

**WHATCOM COUNTY WATER DISTRICT NO. 13**  
**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**SPECIAL MEETING MAY 21, 2025**

**CALL TO ORDER**

A hybrid Special meeting was held May 21, 2025, via Zoom and in-person at the East Whatcom Regional Resource Center. Commissioners present were Anthony Au, Rebecca Cayen, Richard Whitson, and Robert Vandenhaak. Commissioner Talitha Shiroma was present via Zoom. Staff present were Cheryl Thompson, Eli Gunn-Hirsch and Hannah Palm. Gray & Osborne engineer Jay Swift was present via Zoom. Meeting was called to order at 6:31 pm by President Robert Vandenhaak

Review Bids for WWTP Critical Improvements and Award Approval

The lowest bid came in from Summit Construction for \$351,913.60. All the bids came in higher than Gray & Osborne expected. Bidders have said that the uncertain economy and tariffs have led to higher bids in general. Gray & Osborne felt that the bid is a reasonable amount. Gray & Osborne has done work with Summit Construction in the past. Roger checked their references, and they came back good. Should prices rise further, Summit Construction is obligated to complete the project at the price they bid. If they walk away from the project, they will forfeit their 5% bond. Gray & Osborne engineers will work District staff to oversee the construction and administration of the contract. *RC/RW a motion was made and seconded to accept the bid from Summit Construction for the WWTP Critical Improvements in the amount of \$351,913.60. Motion carried 5-0.*

Scope of Work for WWTP AKART and Hydrogeological Study-Approval

As per the conditions of the DOE Loan and the new wastewater permit, an AKART and hydrogeological study is required. The permit is required to be completed by September 1, 2025. Sulfite, nitrogen, and chloride limits are challenging to meet. AKART stands for "all known and affordable, reasonable treatment. The hydrogeological component of the AKART study looks at the discharge to the drain field and the effects on the groundwater. Aspect Consulting can get their report completed by September 1, 2025, and Gray & Osborne will submit a draft to DOE by September 1, 2025. The estimated cost for the AKART and hydrogeological study is \$71,150.00. If the scope of work for the AKART study is approved by DOE, the cost of the study can be incorporated into the SCPPL program and be eligible for 50% loan forgiveness. *RC/AA a motion was made and seconded to approve the Scope of Work for Wastewater Treatment Plant AKART and Hydrogeological Study. Motion carried 5-0*

GVLS Bid for Diagnostic Repair

The electrical panel at the Green Valley Lift Station has alarm lights flashing and the operators are not sure why. The operators have a bid for diagnostics only from Whitney Equipment Company for \$1,651.00, plus sales tax, to have a technician troubleshoot the alarms. *RC/RW a motion was made and seconded to approve Whitney Equipment Company's bid for \$1,651.00, plus sales tax, to troubleshoot the alarms at the Green Valley Lift Station. Motion carried 5-0*

Rates Discussion

The current sewer rate structure is not meeting the monetary needs of the District. Increased costs and inflation, making emergency and necessary repairs, and new standards from the Department of Ecology has caused the District to be operating at a loss so far this year. Hannah and Eli will create a list of projects that need to be funded for the budget discussion that will begin this summer. *AA/RC a motion was made and seconded to approve a \$10 per month increase to the sewer rate effective July 1, 2025, and reflecting on the customer statements in September 2025. Motion carried 3-2.*

## CONCLUDE

There being no further business Robert Vandenhaak concluded the meeting at 8:00 pm. These Minutes were presented and approved at a regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners on 6/24/25.

APPROVED: R. L. Vt. DATE: 6-24-25



June 24 / 25