



MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

April 7, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Board President Ron Ricker via telephone conference call in conformance with Governor's Proclamation 20-28. Executive Assistant Theresa Harrington called the roll. All attendees confirmed that they could hear the other participants.

Commissioners Participating

Commissioner Ron Ricker
Commissioner Charlotte Haines
Commissioner Patricia Hale

Staff Participating

Diane Pottinger, District Manager
Denny Clouse, Operations Manager
Amalia Mostrales, Finance Manager
Theresa Harrington, Executive Assistant
Joe Bennett, District Attorney

PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of the public were invited to participate in the telephone conference call. The dial in number was posted at the drive-up window at the district administrative offices and posted with the agenda on the District website. No members of public were on the call.

APPROVAL AND/OR ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA

Commissioner Haines moved to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Hale seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Hale made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 17 regular meeting. Commissioner Haines seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS

Commissioner Haines moved to approve vouchers numbers 5789-5806 and 116569-116619 in the amount \$124,753.08 from the maintenance fund and voucher numbers 490-497 in the amount of \$29,455.31 from the capital fund. The commissioners discussed the vouchers with staff who provided answers to their questions. Commissioner Hale seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

NCWD's COVID-19 Response

District Manager Diane Pottinger provided the Board with an overview of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) which requires certain employers to provide their employees with paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19. These provisions will apply from April 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020. Finance Manager Amalia Mostrales discussed each eligibility scenario and the accounting, payroll and human resource implications for the District.

Ms. Pottinger gave an overview of the current staffing changes the District has implemented to continue the provision of essential functions while maintaining mandated social distancing measures. The front office remains closed to public entry, but customer access is still available at the drive-up window. Front office staff will alternate working in office and working remotely so that no more than two office staff will be present in office on a given day. The Operations Manager will work opposite shifts from the Field Lead and the District Manager. The Finance Manager and the Accountant will also work opposite shifts. No one individual will be at District facilities for any more than 40 hours per two week period until this emergency situation ends.

Operations Manager Denny Clouse updated the Board on the field crew schedule. Currently, only two field employees will be onsite at any given time. The remainder of the crew will work remotely reviewing and updating standard operating procedures and engaging in assigned

training classes. Each field crew member will have a North City Water District vehicle and will be available on call as needed for leaks and other emergent needs.

Ms. Pottinger also reported on some policy changes implemented to support customers during this difficult time. The District website has been updated with current information on COVID related policies. Customers who are having difficulty paying their bill have been encouraged to contact the office. Customer service staff will be working with customers individually on payment arrangements. There will be no late fees charged or shut offs at this time. As water is essential for handwashing and hygiene, these policies are to support public health and safety. These measures will have a revenue impact on the District, but the full impact will not be known for a few months. It is anticipated that water consumption patterns will change as a result of the stay at home order which may offset the revenue loss from not charging late fees. The Board will be kept up to date on budgetary impacts as the situation evolves.

District Attorney Joe Bennett inquired on whether any existing District contracts have been impacted by the COVID-19 situation. Ms. Pottinger reported that the upgrade of the Springbrook software and the implementation of the Flex-Net system has been postponed until May. Janitorial services are still being provided. Commissioner Ricker inquired as to how employees were accessing materials to work from home. Managers are working with individual employees to identify at home tasks and priorities to ensure that they have what they need to productively work from home.

NEW BUSINESS

a. 2020.04.16 Approving Amendment No 1 to the Contract with CHS Engineers for Water System Plan Updates

In December of 2017, the District contracted with CHS to complete the update of the North City Water District Comprehensive Plan. The initial timeline for the project was one year, however, due to unforeseen obstacles the project took more time than anticipated. Ms. Pottinger presented the Board with a resolution to amend the contract with CHS to cover the project overrun expenses. Both she and Mr. Clouse agreed it was a fair representation of the work provided by CHS. Commissioner Haines made a motion to approve the resolution, which was seconded by Commissioner Hale and approved unanimously by the Board.

b. Resolution 2020.04.17 Changing the District's Voucher Approval Process to meet King County's new Accounts Payable Requirements during the COVID-19 Emergency

District Manager Diane Pottinger presented a resolution to modify the District's voucher approval process during the COVID-19 emergency. King County will no longer be allowing delivery or pick up of checks. Instead, they will be mailing out checks priority mail, resulting in a long lag time between Board meeting approval of vouchers and mailing of checks to vendors. The resolution will modify the voucher approval process to meet King County's deadlines to ensure prompt payment of vendors. The resolution authorizes the District Manager to submit the vouchers to the County on Monday prior to the regular Board meeting after review by one commissioner appointed by the Board. The vouchers so submitted would then be ratified by the Board at the regular meeting. After considering the new check disbursement timeline from King County, the Board agreed that submitting the vouchers should occur the Friday before the Board meeting not the Monday.

