

Whatcom County Water District #7
Commissioner Meeting
12 August 2025

The Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners for Whatcom County Water District #7 was held on 12th August 2025 at 5:00 p.m.

Commissioners present were Mark Lann, George Kaas & Tessa Ebbesen, also present were Dave Olson, Operations Manager, & Deanna Dobbs, Office Manager

Call to order: 5:04 p.m.

Approval of Consent Agenda:

Motion: George the Board of Commissioners hereby approve Minutes.

2nd: Tessa Motion Carried.

Claims & Payroll were reviewed.

Motion: George the Board of Commissioners hereby approve claims and payroll in the total amount of \$63,501.95

2nd: Tessa Motion Carried.

Adjustments:

Leak Adjustment for Account #70110 in the amount of \$29.65 approved administratively per District Policy.

Past Due Report:

Past Due list was reviewed.

Financials:

Financial details attached to these minutes were reviewed.

Operations Report:

Fire Hydrant at Haggin Rd. & Summit Court was replaced.

Potholing at Toad Lake Rd. & Academy Rd. to locate the water main for the Water Main Replacement Project has been completed.

Public Comment: Opened at 5:12 p.m.

The public comment portion of the meeting was closed at 5:12 p.m.

Old Business:

Capital Projects –

Follow-up from July 7th, 2025. The District submitted applications for both Capital Projects (Toad Lake Rd. & Academy Rd.)

NSS Group LLC – Common Area Expense Follow-up

No future action or follow-up necessary.

Cascadia Daily News – Julia a reporter at Cascadia Daily News inquired with the District about the large City of Bellingham water rate increase expected to go into effect next year. Julia inquired how the rate increase would impact customers of Water District 7 and if the district has any senior or low-income discounts for utility payers. Commissioner and President provided a Press Release on July 10th, 2025 (See Attached)

New Business:

SAO Audit Exit Conference – Review

A Special Meeting with the Washington State Auditors Office is scheduled to be held on August 26th, 2025, at 11:30 – 12:30 remotely via Zoom.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the 2021, 2022 & 2023 Washington State Audit.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on 9 September 2025.



Mark Lann, President



George Kaas, Commissioner



Tessa Ebbesen, Commissioner

Press Release (7/10/25)

The City of Bellingham (COB) is currently considering a proposal to significantly increase the cost of purchasing water. If the current rate increase goes into effect, it will greatly impact our customers. This is because Whatcom County Water District 7's (WCWD7) only source of drinking water is the City of Bellingham. We purchase it and then redistribute it to our customers. In years past, when the COB has raised their costs, it has been the past practice of WCWD7 to pass any rate increase imposed by the COB directly onto the district's customers. Though the District finds this difficult for our customers, we operate on thin margins and are unable to subsidize the cost of Bellingham's yearly rate increases.

WCWD7 encourages water conservation: <https://waterdistrict7.com/outdoor-water-conservation-smart-watering/>

The district currently has no low income or discounted rates or fees for water utilities. If our customers find themselves in financial hardships, WCWD7 will consider and does offer payment plans. A customer may enter a written payment plan to pay the current amount due in full by the due date and make payments towards the past due balance in a timely manner. Customers that comply with the payment plan will not be assessed with late charges or penalties. Customers who fail to comply with the payment plan will be assessed with all applicable late charges and penalties and rescheduled for shut off as appropriate. The district also refers customers to local outside agencies that offer community assistance.

WCWD7 was established in 1963 as a Community Water System to serve the community east of Britton Road between Emerald Lake Way and the City of Bellingham city limits. Over the years the district has grown to serve over 700 residential Customers east of the Britton Rd. WCWD7 is operated by a board of 3 elected Commissioners that serve six-year terms. The Commissioners meet regularly on the second Tuesday of the month at 5:00 pm.

Board President and Commissioner Mark Lann had this to say, "Our mission is to reliably deliver clean and safe water to our customers. The cost of doing that greatly depends on how much the City of Bellingham charges us for their water. Our on-going commitment to our customers remains the same – we will continue to deliver water as efficiently and affordably as possible." And "The district is also in the midst of preparing for capital improvements, which are part of our strategic Water System Plan. The timing of Bellingham's rate increase proposal couldn't come at a worse time." The plan can be found at <https://waterdistrict7.com/water-system-plan/>

For further questions, please call Mark Lann at (360) 920-8912.