



ENGINEERING & PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Utilities Division

2009 Radcliffe Road, Juneau, AK 99801

p: 907.586.0393 | f: 907.789.1681

UTILITIES ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

*Thursday, December 10th | 5:15pm
Teleconference - Zoom*

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:18 pm by Geoffrey, who led the meeting in the absence of a chair.

Members Present: Geoffrey Larson, Janet Schempf, Bryan Farrell, Grant Ritter

Members Absent: Andrew Campbell

Staff Present: Autumn Sapp, Brian McGuire, Joshua Midgett, Lori Sowa, Cristian Crabtree

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Agenda approved as amended (addition of Election of Officials under Action Items and Utility Online Payment Options to Information Items).

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

June 11th, 2020 Minutes approved with edits from Janet to Motion language.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

V. ACTION ITEMS

Election of Chair

Bryan Farrell was nominated by Geoffrey and accepted the role with no objections. He led the meeting from that point forward.

VI. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. *Budget Updates & COVID Implications*

Autumn Sapp shared the 2020 Season Summary document, showing the comparison of 2019 and 2020 cruise ship wastewater disposal and water usage. Autumn noted that the cruise ship season spans multiple fiscal years. Therefore, FY20 includes July, August, and September of 2019. By losing April, May, and June of 2020 – FY20 has a projected wastewater disposal difference of ~\$500k. Looking forward to FY21, the worst case projection is a loss of \$1.1m with no cruise ships. A best case scenario, with cruise ships returning to 2019 usage, projects ~\$600k loss. For water usage, there is a similar trend, with an estimated loss of \$45k in FY20, and between \$170k and \$215k in FY21.

Response

Bryan mentioned that losses and projections could be made with inflation taken into account.

Geoffrey inquired about additional impacts of COVID on the budget – including delinquent accounts and CARES funding. Autumn spoke to the extension of delinquent forgiveness and payment plan

accommodations to the end of January. Upon last look – there are 50+ customers with signed payment plan forms. Staff is entering the budget process and will have updates for the Board in the coming months.

B. Utility Online Payment Options

Autumn updated the Board on the work the Utility has been doing to allow customers to have a more seamless experience paying their bills online. CBJ has selected 'Invoice Cloud' as the vendor, and recently signed a contract. The Finance Department will be the Project Manager on transferring systems. Customers will be able to view their account online and make payments with Credit Cards and sign up for auto payments. The Utility will be covering the cost of customers who switch over to e-mail statements (\$.40) after the transition – existing customers that are signed up for e-mailed statements will not be charged to the Utility. Mailing costs currently are \$.66 a month, thus even with the possible cost of transfer, it will still represent a savings. Auto Pay costs and the monthly charge of the service (following a three year trial period) will be covered by the Finance Department. Customers will pay CC and/or bank transfer fees. Implementation should be fully operational by the end of February.

Response

Bryan questioned any of the advertising that CBJ might be doing about this. Geoffrey inquired further about who would be paying for the various fees.

C. COVID-19 Wastewater Testing Update

Lori Sowa spoke to the testing that the Wastewater Team has been conducting. Samples have been collected since September – twice weekly. Reasoning for this testing is its possible use as an indicator of the relative prevalence of the virus in the community independent of the community's testing behavior. The primary challenge in this testing is the multiple variables involved – including testing protocol, dilution from rainwater, travel time from households to treatment facility to the testing laboratory, etc. The data is best used to examine general trends. The team has been working with UAA, WRF, and Utah State Public Health on data interpretation in an attempt to better understand what value this testing can provide. Sampling will continue until Dec 29th. Future funding will determine whether this sampling will continue.

Response

Bryan wondered if there had been any normalization of the data to account for flow. Lori indicated that flow has been considered, and recently we changed labs to be able to get data results in concentration so that data can be normalized. Geoffrey asked about any correlation or predictability particularly in the case of the unsheltered population even earlier in the year. Lori noted that there has been some anecdotal agreement with clusters, but there has just been too much variability to date and not enough data to make better correlations.

D. Weather Event Response

Brian spoke to the impact of recent weather on basins and reservoirs. Working with contractors, the Streets Dept., and the Water team, access has been repaired and roadway impacts have been resolved. The primary delivery main from the Salmon Creek Reservoir was severely damaged (a break of about 140 ft.) and water supply has been impacted. Currently, community water supply is limited to Last Chance Basin *only*. The Lemon Creek lift station by Fred Meyer was impacted by a small landslide, which has since been cleared and runoff water has been redirected.

Response

Bryan updated the UAB on AEL&P's involvement in the various weather related damage and a possible timeline for repair.

E. Board Recommendations

Geoffrey brought up the specific types of members needed per the guidelines of the charter - an accountant, an engineer, and an additional commercial customer. Bryan and Geoffrey both mentioned they had reached out to individuals who declined. Autumn asked whether or not Andrew would be continuing – which Geoffrey confirmed. The possibility of a PSA being put out was brought up. Autumn will work with Communications staff on this prior to the next UAB meeting. Grant asked whether or not it



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could be included on Utility bills, which Autumn noted was already taken up by CARES granting and COVID-19 Response information.

VII. NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Geoffrey asked for updates on items from the previous minutes – Fats, Oils, and Greases in the community and the Dryer Project. Brian responded by noting that this year is an anomaly in many ways, but that FOG tracing has not shifted or changed noticeably. The Dryer Project is at a \$20m spend to date, with boiler/heater issues having been resolved via a mechanical damper. Currently, solids from the Juneau-Douglas and Mendenhall Treatment plant are being processed through this facility. Blending and procedural elements are still being fine-tuned. Bryan asked about the dried product usage, to which Brian replied that it is currently being sent to the local landfill. PFAS issues have slowed down the permitting process for dried solids to be used as a fertilizer and the only approved Class A biosolids use on the CBJ permit is for use as top cover at a landfill.

VII. ADJOURNMENT –

The meeting adjourned at 6:27pm

Next Meeting:

January 14, 2021 | 5:15 PM | Teleconference