

**WHATCOM COUNTY WATER DISTRICT NO. 13  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
SPECIAL MEETING AUGUST 30, 2023**

**CALL TO ORDER**

Hybrid Special meeting August 30, 2023, at 6:00 pm meeting was held via Zoom and in-person at the East Whatcom Regional Resource Center. Meeting was called to order at 6:03 pm by President Robert Vandenhaak.

Commissioners present were Anthony Au, Rebecca Cayen, Richard Whitson, Talitha Shiroma, and Robert Vandenhaak. Staff present were Carson Cothren and Cheryl Thompson. Roger Kuykendall and John Markus from Gray & Osborne Engineering were present in person. One member of the public was present via Zoom.

Engineering Report/DOE Permit/Pond Liners

The wastewater discharge permit is in the public comment period. John & Roger are drafting a letter to DOE on behalf of the district to dispute the proposed permit standards for testing around the drain field, in particular. In the engineers' opinion, DOE is asking the district to meet standards without doing a multiple sample statistical analysis of the background water upstream of the drain field and monitoring wells, and that these standards are in conflict with DOE's own regulations. The new permit requirements of 65% BOD/45% TSS will help the district meet the removal requirements, along with adding a 4<sup>th</sup> aerator. DOE has new guidelines for pond liners and leak detection. Pond liners must be tested for leaks every 5 years and any leaks must be repaired within 90 days. These guidelines are not feasible or practical, according to the engineers. And, if the district may not keep all the lagoons for the future upgrade, money spent on new pond liners would be wasted. G & O will comment to DOE that the pond liners should be removed from the permit requirements.

A new Engineering Report will outline several options for the WWTP moving into the future, and the associated costs of each option. One option could be replacing one of the lagoons with a concrete tank with a lid, that has a smaller footprint, would retain heat more efficiently, and leakage would be tested during construction/installation.

Table 12 Funding

The income survey will inform the district if the sewer rates are at or above 2% of the ratepayer's Median Household Income and the survey results will be valid for 5 years. This information will be needed for applying for future financial assistance from funding sources. Reviewing sewer rates will be critical for future funding, along with educating the ratepayers about the need for a new treatment plant, and the goal is to keep the rates as low as possible, while meeting the future needs of the district.

Jack's letter to Whatcom County Executive

A letter drafted by Jack Hovenier for Whatcom County Executive Sidhu to submit to DOE for the draft permit public comment period was reviewed by the commissioners and the engineers. Jack has been in contact with Whatcom County executive Sidhu to keep him updated on the district's plans for upgrading the treatment plant. The district is looking to share the cost of the new treatment plant with all involved: DOE, the developers, the ratepayers, and Whatcom County government.

A special meeting was called for Tuesday, September 12, 2023, at 6:00 pm at the east Whatcom Regional Resource Center.

**CONCLUDE**

There being no further business Robert Vandenhaak concluded the meeting at 7:41 pm. These Minutes were presented and approved at a regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners on 9/26/23.

APPROVED:     *Paul Witz*                        DATE:     9-26-23    

    *[Signature]*      
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