

PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT NO. 1  
OF ASOTIN COUNTY, WASHINGTON  
MEETING MINUTES  
December 8, 2020

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President Judy Ridge presiding, the Public Utility District No. 1 of Asotin County Meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. The meeting was held by teleconference in accordance with the Washington State Governor's Proclamation 20-28, dated March 24, 2020, due to the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Proclamation 20-28.13, dated November 12, 2020, extending the original and subsequent Proclamations.

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ROLL CALL: PRESENT Commissioners: Judy Ridge, Greg McCall and Don Nuxoll.

Staff: Tim Simpson and Bob Sischo.

MINUTES OF MEETING AND VOUCHER APPROVAL

**MOTION** by Commissioner Don Nuxoll and seconded by Commissioner Greg McCall to approve the consent agenda approving the minutes of the November 24, 2020 Regular Meeting and payment of Payroll Vouchers #2047 – #2049 and Electronic Payroll Vouchers #5761EFT – #5777EFT in the amount of \$41,434.17 and Electronic Accounts Payable Vouchers #20120401, #20120402, #20120701, #20120702 and #20121401 and Accounts Payable Vouchers #41294 – #41346 in the amount of \$193,512.46. The question was called for on the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

COVID-19 UPDATE

The manager reported that a field operations employee tested positive for COVID and a co-worker working in close contact on service line leak, on a holiday, tested negative. Both employees were held out of work last week and were back working today. The proclamation prohibiting public meetings will be extended to January 19, 2021 and the proclamation prohibiting service disconnects and the charging of late fees will be extended to April 30, 2021. The manager reported that revenue from delinquent account fees and disconnects is down approximately \$72,000 as compared to last year. The total dollar amount of delinquent accounts currently past due is approximately \$89,000. Nearly half of the past due accounts are in the 1 to 30-day range. 209 door tags for cycles 4-6 were generated November 24th with 54 payments made. 147 door tags for cycles 1-3 will be generated today and will go out tomorrow.

OLD BUSINESS

There were no items presented under Old Business.

NEW BUSINESS

Resolution 20-481 – Adopting the 2021 Budget

The manager presented Resolution 20-481 which provides for the adoption of the 2021 Budget (Budget). He stated that since reviewing the Budget, at the last meeting, a couple of items had changed. \$50,000 was added for the use of a consulting engineer to assist the PUD in meeting the requirements of the America's Water Infrastructure Act signed into law in 2018. The Act requires that community water systems conduct a Risk and Resilience Assessment and update their Emergency Response Plan and submit these documents to the Environmental Protection Agency for approval and certification. Funds designated for the Well No. 3 Inspection and Pump Replacement project were increased to \$125,000 after discovering that the column has deteriorated and will need to be replaced. Water main replacement project funding was reduced to accommodate this change in allocation.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Greg McCall and seconded by Commissioner Don Nuxoll to approve Resolution 20-481 adopting the 2021 Budget. The question was called for on the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

Resolution 20-482 – 2021 Water Rates, Charges and Fees

The manager presented Resolution 20-482 which provides for the setting of water rates, charges and fees effective January 1, 2021. He stated that the 2021 Budget provides for a 5% revenue increase meeting the Board's adopted Plan. The Plan provides for annual revenue increases to fund operations and capital improvements to ensure financial stability of the PUD in order to meet increasing operational costs and provide for capital improvements. The Water Consumptive Rate will increase to \$1.10 per unit, increasing the Industrial Rates. The Monthly Minimum Charge will increase \$1.00 per month for 3/4 inch to 3-inch meters, \$2.00 for 4-inch to 6-inch meters and \$4.00 for 8-inch meters for all account categories. The Multifamily unit charge will not increase and remain at \$11.00 per unit. In addition, the 1-inch and 1 1/2 -inch service line Installation Fees will increase 10% to cover current costs with the 1-inch increasing from \$2,500 to \$2,750 and the 1 1/2-inch increasing from \$5,000 to \$5,500.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Greg McCall and seconded by Commissioner Don Nuxoll to adopt Resolution 20-482 setting the Water Rates, Charges and Fees effective January 1, 2021. The question was called for on the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

Resolution 20-483 – 2021 Sewer Rates, Charges and Fees

The manager presented Resolution 20-483 which provides for the setting of sewer rates, charges and fees effective January 1, 2021. He stated that Monthly Sewer Charges increased 3% in 2020 to cover a net 11.4% increase by the City of Clarkston for the operations and maintenance expenses at the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). The WWTP budget will increase approximately 8.6% in 2021. The sewer rate resolution provides for a 5% increase in the Monthly Sewer Charge. The WWTP Budget has increased nearly 20% the past 2 years with the PUD only increasing rates 8% during that period. The monthly Single Family Residential and Commercial Rate will increase from \$38.00 to \$40.00 and the monthly Qualified Senior Citizens and Disabled Persons rate will increase from \$31.00 to \$32.50. The Port of Wilma monthly charge will increase 10% from \$50.00 to \$55.00. In addition, the category of "Jail/Correction Facility" has been added to the User Classification Schedule to accommodate the new Asotin County jail. The proposed jail site is located adjacent to the PUD sewer system. The commission discussed the Equivalent Residential Unit (ERU) designation which was proposed at 1.0 for the first bed and .4 per additional bed at the proposed 150 bed facility. Due to the 24/7 use by staff and those incarcerated, it was the consensus to change the ERU to 1.0 per bed.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Don Nuxoll and seconded by Commissioner Greg McCall to adopt Resolution 20-483 setting the Sewer Rates, Charges and Fees effective January 1, 2021 with the change in the Jail/Correction Facility ERU. The question was called for on the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

