



Making a difference...together

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE Wilderness Mountain Water Service Commission, held Monday, November 28, 2022 at 9:30 a.m., In the Goldstream Meeting Room, 479 Island Highway, Victoria, BC

PRESENT: Commission Members: D. Pepino (Chair); L. Cutler (Vice Chair); A. Wickheim (Electoral Area Director); M. Lechowicz

Staff: I. Jesney, Acting General Manager, Integrated Water Services; S. Irg, Senior Manager, Water Infrastructure Operations; C. Moch, Manager, Water Quality Operations, Environmental Protection; L. Xu, Manager, Finance Services; T. Duthie, Manager, Administrative Services; M. Risvold, Committee and Administrative Clerk (recorder)

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Item 5.1 Update on Previous Meeting Motions was added to the agenda.

MOVED by M. Lechowicz, **SECONDED** by L. Cutler,
That the agenda be approved as amended.

CARRIED

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the November 21, 2022 meeting were unavailable and will be approved at the February 2023 meeting.

3. CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Chair provided the following remarks:

On Thursday Nov 17, a video conference was held between VIHA, CRD and Commission members as it relates to Wilderness Mountain Water Service. The points the commission stressed (as guided by our Commission Handbook) were the facts that the costs borne by the community were escalating rapidly beyond affordable rates, the information communicated by the consultant was flawed and did not recognize the fundamental need for affordable solutions, and that the narrow interpretation of regulation being applied to the issue of turbidity levels was causing undue expense and community concern in the form of multiple boil water advisories.

VIHA's position was that the staff would dictate the Medical decision making, and the staff's decision at that point was that 1 NTU turbidity is a hard upper limit. Small water systems in B.C. were highlighted by the Auditor General in her 2019 report as needing much more attention on the issues of affordability and competence in their operation.

This Commission has worked diligently to supply detailed analysis to the CRD and VIHA in an effort to address those above identified issues in a calm and measured way.

We would like to continue to do that, however, we are looking for some support on the part of both CRD and VIHA to solve this apparent impasse.

4. PRESENTATIONS/DELEGATIONS

There were none.

5. COMMISSION BUSINESS

5.1. Update on Previous Meeting Motions

Staff advised that internal discussion has taken place, and there is currently no further information regarding the request to withdraw the letter from Associated Engineering to Island Health (IH).

5.2. Wilderness Mountain 2023 Operating and Capital Budget

S. Irg presented the 2023 Operating and Capital Budget.

The staff recommendation was discussed. Staff responded to a question regarding property located at the end of Ambiance Way advising the property will likely be auctioned in the future, and the Provincial Government does not participate in taxable folios. Funds from the purchase of the land are often derived from unpaid taxes, and liens cannot be placed on Government owned property.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- Concern with the Alternative Approval Process (AAP)
- Request to withdraw letter from Associated Engineering to IH
- Water quality data
- Lack of additional low-cost options
- Previous report from Stantec in 2011 with additional options provided
- 2018 piped water study

MOVED by M. Lechowicz, **SECONDED** by L. Cutler,
That the Wilderness Mountain Water Service Commission:
Reject the Wilderness Mountain Water Service 2023 Operating and Capital Budget.

CARRIED
Abstained: Wickheim

6. CORRESPONDENCE

There was none.

7. NEW BUSINESS

MOVED by D. Pepino, **SECONDED** by L. Cutler,
That the Wilderness Mountain Water Service Commission:

1. Establish a working group with CRD staff and Commission members reporting directly to the General Manager, Integrated Water Services;
2. That staff allow detail and information access to the working group and charge staff time to discretionary funds; and
3. That the working group provide a report with findings to Island Health by December 21, 2022.

CARRIED
Opposed: Wickheim

Discussion ensued regarding:

- Floating intake
- Improvements to SCADA system
- CRD obligations for health of the community
- Long term liability
- Short term solutions

Staff advised that there are no discretionary funds. Staff time would be charged to the Commission, and Community Works Funds cannot be used for staff time. Staff do not have resources, time or availability to join a working group, and CRD is required to follow IH requirements. Staff recommended hiring a third party if the Commission would like further analysis of the system.

The Commission further discussed the 2023 Operating and Capital Budget.

Staff advised the provisional budget has been reviewed by the Electoral Areas Committee (EAC) and Board. Staff recommended amending the budget and working toward a solution for approving the provisional budget.

Discussion ensued regarding:

- Removing the AAP from the budget
- Removing all capital projects from the budget
- Having a zero percent operational increase for five years
- Having a zero percent tax increase for five years

Staff will ensure IH is aware of the Commission's request to have the letter from Associated Engineering withdrawn.

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by L. Cutler, **SECONDED** by M. Lechowicz,
That the November 28, 2022 meeting be adjourned at 10:29 a.m.

CARRIED

CHAIR

SECRETARY