Commissioner Hale motioned to amend resolution 2020.04.17 to stipulate vouchers submittal should occur the Friday before the general meeting (in place of Monday). Commissioner Haines seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously. Executive Assistant Theresa Harrington updated the resolution as requested. Commissioner Hale made a motion to approve and authorized the District Manager to indicate each commissioner's approval, and the District Attorney's attestation, of the resolution by signing her name on their behalf. Commissioner Haines seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Haines moved to appoint Board President Ron Ricker to carry out the remote voucher approval duties outlined in resolution 2020.04.17. Commissioner Hale seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Hale motioned to extend the authorization for the District Manager to sign on behalf of the Commissioners and District Attorney to all documents including meeting minutes, vouchers and resolutions approved by the Board during this meeting. Commissioner Haines seconded the motion and the motion passed.

The District Manager was instructed to sign her name on behalf of each commissioner and the district attorney on the approved minutes, resolutions and vouchers approved at the meeting.

c. Resolution 2020.04.18 Allowing Employees to work remotely during the COVID-19 Emergency.

Ms. Pottinger presented a resolution to clarify the essential services the District is required to perform and the necessary staffing to both provide services and adhere to social distancing practices. In order to do this, staff will be working remotely at times, which is currently not the norm for the District. The proposed resolution allows staff to work remotely during this emergency. Commissioner Haines motioned to approve the resolution. Commissioner Hale seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

d. WASWD Section IV Contributions

District Manager Diane Pottinger presented a letter from WASWD Section IV requesting that member utilities contribute to the WASWD Section IV consulting services fund. In the past, NCWD has contributed \$1,500 to this fund. The commissioners discussed the value of these services to the District. Commissioner Haines moved to approve a \$1,500 contribution to the WASWD Section IV Consulting Services Fund. Commissioner Hale seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

MANAGER REPORTS

a. Finance Manager

Finance Manager Amalia Mostrales reported that the audit deadline for the financial statements deadline is expected to be extended due to the COVID-19 emergency. This will give staff the much needed extra time to produce the financial statements.

b. Project Status Report/Operation Manager

Operations Manager Clouse informed the Board that the construction of the new maintenance facility has been deemed an essential project and, therefore, construction work is continuing at the site. The slab has been poured and work on the curbs, sidewalks and fencing will start soon. The steel frame building should go up next week. The District received authorization to install a temporary power pole at the site. This will allow for the electric meter to the house on site to be removed in preparations for tear down which is scheduled for next week. There is also a large tree on site which will be removed, pending city authorization. Mr. Clouse also informed the board that Sound Transit has shut down their construction projects for the duration of the COVID-19 emergency, resulting in the suspension of its WSEA-related work until the stay at home order has been lifted. All other non-essential WSEA projects have also been paused. Finally, Mr. Clouse reported on several new developments that will require a District WSEA. He anticipates hearing from the developers for these projects soon.

District Attorney Joe Bennett asked Mr. Clouse to report on social distancing practices at the worksite. Mr. Clouse reported that he has spoken with Faber Construction about this and their team has implemented as much social distance as is possible on the worksite. In addition, District staff and construction staff are distancing from each other. Faber is also responsible for communicating social distancing requirements to any subcontractors on site.

a. District Manager

District Manager Diane Pottinger shared information about a source for hand sanitizer during the emergency. The same source sells small bottles of sanitizer with logo and message printing for Northshore Utility. Ms. Pottinger proposed that North City Water District purchase some as well to offer to customers at our summer events. This would promote public safety. The expense would come out of the existing public outreach/event budget. The commissioners agreed.

Ms. Pottinger shared the results of a survey she conducted with similar sized water utilities in our region about responses to the COVID-19 emergency. This information was helpful. Ms. Pottinger reported on the April 2nd SPU Operating Board meeting. There were a host of technical difficulties on the call resulting in a less than ideal meeting experience. An important topic of the meeting was a review of the CIP projects and expenses. Ms. Pottinger will be attending a working group meeting to review and provide input to SPU on this topic. Operating Board members must provide their questions and comments on the CIP before the June meeting. She also reported on the recent Public Works Board meeting. Lastly, Ms. Pottinger revisited the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA). Several leave

scenarios (like caring for a child who is out of school) only allow for 2/3 compensation for employees. Ms. Pottinger proposed that if an employee found themselves requiring this type of leave, they be allowed to use their existing banked leave to cover the remaining of 1/3 uncompensated loss. The commissioners agreed that this would be allowable if the situation warranted it.

Commissioner Ricker was disconnected from the call at 4:15 p.m. Vice-President Hale presided for the remainder of the meeting in his absence.

COMMISSIONER REPORTS

Commissioner Haines reported that she attempted to attend the Operating Board meeting via conference call on April 2nd, but after trying for 30 minutes to dial in and getting a busy signal she was forced to give up.

Commissioner Hale reported that the development planned west of 8th Avenue has been stalled due to COVID-19 related challenges.

LEGAL REPORT

District Attorney Joe Bennett commended the Board on a well-run remote meeting.

Commissioner Hale concluded the meeting at 4:20 p.m.

The next regular meeting will be Tuesday, April 21, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. via telephone conference call as required by the Governor's Proclamation 20-28.

Ronald Ricker

Charlotte Haines

Patricia M. Hale