Resolution 20-484 – Establishing the Board of Commissioners Governance Policies

The manager presented Resolution 20-484 which provides for the adoption of the Board Governance Policy Manual. A draft copy of the policies was reviewed and discussed at the last meeting. Section 10.3 – Legislative Activities of Board Members, specifically item A of this section regarding lobbying without prior Board approval or action was reviewed and language in PUD policies used for the development of our policy is consistent in all documents. There have been no changes since the review.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Greg McCall and seconded by Commissioner Don Nuxoll to adopt Resolution 20-484 Establishing the Board of Commissioners Governance Policies. The question was called for on the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

Resolution 20-485 – Authorizing the Purchase of Real Property

The manager presented Resolution 20-485 which provides for closing of the purchase of the Valleyview Drive properties. The Resolution identifies the steps taken in the process of purchasing the properties, including the appraisal, and authorizes the manager to proceed with the purchase of the real property by securing the commitment for title insurance, executing the closing documents, including the deed, on behalf of the PUD in order to complete the property purchase transaction. The manager stated that upon Board approval of the Resolution, he will contact a title company to initiate the closing process.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Don Nuxoll and seconded by Commissioner Greg McCall to adopt Resolution 20-485 Authorizing the General Manager to proceed with the purchase of real property, secure the title insurance commitment and execute closing documents on behalf of the District. The question was called for on the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Commissioner Ridge adjourned the regular meeting into Executive Session at 10:25 a.m. to evaluate the performance of an employee per RCW 42.30.110(1)(g). Commissioner Ridge stated that the Board would be in Executive Session for 20 minutes.

Commissioner Ridge called the regular meeting back to order at 10:45 a.m.

Resolution 20-486 – Setting the General Manager’s Salary

**MOTION** by Commissioner Don Nuxoll and seconded by Commissioner Greg McCall to adopt Resolution 20-486 setting the General Manager’s salary effective January 1, 2021. The question was called for on the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

Change the Tuesday, December 22, 2020 Commission Meeting Date

Commissioner Nuxoll requested changing the next Commission meeting date from Tuesday, December 22, 2020 to Monday, December 21, 2020.

**MOTION** by Commissioner Greg McCall and seconded by Commissioner Don Nuxoll to approve changing the Tuesday, December 22, 2020 to Monday, December 21, 2020 at 10:00 am. The question was called for on the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

MANAGER’S REPORT

Operations Activity – the manager reported that the crew is currently working on maintenance items. The fence for the new material storage area, near the operations shop, is close to completion.

Well No. 3 Project – the manager reported that Specialty Pump completed the pulling of Well No. 3 components last week. As noted earlier in the meeting during the 2021 Budget discussion, the columns have deteriorated and need to be replaced. The cost of replacement is approximately \$45,000. The retainers are being inspected and may also need to be replaced. The pump and column have been ordered and Specialty Pump stated that they should have the well operational by February 2021.

Well No. 7 Motor Starter – the manager reported that a custom designed Benshaw motor starter for Well No. 7 will be purchased this week. Replacement of the starter is identified in the list of Capital Improvement Projects for 2021. He stated that Benshaw is the motor starter used at PUD wells due to their quality. He stated that having the same starter at each well provides for ease of maintenance when it comes to parts replacement. It will take 12 to 14 weeks to build and ship and the plan is to have it installed prior to the start of the peak pumping season.

#### COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioners Ridge and McCall remotely attended the Washington PUD Association Annual Conference on December 2-4. They reported that at the Water Committee meeting staffing was addressed for when Water Program Director John Kounts retires in January 2021. Current staff will pick up his responsibilities. The group heard reports about the WSDOT culvert replacement program for fish passage and the cost burden it is placing on utilities; a report from the Public Works Board regarding available funding and the replacement of six board members, in 2021, including WPUDA's representative; reports from the Department of Health (DOH) on how the pandemic has required the reallocation of staffing resources to address COVID reporting and tracking issues along with discussion about PFAS and Lead and Copper rule-making; and reports from the Department of Ecology about the Municipal Water Law and current court cases affecting changes in policies. Commissioners reported that the Legislature is scheduled to convene on January 11, 2021. House Democratic majority leadership has set priorities for next session and has asked its members to limit their introduction of bills to no more than seven per member during session. The House Democrats' legislative priorities are COVID-19 response, biennial budget preparation, racial equity and addressing climate change.

During the conference Commissioners heard from the Bonneville Power Administration regarding their CEO search, the BP-22 Rate Case and regional power issues. Presentations were also made by DOH and others about the health and economic impacts of COVID-19. WPUDA Executive Director George Caan provided a WPUDA outlook and perspectives for 2021. Digital equity and closing the digital divide in the most vulnerable communities was discussed along with a presentation from Department of Natural Resources Commissioner Hillary Franz. Kittitas PUD Commissioner Paul Rogers received the WPUDA Lifetime Achievement Award.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.