Call to Order

The Public Works Commission Chair, Larry Crowley, called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

1. Welcome and introduction

Steve Burgos, Public Works Director, welcomed the Commissioners and explained the purpose and desired meeting outcome. He presented three questions for consideration by the Public Works Commission during the presentations on June 23rd and June 25th:

- Should Boise pursue this fundamental shift in the management of the resource?
- Should the city proactively invest in infrastructure to address capacity needs, system degradation and growing regulatory requirements to prevent system failures?
- Should the utility fundamentally shift how we finance projects and consider changes to our business model and rate structure?
2. **Infrastructure Condition and System Capacity**

Jim Pardy, City Engineer, reviewed the information on Infrastructure Condition and System Capacity that was presented at the March 4, 2002 PWC meeting. Mr. Pardy explained the City has been proactive in the maintenance and replacement of aging infrastructure in the past and is considering ways to continue to be proactive. Future regulatory requirements and growth will affect system capacity and the City is considering options to address current and future capacity concerns in a proactive manner.

Amanda Watson, Atlas Strategic Communications, asked the Commissioners for their reaction to the City’s proactive approach to replacing assets and planning for implementation of new assets built for growth and how that approach relates to community values.

The Commissioners favored a proactive approach and asked for clarification of financial and regulatory items. Mr. Burgos clarified the proposed amount to pay for the plan is a combination of four pieces of the plan; Replacement, Level of Service, Regulatory and Climate Change. Mr. Burgos added we will likely shift how we execute work to a program management approach similar to how the project at Lander Street is being managed.

There was discussion around COVID-19 funds that might be available for use. Mr. Burgos explained that we are identifying projects that might qualify for COVID-19 funding and they are ready to go if funds are released. Commissioners questioned why they aren’t being asked to consider the budget component of staffing for the project. Mr. Burgos explained the staffing question will be addressed later in the presentation.

3. **Regulatory Requirements and Climate Change Impacts**

Haley Falconer, Environmental Division Sr. Mgr., briefed the Commissioners on the efforts in Water Renewal Services to cost effectively meet current and future regulatory requirements while continuing to meet citizen’s expectations.

Ms. Falconer outlined the steps we are taking to proactively address climate change issues that could affect our water and our ability to provide a drought-proof water supply, manage our water locally and our ability to adapt to changing conditions.

Ms. Watson asked for the Commissioner’s thoughts on how the department has handled regulatory requirements historically and the proposed plan to handle them in the future; how that approach correlates with community values; and how it correlates with their personal values.

The Commissioners approve of the way Public Works staff has adapted to changes in the regulatory environment to meet community expectations. The Commissioners
believe that growth in the valley will continue to be a challenge to proposed plans for increasing capacity and meeting and exceeding regulatory requirements. Mr. Burgos explained Public Works is working with Planning and Zoning (of the Planning and Development Services department) and other departments to identify growth trends to best adapt our water renewal planning needs.

4. Financial Capacity and Affordability Approaches

Heather Buchanan, Chief Administrative Officer, explained the fiscal policies related to the Water Renewal Utility Plan; financial capacity at the utility level and affordability at the individual level. The City’s goal of providing quality affordable water renewal services to its residents will require the consideration of different funding models in the future. Ms. Buchanan reviewed the capital funding approaches being considered, cash funding, debt funding, or a combination of the two. The Commissioners were interested in other funding sources the City has considered such as user fees. Ms. Buchanan answered that impact fees are an option under consideration as a future revenue source. Mr. Burgos added state statutes limit what fees we can charge.

Ms. Watson asked the Commissioners what considerations, other than affordability, should be taken into account when discussing ways to fund the utility, and which of the funding models (cash funding, debt funding or a combination) do they consider to be the best option. The Commissioners are in favor of exploring alternate funding options and would like an opportunity to review the numbers and data before deciding. Commissioners feel that growth should pay for growth. Ms. Buchanan assured them that connection fees and service fees are structured so that this is the case.

5. Stakeholder Engagement

Colin Hickman, Communications Sr. Mgr., briefed the Commissioners on the Public Involvement and Community Expectations component of the Water Renewal Utility Plan. The effort to involve the public included gauging the public’s knowledge of the utility and their expectations of future water use and engaging the community in helping to shape the plan.

Ms. Watson asked the Commissioners for their reaction to the community engagement process and for ideas on how it can be improved for future efforts. The Commissioners commended the efforts thus far and the process of the Water Renewal Utility Planning (WRUP) team to involve the public in the plan. They reiterated the importance for the City to be transparent its planning efforts in order to gain the support of the public. Because of the restrictions placed upon society by COVID-19, Commissioners would like to see more virtual learning opportunities to educate the community on the City’s role in water renewal.
6. Next Steps

Mr. Burgos gave an overview of what will be covered at the Thursday, June 25th meeting and advised the commissioners a recommended approach will be presented for their consideration. Specific actions/motions won’t be needed until the July 7th Public Works Commission meeting.

Commissioner Quick moved to adjourn. Commissioner Robbins seconded, and the motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m.