



CITY OF BOISE
PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION MEETING
MINUTES • APRIL 7, 2021
REGULAR MEETING

City Hall - Maryanne Jordan City Council Chambers
4:00 PM

Final

150 N CAPITOL BLVD
BOISE, ID 83702

I. Call to Order

PRESENT: Gravatt, Hilton, Reading, Nink, Ellis, Collette
ABSENT: Crowley, Morgan

II. Minutes Approval

1. Public Works Commission Minutes - Work Session - Mar 3, 2021 3:00 PM

RESULT:	ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Jacob Nink, Commissioner
SECONDER:	Kylene Collette, Commissioner
AYES:	Gravatt, Hilton, Reading, Nink, Ellis, Collette
ABSENT:	Crowley, Morgan

2. Public Works Commission Minutes - Regular Meeting - Mar 3, 2021 5:15 PM

RESULT:	ACCEPTED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Jacob Nink, Commissioner
SECONDER:	Kylene Collette, Commissioner
AYES:	Gravatt, Hilton, Reading, Nink, Ellis, Collette
ABSENT:	Crowley, Morgan

III. PWC Agenda Requests

1. Water Renewal Utility Financial Plan Approach

Heather Buchanan, Chief Administrative Officer, gave the Commission an overview of the financial planning process for the Water Renewal Utility. Steve Burgos, Public Works Director, explained a bond election is required for the City to take on new debt to fund the capital investments under discussion. The bond would be a revenue bond requiring a 50% plus one vote approval. More information will be presented at the May meeting

- Commissioner Hilton is concerned and believes a nine percent rate increase is a large percentage in the current economic environment. Mr. Burgos answered affordability is a priority and we are looking at alternatives and options to offset a large increase.
- Councilmember Bageant asked what the dollar value is of the approximately 50% rate increase in year one compared to the time value of the high rate in year 2040. Mr. Burgos agreed the information would be useful in weighing affordability options and will be shared at the next meeting.
- Commissioner Collette appreciates the proactive approach the City is taking to replace aging infrastructure and thinks the public should be informed of the benefits of a proactive approach.
- Acting Chair Gravatt asked what the remainder of the debt the City has for Public Works assets is from. Ms. Buchanan explained the balance is from previous bonds for the existing water renewal facilities.
- Acting Chair Gravatt asked if the changes to the City's zoning policy will have an impact on capacity and condition of current assets. Jim Parady, City Engineer, explained the City regularly does modeling to look at capacity within the collection system and identify potential problems. Current modeling indicates the system shouldn't be impacted by changes to the zoning policy.
- Acting Chair Gravatt asked if we've considered billing for water use by zones. Mr. Burgos explained utilities generally avoid zone-based rates and keep rates equal for all customers.
- Commissioner Nink asked when the final payoff would be if debt was taken on. Ms. Buchanan anticipates 30 years to pay off any debt. Commissioner Nink then asked what the useful life is for the investments planned. Mr. Parady answered collection system assets useful life is typically 100 years and the treatment facility components vary from 20 to 70 years depending on the component.
- Councilmember Hallyburton asked if Mr. Burgos is aware of utilities that are considering income-based rates. Mr. Burgos explained in the past affordability was defined as two percent of the median household income in a community. In low income households the water renewal bill can be six to eight percent of their household income. We are looking for ways to allow the two percent rate for low income households as part of our affordability effort. Mr. Burgos shared there are utilities considering income-based rates to address affordability issues in other parts of the country.

RESULT:	DISCUSSED
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2. Lander Street Phase 1 and Program Update

Josh Baker, Engineer, briefed the Commission on the status of the construction at the Lander Street Water Renewal Facility and program.

RESULT:	DISCUSSED
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3. Lander and West Boise Water Renewal Facility Permits

Haley Falconer, Environmental Senior Manager, explained the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)/Idaho Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (IPDES) permits for the West Boise and Lander Street Water Renewal Facilities and the Phosphorus Removal Facility located on the Dixie Drain.

- Commissioner Collette asked if the water temperature in the river has increased over the past years and is it going to continue to increase. Ms. Falconer answered we don't have information on past water temperature. We do have a climate change exception in our current permit but it likely won't be included in our next permit. We will continue to monitor river temperature and act as necessary.
- Commissioner Ellis asked if the WaterShed Watch locations are where river temperature samples are taken. Steve Hubble, Climate Action Senior Mgr. explained the WaterShed Watch event does align with our department's efforts to monitor river health. Acting Chair Gravatt added there is additional information available in the updates to the Boise WaterShed Education Center to a Climate and Water Science Center.
- Acting Chair Gravatt asked if conditions of the 316a require the additional studies that we are proposing. Ms. Falconer explained the studies and additional monitoring are to add to our understanding of the river and provide data for the next permit cycle.
- Acting Chair Gravatt asked what the impact would be between Lander Street and the phosphorus removal facility at the Dixie Drain. Ms. Falconer explained our modeling has shown there would not be a negative impact at the confluence of the Boise River and the Snake River. Acting Chair Gravatt asked if the slight increase in phosphorus and an increase in the river's temperature impact the growth of invasive species in that stretch of the river. Ms. Falconer answered the additional phosphorus would likely not contribute to plant growth. We are monitoring the river to determine if the temperature nutrient combination will have an impact on undesirable species.
- Councilmember Hallyburton asked if we have considered the public might

be opposed to the plan based on the impression they get when they hear "variance". Ms. Falconer agreed public education will be important to ensure an understanding of the development and requirements the City must meet to qualify for the 316a variance.

- Acting Chair Gravatt asked for an update on testing and treatment for PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) and other emerging constituents in our water. Mr. Burgos answered the topic is a priority across the industry and steps are underway to increase education to the public and the industry. Ms. Falconer added we are working with the National Water Research Institute to convene a panel of experts with different relevant backgrounds to provide recommendations to us and provide an opportunity for public engagement.
- Acting Chair Gravatt asked what relationship the permits we are currently negotiating have to the Farmer's Union Canal. Mr. Burgos answered the permits we are negotiating currently are to discharge into the Boise River and have no connection to the Farmer's Union Canal. Ms. Falconer added these permits have no impact or influence on the Farmer's Union Canal.

RESULT:	DISCUSSED
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IV. Director's Reports

1. Administration Division
2. Climate Action Division
3. Engineering Division
4. Environmental Division
5. Facilities Program Management Division
6. Operations Division

V. Adjournment

1. Director's Announcements
Mr. Burgos reminded the Commission a Public Works Commission Work Session is planned for mid-May.
2. Motion to Adjourn
Commissioner Hilton made a motion to adjourn, Commissioner Ellis seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 6:06 p.m.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Julia Hilton, Commissioner
SECONDER:	Jennifer Ellis, Commissioner
AYES:	Gravatt, Hilton, Reading, Nink, Ellis, Collette
ABSENT:	Crowley, Morgan