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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE Juan de Fuca Water Distribution Commission, held Tuesday, December 3, 2024 at 12 pm, Goldstream Meeting Room, 479 Island Highway, Victoria, BC

PRESENT: Commissioners: G. Baird (Chair); J. Rogers (Vice Chair); S. Donaldson (12:09 pm); D. Grove; C. Harder (12:12 pm); K. Pearson; M. Wagner; A. Wickheim
Staff: A. Fraser, General Manager, Integrated Water Services; J. Marr, Senior Manager, Infrastructure Engineering; S. Irg, Senior Manager, Infrastructure Water Operations; J. Kelly, Manager, Capital Projects; N. Tokgoz, Manager Water Distribution Engineering and Planning; D. Dionne, Manager, Business Support Services (Recorder)

REGRETS:

(EP) Electronic Participation

The meeting was called to order at 12 pm.

1. TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Chair provided the Territorial Acknowledgement.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED by Commissioner Rogers, **SECONDED** by Commissioner Wagner,
That the agenda be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOVED by Commissioner Rogers, **SECONDED** by Commissioner Wagner,
That the minutes of the October 1, 2024 meeting be adopted.

CARRIED

4. CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Chair made no remarks.

5. PRESENTATIONS/DELEGATIONS

There were no presentations or delegations.

6. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

A. Fraser reported on the following items:

1. Juan de Fuca Development Cost Charges Update:

- The public engagement for the Development Cost Charges update in the Juan de Fuca area was released earlier today.
- This update occurs every five years, and it's notable that the rates are decreasing.

2. Request for Proposals (RFP) for Regional Water Supply Master Plan Projects:

- An RFP has been issued for assistance in reviewing the best planning and bundling strategy to deliver the Regional Water Supply Master Plan's projects, which includes 22 initiatives.
- The purpose of the RFP is to seek advice on how to efficiently bundle and procure these projects.
- The deadline for the RFP submissions is Thursday.

Commissioner Donaldson joined the meeting.

7. COMMISSION BUSINESS

7.1. Bylaw No. 4653 – Ticket Information Authorization Bylaw, 1990, Amendment No. 80, 2024

A. Fraser introduced the report, noting the following key points:

1. Certified Water Operators Requirement:

- Under the Drinking Water Protection Act, only Certified Water Operators are permitted to handle and operate Capital Regional District (CRD) equipment.
- An increase in connection tampering has been observed, prompting staff to issue reminder letters to all contractors about the implications of such actions.

2. Relevant Bylaws:

- **Bylaw 3889:** Prohibits making new connections or alterations to the water system.
- **Bylaw 4653:** Provides the authority to enforce Bylaw 3889.

Commissioner Harder joined the meeting.

Discussion ensued and staff responded to questions from the Commission regarding:

- **Operation of Post-Disaster Drop Kits:** Staff noted that since only certified operators can connect to the system, logistics will need to be worked out on how to authorize other individuals to make connections during an emergency.
- **Fees and Penalties:** Questions were raised about fees related to offenses and whether a stop-work order or other meaningful recourse could be issued. Staff explained that, since it involves not just contractors but all subtrades, it is challenging to monitor everyone. The fees recommended by legal services were not drastic, but having measures in place is a good starting point. Fines can always be increased if necessary.
- **Recording Offenses:** Staff mentioned they could detect when a valve has been operated by changes in flow; in residential areas, detection would be more incidental.
- **Educating Subcontractors:** Staff highlighted that reminder letters are issued to all General Contractors and designers, making it the responsibility of the General Contractors or owners to educate the subcontractors.
- **Managing Unpaid Tickets:** Staff indicated they are still learning as the new authority takes effect. If someone connects where there is not a meter, the offense could be noted on file, so it would appear if a new meter were requested.

MOVED by Commissioner Pearson, **SECONDED** by Commissioner Harder,
That the Juan de Fuca Water Distribution Commission recommends to the Capital
Regional District Board:

1. That Bylaw No. 4653, "Ticket Authorization Bylaw, 1990, Amendment Bylaw No. 80, 2024", be introduced and read a first, second, and third time; and
2. That Bylaw No 4653 be adopted.

