

**UTILITY ADVISORY BOARD  
MEETING MINUTES**

May 19, 2011

Public Works Department – Water Utility Conference Room

**Board Members Present:** Dick Behrends - Chair; Geoff Larson – Vice-Chair; Scott Willis; Matt Van Steenwyk; George Porter

**Staff Present:** Joe Buck, Kirk Duncan, Jim Heumann, Dave Crabtree, Ken Huddleston, Patti Rumfelt

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 5:28 p.m. by Mr. Behrends.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes from the March 17, 2011 meeting were unanimously approved without changes.

**III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

**IV. ACTION ITEMS**

Board decision on next meeting date: July 7. Ms. Rumfelt will email members with this proposed date. [As a result of members' emailed feedback, the date of Tuesday, July 5<sup>th</sup> was subsequently set.]

**V. INFORMATION ITEMS**

A. Introduction - Kirk Duncan, Deputy Public Works Director

Mr. Buck introduced Kirk Duncan to the board. Kirk joined the Public Works Department in May and is currently serving as Deputy Director. He will assume the position of Director when Joe Buck departs at the end of June. Kirk served as the Manager of the Eaglecrest ski area for the past 7 years and originally came to Juneau in 1996 to participate in the construction of the Mount Roberts Tram.

B. Draft FY2011 Annual UAB Report

An updated draft of the UAB's annual report to the CBJ Assembly was included in the board packet. UAB members were pleased with the draft, but recommended including additional language to the portion of the report discussing the water and wastewater rate increases that the Assembly approved in 2010. The additional language is intended to add

background information about the events leading up to the 2010 rate increases:

1. Note that the UAB had previously made recommendations for smaller rate increases in 2008. Unfortunately, the previous recommendation coincided with the Snettisham power line avalanche which caused significant short term increases to local electrical rates. These conditions prompted the City Manager/Assembly to forgo the 2008 recommendation in an effort to reduce economic impacts on local residents.
2. The postponement of the rate increases recommended in 2008 prompted the need for the larger magnitude rate increases that the Assembly approved in 2010.

Mr. Buck stated he would incorporate the comments noted above and requested that any additional comments be emailed to him by the end of May.

The FY2011 UAB Annual Report will be presented in the packet for the CBJ Human Resources Committee at its June 13, 2011 meeting. At least one UAB member will need to attend, as well.

C. Biosolids Disposal/Reuse Options Memo

Mr. Heumann summarized the recent Biosolids Disposal/Reuse Options memo and noted that it was presented to the CBJ Assembly May 2<sup>nd</sup>. The memo was accepted by the Assembly who directed the City Manager to have staff prepare a Request for Proposals advertisement aimed at private sector vendors interested in providing these services. Mr. Buck noted that the goals are to engage an appropriate firm for the beneficial processing/reuse of the biosolids and to keep the costs as low as possible.

Mr. Larson stated that it would be good to continue shipping the biosolids south for disposal for another couple of months. Staff concurred and noted that this method of disposal will be used for biosolids produced by the JDWWTP during the 2011 cruise ship season.

D. Utilities Engineer's Report – Jim Heumann, PE

In addition to his written report, Mr. Heumann commented on his attendance at the Alaska Water & Wastewater Management Association (AWWMA) conference in Anchorage at the end of April. He noted that the event allowed him to interact with representatives of other Alaska communities facing similar challenges and to become familiar with new equipment and technologies. He also noted that he has been elected as Southeast Regional Vice-President to the AWWMA Board of Directors.

E. Wastewater Utility Updates – Tom Trego

Mr. Trego stated there are currently some staffing issues at Wastewater that are being dealt with in-house.

He additionally noted that Wastewater staff loaded the first container of biosolids from JDWWT biosolids vault today which prompted some odor complaints from adjacent businesses. The vault is currently approximately 40% full, and staff is working to remove the rest of the material as quickly as possible.

F. Water Utility Updates – Dave Crabtree

Mr. Crabtree noted that, over the last several days, Water staff has noted decreases in the amount of water being produced by well #4 at the Last Chance Basin Well Field. Staff is monitoring the performance of the well and has been in contact with several pump specialists in an attempt to diagnose and correct the situation; additionally, staff has made a series of adjustments in the system to compensate for the decreased output. Mr. Willis inquired if the utility has a spare pump on the shelf to replace Pump #4. Mr. Crabtree replied that we do not because each of the pumps is a custom assembly, sized for the individual characteristics of each well, thus making it difficult to keep the correct spares on hand.

After hearing Mr. Crabtree's report, Mr. Willis provided a status report of AEL&P's current program to evaluate the integrity of the concrete in the Salmon Creek dam. AEL&P periodically investigates the condition of the concrete and has had a consultant working onsite since May 1<sup>st</sup> for the collection of core samples. The investigation made it necessary to lower the reservoir's water surface elevation to allow access to its lower wall surface, and the water supply from the dam has been offline since early May. The current schedule anticipates that the coring on the upstream side of the dam will be complete by May 31<sup>st</sup>, so water can start returning to the dam. The results will be compared with the findings of a similar investigation conducted about 30 years ago and used to prepare an updated report of the dam's condition.

Board members and staff discussed the possibility of having to tell residents to conserve water or whether it will be necessary to restrict water sales to cruise ships in the upcoming weeks. After some discussion, it was determined that we presently do not know whether special conservation measures will be necessary this summer and that it is premature to be issuing special water conservation announcements at present.

**VI. NON-AGENDA ITEMS**

- A. Mr. Buck stated that several staff attended a recent presentation by Rorie Watt on the AJ Mine. It was very informative and historical; many

questions centered on the effects that reopening of the mine could have on the water field up there. Mr. Willis also attended the presentation and suggested that Rorie could give a similar brief presentation at the next UAB meeting in July. The Board was very interested, and Mr. Duncan will contact Rorie.

- B. Mr. Behrends stated that he likes all of the details on the Water and Wastewater reports. Mr. Willis seconded that and added that he especially likes the chart at the end of Water's report.
- C. Mr. Duncan stated that as director of Public Works, some of his goals include 1) understanding the energy usage of both Utilities and working to reduce said usage; 2) conducting audits done in various areas of both Utilities; 3) evaluating whether an additional water source is needed in the Mendenhall Valley or elsewhere in the community; and 4) resolving meter issues to ensure increased accuracy of customer billings.

## **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Patti Rumfelt*

Patti Rumfelt, Administrative Assistant II  
CBJ Public Works Water Utility