

UTILITY ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

February 13, 2025 at 5:15 PM

Water Utility Shop 2520 Barrett Ave./Zoom Webinar



<https://juneau.zoom.us/j/83013202186> or 1-253-215-8782 Webinar ID: 830 1320 2186

A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Campbell called the meeting to order at 5:18 PM.

B. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to acknowledge that the City and Borough of Juneau is on Tlingit land, and wish to honor the indigenous people of this land. For more than ten thousand years, Alaska Native people have been and continue to be integral to the well-being of our community. We are grateful to be in this place, a part of this community, and to honor the culture, traditions, and resilience of the Tlingit people. Gunalchéesh!

C. ROLL CALL

UAB Members Present: Chair Campbell (Zoom), Ms. Pederson, Mr. Larson, Mr. Cohen, Mr. Ritter, Ms. Schempf (Zoom).

CBJ Staff Present: Denise Koch, Engineering and Public Works Director; Brian McGuire, Utilities Superintendent; Chad Gubala, Production & Treatment Manager; Nathan Bodensadt, Utilities Administrative Coordinator

D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Approved without comment.

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. January 9, 2025 - Regular Meeting

Mr. Larson requested one change to the January 9th minutes, clarifying that he talked with two assembly members, Paul Kelly and Neil Steininger.

Minutes were approved without any other comments following this adjustment.

F. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

No public participation.

G. AGENDA TOPICS

2. Letter of Support - Congressionally Directed Spending for MWWTP

The UAB reviewed both letters. Chair Campbell noted that the phone number on one letter needed to be updated. Mr. Larson requested one small grammatical change.

Following these adjustments, Mr. Larson motioned to express support from the UAB via the attached Congressionally Directed Spending Letters with minor revisions, to be signed by Vice Chair Larson. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cohen and then passed with unanimous consent.

3. Potential Utility Bond Revenue

Mr. McGuire presented regarding discussions about two General Obligation (GO) bonds that were discussed at the February 5, 2025 Assembly Finance Committee, which included a \$10M wastewater bond or a combined water and wastewater bond totalling \$20M. Mr. McGuire presented on selected CIP projects that could be lumped into this bond request and highlighted selections for both the \$10M and \$20M bond revenue scenarios. All projects selected for the \$10M bond supported wastewater. For the \$20M bond scenario, about \$13M was selected out of wastewater projects and \$7M was selected from water projects.

UAB members asked questions regarding how bonds would be paid back, how projects were selected, and how the utility works with CBJ streets and other agencies to assess water and sewer line repairs when streets are being worked on. Ms. Koch and Mr. McGuire provided information on these subjects. Ms. Koch informed the UAB that since the bonds are General Obligation Bonds, they would be paid back via property tax revenue. She also indicated that the CBJ Utility division works with CBJ Streets to prioritize CIP projects to ensure that expenses are kept as low as possible when both a street and the utility infrastructure underneath it are in need of attention. Mr. McGuire shared that the projects selected and presented to the UAB were chosen due to the risk factors identified during the CBJ Utility Rate Study process.

The UAB expressed support for both the bonds as well as the projects selected by CBJ staff. They also expressed a desire to see modest water and wastewater utility increases annually, and not to totally offset the rate increases with bonds.

The UAB passed the following four motions regarding GO bonds:

Motion from Mr. Larson:

UAB supports the use of GO bonds to reduce the rate increase to be in line with cost of living increases each year.

Seconded by Mr. Cohen, passed with unanimous consent.

Motion from Mr. Ritter:

UAB supports the 20 million dollar bond and the proposed CIP projects are presented by CBJ staff in the agenda packet in conjunction with the 5 year rate increase.

Seconded by Mr. Cohen, passed with unanimous consent.

Motion from Mr. Larson:

UAB heartily supports pursuing the 20 million dollar bond level for use in conjunction with the 5 year rate increase.

Seconded by Mr. Ritter, passed with unanimous consent.

Motion from Mr. Larson:

In the alternative, UAB supports the use of the 10 million dollar bond level in conjunction with the 5 year rate increase if the 20 million dollar bond level is not pursued.

Seconded by Mr. Cohen, passed with unanimous consent.

4. Utility Update

This agenda item was not addressed due to time constraints.

5. Discussion: Industrial User Rates

This agenda item was not addressed due to time constraints.

H. NEXT MEETING

6. March 13, 2025 at 5:15 PM

7. Proposed Agenda Items

The UAB expressed interest in moving both items on the agenda that were not covered (Utility Update & Industrial User Rates) to the next meeting.

I. SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

J. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Campbell adjourned the meeting at 6:25 PM.

ADA accommodations available upon request: Please contact the Clerk's office 36 hours prior to any meeting so arrangements can be made for closed captioning or sign language interpreter services depending on the meeting format. The Clerk's office telephone number is 586-5278, TDD 586-5351, e-mail: city.clerk@juneau.gov.