

Utility Advisory Committee

January 20, 2021

Zoom Meeting

Committee Members Present: Andy Maron and Ted Jones, co-chairs, Charles Averill, Sheina Hughes, Susan Hume, Nancy Nolan, Martin Pastucha

Also Present: Chris Wierzbicki, COBI Director of Public Works, Jeff Kantor, former committee member, B. Sue Johnson and Kimara Sajj, citizens

Absent: Council Liaison Rasham Nassar

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:30 pm. Andy Maron recused himself from participation in the PSE Franchise agenda item.

Minutes: The minutes for December 9, 2020 were unanimously approved.

Emerald Heights: B. Sue Johnson, a current owner in the Emerald Heights neighborhood, presented some facts about the current Emerald Heights water system including the following:

- On December 14th, some water system customers received a red notice of a potential sale of the water system to WRUC, a private water company, for \$150,000 originally scheduled for January 13, 2021.
- WRUC does not own any other water systems on Bainbridge Island.
- 30 homeowners received a request from the current owner of the water system to sign over water easements before January 13 to ensure that the sale could proceed.
- Many homeowners would prefer a public option.
- The current owner also seeks to add 17 more lots to the system in order to develop the properties.

Andy Maron noted that Council member Kirsten Hytopoulos and Public Works director Wierzbicki are planning to attend the zoom meeting with WRUC about this potential sale. Andy Maron and Chris Wierzbicki suggested that homeowners meet and agree to create a homeowner owned water system.

Jeff Kantor, the current president of the Bill Point water system, suggested that he would also attend the zoom meeting to assist the homeowners with steps necessary to become a homeowner-owned water association.

B. Sue Johnson's email is paperjam@serve.net and phone number is 206-842-8242. Anyone interested in attending the zoom meeting can contact her.

Fire Flow Ordinance:

Changes to the Fire Code will be presented to the City Council on February 9th. Jeff Kantor and Chris Wierzbicki are currently still discussing some adjustments to Chapter 13, specifically what elements of Chapter 13 apply to non-city owned water systems.

CCAC/UAC Draft Report on the PSE Franchise:

Ted Jones presented the following facts:

- This memo will be presented to the Council at the February 2nd meeting.
- The joint committee hopes the new franchise agreement and partnership agreement with PSE will ensure that PSE provides data about how many existing lines need to be undergrounded and will create a 10 year plan to underground lines and that the City will create a means to ensure funding for this important task. A WUTC tariff structure for undergrounding is already in place.
- The joint committee also proposes requiring PSE be more transparent about its reliability data.

- The Climate Change committee has been granted \$500,0000 in the current City council budget to fight Climate change and potentially some of these funds may be used to jump start the undergrounding process.

Nancy Nolan suggested that the issue of funding for undergrounding be clarified further in the memo. The UAC unanimously approved the going forward with the joint CCAC-UAC recommendation memo. Maron abstained.

Water Resource Inventory Area:

This is a joint plan with ETAC and the UAC. The City pushed the presentation deadline back to its first meeting in April. The next joint meeting between the UAC and ETAC is March 3rd.

More information about the Johnson Farm recharge project needs to be assembled before the joint group makes a recommendation. The joint group will send out the latest plan before the next joint meeting.

Water System Resolution:

The Resolution as prepared by the UAC subcommittee will be in the City Council packet for their next meeting on January 26.

Chris Wierzbicki informed the UAC that Ferncliff water system, which is within the City's designated water system area and close to the Casey Street system that the City is currently managing, is requesting to become managed or taken over by the City.

There is a question about how to fund this. Various approaches were discussed. Sheina Hughes and Martin Pastucha suggested the City help the residents of these water systems apply for grants and low interest loans to accomplish upgrades to integrate these two systems in the City's water system.

Treatment Plan Memo:

Chris discussed the January 11th Department of Public Works memo about the discharge of 250,000 gallons of partially treated wastewater into the Puget Sound. The incident was the result of an extraordinary rain event that stretched to six days. The incident will be reviewed by the consultant currently studying improvements to the system. The consultant is scheduled to present his findings to the Council in March.

Chris suggested that any ideas about tertiary treatments might be put on the back burner while improvements are made to the plant to ensure that this type of incident does not happen again as climate change and increasing rain events impacts the island.

The next meeting is scheduled for February 10th at 5:30pm. Agenda to be determined. The WRIA and the Ferncliff water system may be discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:58pm.

[Ted Jones e-signature](#) [2/10/21](#)

Co-Chair

Date