract requirements. Staff recommended accepting the project as complete and closing out the public works contract.

Action Taken

Ford moved, Knakal seconded, to accept the Lakewood and Rocky Ridge Sewer Lift Stations Improvements Project public works contract performed by Red Point Contracting as complete and authorize staff to close out the public works contract. Motion passed.

Financial Benchmarks Discussion

Clary summarized that as a public agency, it is crucial that the District maintain public trust through efficiently operating in a transparent manner. The development of benchmarks can effectively set the stage for the long-term demonstration to customers that the District has proactively managed and maintained its systems to mitigate unnecessary operational expenses. Recognizing that the District is unique, District staff and Commissioner Carter have initiated discussion on creation of benchmarks specific to the District, while also using existing resources (such as the American Water Works Association Utility Benchmarking and Washington State Auditor's Office guidance documents) as may be applicable to the District. Staff presented an initial set of benchmarks proposed for demonstrating the District's proactive, long-term management of its systems. Discussion followed.

General Manager's Report

Clary updated the Board on several topics, including a recent sewage release due to root infiltration in a manhole, potential de-designation of the Geneva Urban Growth Area as part of the current Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan update, and staff research on consolidation related to the Glen Cove Water Association. Discussion followed.

Engineering Department Report

Nicoll highlighted several projects, including self-healing progress and trial operations at the newly constructed Division 7 Reservoirs, planning for future updates to the Geneva Reservoir, and progress on the Flatcar Lift Station Reverse Flow project. Discussion followed.


Finance Department Report

Signs' report focused on the Quarterly Financial Report for Second Quarter 2025, including investment income earnings, trends in revenues and expenditures, and June customer account adjustments.

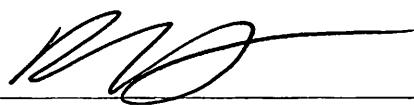
Operations & Maintenance Department Report

Dahlstrom updated the Board on activity in the Department, including repair of recent line breaks and ongoing pressure reducing valve maintenance and installation of pressure monitors in Sudden Valley. He also recognized Maintenance Worker Cyrus Gates for attaining the Water Treatment Plant Operator 3 Certification.

With no further business, Citron adjourned the regular session at 10:11 a.m.



Board President, Todd Citron

Attest: 

Recording Secretary, Rachael Hope

Minutes approved by motion at ☒ Regular ☐ Special Board Meeting on Aug 13, 2025