



1220 Lakeway Dr • Bellingham, WA 98229

REGULAR SESSION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Minutes

August 27, 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	Finance Manager Jenny Signs
	Commissioner Bruce Ford (v)	Operations Manager Jason Dahlstrom
	Commissioner Jeff Knakal	Recording Secretary Rachael Hope
	Commissioner David Holland	

Also in attendance was District customer Taryn Adams (v). Attendees noted with a (v) attended the meeting virtually.

Consent Agenda

Action Taken

Carter moved, Knakal seconded, approval of:

- **Minutes for the 8.13.2025 Regular Board Meeting**
- **Payroll for Pay Period #17 (08.02.2025 through 8.15.2025) totaling \$59,362.33**
- **Benefits for Pay Period #17 totaling \$60,971.83**
- **Accounts Payable Vouchers totaling \$74,018.83**

Motion passed.

Water Bill Adjustments Policy Appeal

Clary explained that the District received an appeal of the water bill adjustments policy from District customer Taryn Adams on August 6, 2025. On June 3, 2025, Ms. Adams contacted the District in the evening after identifying a leak in her water service line. On-call staff responded that evening and confirmed with Ms. Adams that there was a leak in her line, which she had repaired on June 5. Based upon water meter data, it was determined that the leak began on May 20. Total use over the two-month billing period including the leak was 38,184 cubic feet resulting in a \$6,080.15 water bill. District staff spoke with Ms. Adams on August 6 during which she requested credit beyond what is allowed in Administrative Code section 2.10.6.

Ms. Adams' appeal proposed a revision to Administrative Code section 2.10.6 to add a provision for "Extreme High Use Leak Forgiveness," with forgiveness of 100% based on prompt repair, leak volume, and other factors. Staff presented the board with Ms. Adams' appeal as well as information about the history of leak and unintentional water loss adjustments in the District; and recommended that the Board uphold the General Manager's interpretation of the Administrative Code and decline the appeal for revision. Ms. Adams spoke to the Board regarding the appeal and policy. Discussion followed, during which the Board requested staff provide additional information for discussion at the next regular meeting.

Action Taken

Knakal moved, Ford seconded, to table Ms. Adams appeal to the September 10 meeting for further discussion regarding the District's Administrative Code specific to the Water Bill Adjustment policy. Motion passed.

2025-26 Miscellaneous Asphalt Repair Unit-price Public Works Contract Award

As part of sewer and water utility repair and replacement and installation of new service connections by District staff, portions of existing asphalt surfaces are removed to facilitate the work. In addition, the District owns and maintains asphalt surfaces through the various District-owned properties that require periodic repair and replacement. The intent of a unit price bid is to contract with a qualified contractor over a 12-month period to provide the "on-call" professional repair, rehabilitation and replacement services for existing and removed asphalt surfaces. This allows staff to authorize individual work orders in logical groupings of work that minimize mobilization/demobilization expenses. The District estimated the work under this unit price contract to be less than \$350,000, which allows the use of the small works roster process for bidding.

Bids were opened on August 21, with J Ritter Dirt & Asphalt LLC being the apparent low bidder. Staff completed verification of supplemental bidder criteria and recommended awarding the 2025-26 Miscellaneous Asphalt Repair Unit-price contract to J Ritter Dirt & Asphalt LLC for an amount of \$128,204.48 (including Washington State sales tax).

Action Taken

Carter moved, Holland seconded, to award the 2025-2026 Asphalt Repair Unit-price contract to J Ritter Dirt & Asphalt and authorize the General Manager to execute the contract. Motion passed.

Code of Ethics Adoption

A code of ethics for officials and employees establishes standards and guidelines for ethical conduct and principles of public service that strengthen public confidence of the agency and defines the expectation for conduct that aligns with the agency's mission and vision statements. The District previously adopted a personnel policy manual for employees and a protocol manual for commissioners, defining allowable conduct of staff and board; however, a succinct document setting these expectations was not created. During the August 13 board meeting, the general manager facilitated a discussion with the board and management team to identify elements to be included in a code of ethics specific to the District. Based upon that discussion a draft code of ethics was provided for the Board's consideration.

Action Taken

Knakal moved, Holland seconded, to adopt the Code of Ethics, as presented. Motion passed.

General Manager's Report

Clary updated the Board on several topics, including an update on the voltage challenges at the Euclid Sewer Lift Station, progress on the Whatcom County Coordinated Water System Plan update and potential adoption at the County Council's September 23 meeting, and topics for an upcoming Lake Whatcom Management Program policy group meeting. Discussion followed.

Engineering Department Report

In Nicoll's absence, Clary highlighted the schedule for demolition of the de-commissioned Division 7 reservoir, progress on the Flatcar Reverse Flow project, and design progress on various projects.

Finance Department Report

Signs' report focused on the July financial summary, touching on receipt of federal funds, status of the District's water and sewer revenue and expenditures for the year to date, and capital project expenditures tracking to budget. Discussion followed.

Operations & Maintenance Department Report

Dahlstrom updated the Board on activity in the Department, including Maintenance Worker Greg Soto's placement at the 2025 American Public Works Association's National Conference ROADeo, an upcoming road closure in the Geneva neighborhood for water leak service line repair, and staffing in the absence of the District's water treatment plant operator due to a non-work-related injury. Discussion followed.

With no further business, Citron adjourned the regular session at 9:35 a.m.



Board President, Todd Citron

Attest:



Recording Secretary, Rachael Hope

Minutes approved by motion at ☒ Regular ☐ Special Board Meeting on Sept 10, 2025