

**CITY OF BAINBRIDGE ISLAND  
UTILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
February 8, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

Meeting called to order 5:30 pm

Members Present: Charles Averill (co-chair), Svend Brandt-Erichsen, Susan Hume (via Zoom), Ted Jones (meeting chair), Andy Maron, Martin Pastucha, Chris Wierzbicki,

Also Present: Chris Gonzalez (FCS, Utility Rate Consultant), DeWayne Pitts (Finance Director)

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1. Meeting was **called to order** at 5:30 pm. No potential conflicts of interests were noted.
2. The **January 11, 2023 meeting minutes** were approved.
3. **2023 UAC Committee Work Plan**

The work plan that had been previously shared with the UAC was formally approved.

A. Recurring / Continuing Efforts

1. Water System

- a) Rate study (concluding first quarter)
- b) Winslow water tank and fire flow improvements
- c) Ferncliff line extension
- d) Coordination with Winslow Subarea Plan
- e) Water System Business Plan

2. Sewer System

- a) Utility Rate study
- b) WWTP upgrade
- c) Sewer District 7 Interlocal Agreement (ILA)
- d) Wastewater Beneficial Reuse
- e) Fat, Grease and Oil (FOG) ordinance
- f) Coordination with Winslow Subarea Plan

3. Storm Water System

- a) Storm Water System Plan
- b) Ground Water Management Plan

4. Utility CIP review

5. Begin work on update of Utilities Element of Comprehensive Plan

6. Continue subcommittee consultations with other COBI committees.
  - a) ETAC and CCAC on Ground Water Management Plan
  - b) CCAC on PSE franchise

## B. Emergent Issues

1. Respond to inquiries and requests from citizens, COBI staff and Council.

### **3. Public Works Update**

The rehabilitation of the Taylor Well was completed last week, resulting in an increase from 40 gallons a minute to a sustained 65 gallons a minute. The project also included adjustments to the water treatment area, adjacent to the well. Rehabilitation involves replacing the pump and the drive, and cleaning and scrubbing the screens and other parts of the pump. The utility is now moving on to the rehabilitation of the Sands wells. City is ready to purchase pumps.

Chris Wierzbicki was pleased to inform the meeting that a loan of \$9.5 million was recently approved by the Public Works Trust Fund at a 2.25% rate for the water tank replacement. While this is good news, the project cost is still uncertain given its complexity and would likely draw on the sizeable contingency included in the project financing plan. Hopefully the costs will become clearer as the project gets underway over the next few years.

### **4. Alternative Meeting Date**

To accommodate a scheduling conflict of Ted Jones (the UAC Co-Chair), the meeting approved changing the monthly meeting day to the first Wednesday of the month, instead of the second Wednesday.

### **5. Overview and Discussion of the Draft Water and Sewer Utility Rate Study**

Chris Gonzalez briefed the meeting on the draft study. The numbers in the draft distributed for UAC discussion has been updated to reflect changes in some underlying assumptions, including a reduction in actual receipts and accelerating the General Obligation (GO) bond to 2024. This resulted in a water rate increase projected at 25% for the five-year period. (For 2023, a 10% rate required CPI-based increase is already in effect; an additional increase will take place in June 2023.) Chris Wierzbicki emphasized that within the next few years COBI will have a better idea of actual costs (particularly the price of the tank which was significantly higher than initial projections), and thus inform the implementation of water rate increases. Rate increase projections for sewerage had not changed from the previous draft.

The water System Participation Fee (SPF) rates have been tweaked upwards. Similarly, the sewerage SPFs were also slightly increased due to changes in underlying assumptions, specifically a lower ERU capacity.

The meeting provided specific editorial suggestions to the draft study and also noted useful content for the accompanying cover memo that Chris Wierzbicki will prepare.

6. **Next Meeting Agenda**

The group will discuss the final draft of the study (reflecting the editorial suggestions) along with its covering memo and the slide deck that will be presented to the Council.

7. The **meeting was adjourned** at 7:06 pm

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Co-Chair