



The following questions have been posed by Commissioners prior to the scheduled Board Meeting on May 6, 2025. Staff responses are included below and are sorted by Agenda topic.

#### Agenda Items

**City of Eugene Fire Fee – EWEB Billing and Collection (LAWSON)** Will there be a more current update about what the City of Eugene is thinking about the proposed fire fee? I'm not sure when Council last met.

**RESPONSE:** Commissioner Barofsky, who is a member of the City of Eugene's Budget Committee, can provide an update during the EWEB Board Meeting.

**Organizational Goal #3 – Resolution No. 2509, BPA Product Initial Recommendation(s)** Is the initial leaning on BPA the opinion of the whole team or is this where GM Lawson is leaning? (LAWSON)

**RESPONSE:** Several product options, as presented as part of BPA's "Provider of Choice" post-2028 contract, offer good value for EWEB customers. While there was not complete consensus across the entire core team, including the executive sponsors, all of the members have a good understanding of the options and recognize the merits of one choice over another, including the rationale of the initial "Leaning" that will be presented at the Board Meeting by GM Lawson.

#### Consent Calendar

##### CONTRACTS

**Good Works Consulting, LLC - for Consulting services in support of Board Policy SD23, Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion. (LAWSON)**

What is driving this contract? I suspect we will need input/guidance on rate design but are there any pressing issues that we need to do this now?

**RESPONSE:** While we have a strong policy in place, putting it into practice takes specialized expertise.

The timing of the contract, particularly the 2025 scope of work, aims to improve the outcome of our annual organizational goals around rate re-design, limited-income support, and energy efficiency programs. Leaning into the consultant's experience evaluating pricing and programs, EWEB's project teams would work collaboratively with them to develop strategies to design rates and customer programs that are equitable and affordable.

We created a policy (SD23) and as far as I know it's being adhered to and used as a guide. Are there complaints or perceived shortcomings regarding SD23 and if so who/or where are these criticisms coming from?

**RESPONSE:** None that we're aware of. However, a third-party professional evaluation would help establish a baseline and determine where gaps in access or participation may exist, particularly for limited-income and potentially underserved populations.

We have well-informed and educated staff regarding a wide range of topics in this field. Can we insource this and have internal staff do this work and possibly save most or at least some of the \$300,000? I understand we have already budgeted \$98,000 for this work in 2025 but again I believe we can have this work done internally.

**RESPONSE:** *The primary directives of Board Policy SD23 include continually improving Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the areas of Access to Products and Services, Workforce, Community Engagement, and Board of Commissioners.*

*EWEB employs skilled professionals who are adept at building rate structures and comprehensive customer programs and engaging with our community. However, assessing equity in programs and services—especially identifying gaps in access and unintended barriers—can be difficult from within the organization. A professional, third-party evaluation may uncover blind spots and could enhance credibility and accountability and improve customer trust in EWEB's process.*

*The consultant selected has extensive experience reviewing policies to ensure that practices (like those at EWEB related to disconnection, reliability, affordability, and safety of services) are fair and transparent. Their evaluation would bring a perspective to help continuously improve our practices while ensuring our policies are fair and transparent, communicated clearly, and align with sustainable and equitable practices.*

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

### **Willamette Treatment Plant – Annual Situational Update - (KELLEY/MASTERS/IRVIN/FARTHING)**

**Am I correct in reading that the cost for the second source has gone from \$68M to \$160M?**

**RESPONSE:** *Yes. The original estimate of \$68M from 2017 was escalated to \$90M in 2020-2021 using standard indices for inflation and commodity pricing. The latest cost estimate of \$160M is in 2025 dollars and includes specific price changes pertaining to water treatment plants with specialized equipment plus a 30% contingency and excluding overhead. To fully assess the detailed costs, along with potential mitigation options, a 30% design will need to be completed. Management's request for Board approval of a design contract is anticipated this summer.*

**Could there be any delays in the federal permitting process due to the current national conditions we are in?**

**RESPONSE:** *Yes, there could be delays affecting the fish agency review of the environmental permitting process. However, so far, no delays have been experienced, and progress continues. The benefits this project will provide to the community and the environment will help to keep the pace of review on track.*

**Do we have an estimate as to how much we may be impacted by the cancellation of federal funding/grants? Maybe a worse-case and a middle-case scenario?**

**RESPONSE:** *While we had not yet applied for BRIC (Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities) grant funding, EWEB had good reason to believe our project would qualify for a substantial grant and intended to request the full \$90M originally budgeted. Given that \$90M is budgeted in the Long-Term Financial Plan (LTFP), any grant funding would have reduced future rate impacts. Recently, that funding has been canceled by the Federal Government. EWEB staff will continue to pursue all relevant opportunities to fund this project and remain hopeful that infrastructure resiliency grants will become available once again in the future. In the meantime, assessing the impact of this new estimate and funding environment on the LTFP, including rates, is required.*