CARRIED

7.2. Bulk Water Station – District of Metchosin

J. Marr introduced the staff report.

Discussion ensued and staff responded to questions from the Commission regarding:

- **Other locations:** Staff assessed locations, including closer to the municipal hall. Location consideration needs to be given to traffic and accessibility; electrical service connection and potential to affect flows and pressures to the distribution system.
- **Project schedule:** Dependent on BC Hydro's availability, aiming for completion in 2026.
- **Moving/postponing projects:** General opposition for moving 2025 projects; there are no standout projects that could be removed from the budget. Staff recommended adding this project to 2026 budget.
- **Metchosin residents' concerns:** Significant concern about wells drying up; public open houses had high turnout. Roughly 25% of Metchosin residents are on well water.
- **Emergency storage:** The station will provide direct hook up to trucks to fill and deliver water from the distribution system, there is no storage tank.
- **Revenue flow:** Minimal revenue, mainly covering water production and maintenance costs.
- **Existing stations' capacity:** High summer usage causing truck lineups.
- **Future service expansion:** Installing bulk water stations won't limit future system expansion. Staff ensure there is adequate flow and pressure for the station.
- **Regulating usage:** Limited to one truck filling at a time (20 minutes per truck).

Commissioner Considerations:

- Summer 2025 completion is unlikely; design could be ready for fall 2025.
- There was overall support for the project.
- There was an unfavourable view on amending the 2025 budget for this project.
- Proceeding with the project in the 2026 budget allows for appropriate planning and design.

MOVED by Commissioner Rogers, **SECONDED** by Commissioner Wagner,
That staff be directed to proceed with the design and construction of a Bulk Water
Station within the District of Metchosin, subject to 50% funding from the District of
Metchosin, and include the necessary funding (50%) in the 2026 Capital Plan.

CARRIED

7.3. Summary of Recommendations from Other Water Commissions

There was no discussion. Item was received for information.

7.4. Water Watch Report

Staff responded to a question about current water levels, noting that the water level is well above the 5-year minimum and slightly below the 5-year average. Item was received for information.

8. NOTICE(S) OF MOTION

8.1. Motion with Notice: Remuneration for Juan de Fuca Water Distribution Commissions, J. Rogers

Commissioner Rogers is seeking to revisit a previously opposed motion, aiming to investigate CRD Board policies and advocate for fiscal recognition for the Juan de Fuca Water Commissioners' work. Discussion points included:

- Regional Water Supply Commissioners receive remuneration, Saanich Peninsula Water Commissioners do not.
- The other water commissions would be made aware of this motion through the shared meeting hotsheets.
- The amalgamation study currently underway for the Saanich Peninsula Water Commission with Regional Water Supply Commission.
- Staff could present a report by Q1 2025.

MOVED by Commissioner Rogers, **SECONDED** by Commissioner Wagner,
That the Juan de Fuca Water Distribution Commission direct staff to prepare a report outlining the implications related to amending the Board Remuneration and Travel Expense Reimbursement Policy, to include remuneration for meeting attendance for JDF Water Distribution Commissioners, for the Commission's consideration.

CARRIED

8.2. Motion with Notice: Tiered Water User Rate Based on Consumption, J. Rogers

Commissioner Rogers is seeking options and information on whether a similar rate structure could be implemented in the Juan de Fuca Water Distribution Service Area. He noted the following key points:

- The three-tier rate system effectively implements a user-pay process.
- It encourages users to remain conscious of their billing, allowing them to exercise control over their own conservation efforts.
- Interested in understanding the costs and options for re-tooling systems to accommodate the three-tiered approach, with a focus on rewarding conservation.

Discussion ensued and staff responded to questions regarding:

- Creating a meaningful opportunity for the public to pay attention to water rates and water usage, thus providing more conservation education.
- Concerns about people in outlying areas who struggle with the cost of having water delivered and limited availability of water, seems somewhat inequitable.
- Staff time and resources to gather high-level information will require investigation as a program like this would affect water billing, finance, and operational processes. Developing a report could be done by the second quarter of 2025.
- A program like this would not roll out right away; it needs to be designed, systems

upgraded in the background, a year of pilot implementation, and a significant public education process. You do not want to implement new meters all at once as meter replacement becomes costly.

- The Juan de Fuca meters are currently read every two months, while Nanaimo's are read daily. To implement this type of system would require more automated meter readings on a regular and timely basis.
- There could be value to reviewing meter technologies at the same time as other modernization process reviews currently underway.

Commissioner Rogers stated that he is seeking information on a simplified, tiered approach (based on high, medium, low consumption) to enhance water conservation while using existing equipment.

MOVED by Commissioner Wagner, **SECONDED** by Commissioner Rogers,
That the words "with a 2026 implementation" be struck from the motion.

CARRIED

MOVED by Commissioner Rogers, **SECONDED** by Commissioner Grove,
That staff investigate options to replicate Nanaimo's water user rate calculation where consumption is split among three tiers to encourage water conservation.

CARRIED

9. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Commissioner Harder, **SECONDED** by Commissioner Wagner,
That the December 3, 2024 Juan de Fuca Water Distribution Commission meeting be adjourned at 1:20 pm.

CARRIED

CHAIR

SECRETARY