

Bolinas Community Public Utility District
A Meeting Of The Finance Committee of the Board Of Directors
April 13, 2021 270 Elm Road, Bolinas

In compliance with local and state shelter-in-place orders, and as allowed by the Brown Act as currently in effect under the State Emergency Services Act, the Governor’s Emergency Declaration related to COVID-19, and the Governor’s Executive Order N-29-20 (March 17, 2020), the BCPUD’s Finance Committee did not offer an in-person meeting location for the public to attend this meeting. The meeting was limited to essential district business items and was conducted by the BCPUD’s Finance Committee, staff and public via teleconference.

1. Call to Order.

10:05 a.m.

2. Roll.

Directors Walker and Comstock present; General Manager Jennifer Blackman also present.

3. Minutes of the March 9, 2021 Finance Committee meeting; Minutes of the March 31, 2021 Finance Committee meeting.

L. Comstock/K. Walker all in favor to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2021 Finance Committee meeting.

The committee discussed a revision to the final sentence of the minutes; after a brief discussion, the committee agreed to revise the final sentence to read: “Director Walker said she would be willing to work with staff on an effort to explore the establishment of such an entity within the Bolinas community for those who can afford to contribute.”

L. Comstock/K. Walker all in favor to approve the minutes of the March 31, 2021 Finance Committee meeting, as clarified.

4. Draft Fiscal Year 2021-22 Budget and related spreadsheets re: status of debt and status of reserves.

Staff presented a revised draft FY 2021-22 budget and an accompanying draft Proposition 218 notice. Per the committee’s direction at the March 31st meeting, staff has revised the draft budget to include a modest cost-of-living increase of 3% in both the annual water service charge and the annual sewer service charge. This percentage increase will result in an increase of \$43 to the annual water service charge and an increase of \$42 to the annual sewer service charge, generating an additional \$24,755 and \$6,898 in revenue for these enterprises, respectively. Staff suggests the additional water revenue be earmarked for the district’s project to add two emergency groundwater wells to the water system; staff recommends the additional sewer revenue be added to the general sewer reserves. The draft Proposition 218 notice explains the proposed rate increase, details why the district proposes to increase the rates, and offers customers opportunity to protest or object to the increase at (or prior to) the budget hearing in June. Staff explained that the next step is for the full Board to consider the draft budget and updated Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan (“CIP”) at the next meeting and approve the Proposition 218 notice if the full Board concurs with the committee’s proposed increases to the water and sewer annual charges. Assuming the Board concurs, staff will then timely mail out the Proposition 218 notice.

L. Comstock/K. Walker all in favor to recommend the current draft FY 2021-21 budget to the full Board of Directors for consideration at the next regular Board meeting in April.

The committee briefly discussed the draft Proposition 218 notice and did not have any changes to discuss, so staff will include an action item for the full Board to approve the notice at the next regular Board meeting in April.

Director Comstock said he would like to discuss the funding of the district’s capital projects. He noted that director Walker suggested at the last committee meeting that the district think more creatively about how to raise revenue to fund its capital projects other than directly from customers via annual service charges. Discussion ensued about one-time efforts vs a multi-year project to solicit private contributions to the district reserves. Director Comstock said he is concerned about injecting further “competition” into other commendable and needed community fundraising projects. He observed that the district does have the option of charging for its services, whereas many non-profits have no such option, such as the Save Terrace Avenue at Surfer’s Overlook Committee. He noted that grant funding definitely would ease the burden on all of the district’s customers, to the extent such funding is available, such as pursuant to the potential federal infrastructure spending bill that is pending. Director Walker concurred that the district would need to take other community fundraising efforts into account. She noted that increases to the district’s charges are much more difficult for

some of the town residents than others – and those in town who have the means and desire to contribute more toward the district’s infrastructure improvement efforts should be encouraged to do so.

Director Comstock said the district’s efforts might be best spent initially on pursuing governmental grant funding operations and then turn to community members if needed after that. Staff said that most grants are reserved right now for “disadvantaged” and “severely disadvantaged” communities based on median income; Bolinas does not qualify for either of these designations. Staff is interested in exploring whether some sort of 501(c)(3) vehicle might be possible to form an entity similar to the how the Point Reyes National Seashore Association (“PRSNA”) functions vis-à-vis the Point Reyes National Seashore. Also, it is possible that the district’s consulting engineers could assist with identifying possible grant sources for capital projects that staff may not know about.

5. Draft Update of the District’s Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan.

Staff noted that the only change to the draft Five Year CIP is the increase of \$25,000 toward the project to develop groundwater sources to augment the district’s water supply, so the initial project budget is now \$75,000 rather than \$50,000. Director Comstock commented that he would like to ensure that the district’s incoming Chief Operator, Stew Oakander, is very familiar with the Five Year CIP and her urged staff to ensure this plan is included as part of Stew’s training on his new responsibilities. Staff said this already is taking place and that all shift operators should be generally familiar with the CIP, as well. Director Comstock agreed and said that suggestions on the district’s capital improvement needs ideally should come “from the ground up” rather than “from the top down”; in other words, from the operators working in the field rather than from Board members since staff are so knowledgeable about the district’s operations. Director Comstock said if the Board comes up with an innovative idea and wants the staff to consider it, so be it; however, he wants to see all of the staff take ownership of/make suggestions about the district’s capital improvement projects.

6. Community Expression

None.

7. Adjournment

11:08 a.m.