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#### Stephen:

And I can call the June Consumer Affairs Committee meeting to order and you have the roll call, who's on. The first item on the agenda is our safety moment. It is regarding preventing hearing loss and as someone who has half lost a hearing in one ear, I can tell you need to pay attention before that happens. So thanks for the tips, Jennifer. I don't know how you come up with all these things, but you do a great job. Item two is the approval of the minutes, do I have a motion?

Tony:

So moved.

Stephen:

Okay. And the second? Mark, can you second him?

Mark:

So move.

Stephen:

Okay. Are there any corrections, any additions, any omissions? Hearing none. All those in favor?

Group:

Aye.

Stephen:

Minutes carry. Third item on the agenda is we're here to consider and act on a recommendation to the RPB regarding the completeness of the customer information system solution project. The application that's been submitted to us to review and we are looking at this only for completeness. We can't discuss this in any other way, it would be inappropriate. And I've asked both Jeff and Prem, since we don't usually do this to kind of go over what the procedure is to determine that something is complete before we make that recommendation. So Prem, do you want to start?

Prem:

Yep. So as you all know this is the first step of the process after the application is filed. So we are going to be checking on the completeness of the application. Of course, in terms of the process itself, Jeff knows better than anybody else here. The way it's going to be working is we'll be having a public hearing as part of the process. Once everybody agrees, we do have a couple interrogatories and I think the overall process is around 14 weeks for the application. We are going through the long process, not the short process. And then I also understand that Jeff had reached out from a consultant who's been helping us in the past and will be helping us on this application as well. So we go through that process in making sure, if there's any questions to be answered, et cetera, we go through that whole period of time.

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#### Prem:

In the public hearing, it's going to be again, between the team here, RPB and also open for public. Based on the interest, we'll be going through any questions as part of that process and eventually that gets us through the nine weeks, to the public hearing. And then we'll have further questions and the things that we've taken to account and eventually expecting a decision probably around October timeline, provided everything goes through with the 14 week process. So that's the overall, I think at the highest level, I would say, you're not going into the application itself, Steve. And again, Jeff, please add or comment on any of those steps as well.

Rochelle:

Can I also just say something?

Prem:

Sure.

#### Rochelle:

Really the completeness is looking at with all the requirements are that are outlined in the role of practice. There is a pre-subscribed format, and you're looking to make sure that in that pre-subscribed format, prescribed format, that the application addresses each of those areas.

Prem:

That's right.

Jeff:

That's right. What I've been doing since I started doing this in 2008 is it's section 24 from article two of the RPB rules of practice and procedure. And what I did and still do every time I get an application is I basically have a checklist. And as I go through the application, I check off the items that are required by section 24 of article two of the rules, and that is there needs to be a statement of application and there are requirements in addition to... Depending upon the type of application, there are requirements that are set forth in the rule. So an explicit statement setting forth the need for the proposed action for approval, an analysis of the alternatives to the proposed action, a statement of cost to be incurred or saved versus the current expenditures. As the case may be as a result of the proposed action and analysis of any cost or savings to be realized from any rejected alternatives, including the taking of no action.

Jeff:

A concise and explicit statement of facts upon which the board is expected to rely in ruling on the application or granting the authorization sought, an explanation of any unusual circumstances involved in the application. And then of course, as is the case with the pending application annex materials, in this case, there's several items that are annexed the RFP, some analysis that was done by AAC, as well as confidential materials that are subject to protective order. So I've gone through the application to

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determine whether or not it's complete, and whether or not it meets the requirements of section 24 of the RPB rules and I'm satisfied that it does.

Stephen:

Okay. The reference again was section 24 article what?

Jeff:

It's article two.

Stephen: Article two. Okay.

Jeff:

Yep, which is the applications article in the RPB rules.

Stephen:

Now a couple of questions, all the things you mentioned, I looked through the application and I see those topics addressed. Is that the sort of the basic need and are there other things that could be added to this process?

Jeff:

Well, there that's the basic list in order to meet the bare minimum requirement of finding it to be complete, which simply means it's prepared to go forward to having a hearing date set. There are other components to this particular application such as a business case analysis that are not required in order to find the application to be complete, but are provided as a sort of a best practice or the RPBs standard operating procedure for the last several years.

Stephen:

Yeah. I would expect that would occur. And also it might be different for a customer information system application versus an engineering application-

Jeff:

Yes.

Stephen:

Or some other topic.

Mark:

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Steve, that outline is pretty complete. We used it on the land usage. It's pretty specific. You random things, you check it off, check it off, check it off. And that's all it has to be, is that it has to meet those requirements. So I move that we vote on it.

Stephen:

Okay. The only thing since we're discussing it is I just want to understand it totally, because some of these projects like this one are much more money than other projects. Over \$2 million could be 2.2, but when you're talking about \$20 million, you want to be able to have all the information that you need to make a real decision.

Mark:

Yeah. But that comes at the hearing. All the other stuff you're talking about comes at the hearing. This part just says, check, did it do this? Did it do that? The application, did it do this, did it do that? Did it do that? Whether it's 20 million or 2 million, it's the same, right, Jeff?

Jeff:

Correct. Just all finding the application complete does, is check the first box and get you to a scheduling of a public hearing.

Stephen:

That's right. Where you can ask all those questions about the 20 million versus 2 million.

Prem:

That's right.

Rochelle:

You can also submit interrogatories before the hearing.

Prem:

Yeah, that's right.

Mark:

I move that the application is complete and let's vote on it.

Tony:

Second.

Stephen:

Okay. We have a second. All right. Any other discussion? Sounds good. All those in favor?

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Tony:

Aye.

Stephen:

Aye. Any opposed? Any abstained?

Naomi:

First of all, I didn't realize about this section 24, article two, because it was a lot of information for me. And as I was going through to read it, I guess, some of the stuff I just didn't really understand, to be very honest. But my question, I guess, is by us tonight agreeing to this, we're just saying that it's okay to move forward with the public hearing, get the public involved. Is that what we're doing?

Group:

Yes.

Naomi:

Okay.

Mark:

You can ask all the questions you want.

Naomi:

Okay.

## Stephen:

Yeah. No, we're not discussing the merits of this in any way. This is just to determine the format that they have supplied information under those particular headings.

Mark:

Our committee rarely gets these kind of questions. In other words, it should be finance or it's a land issue. Consumer affairs really gets it, but Mario wanted to be brought in front of consumer affairs to make sure it's complete to our standards too.

Stephen:

That's why I asked Jeff to go over it for us.

Naomi:

Okay. So my vote is yes.

Stephen:

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Great. We're unanimous on that vote. So Jennifer, you have a proposal that you sent to me?

Jennifer:

Yes.

Stephen:

Regarding the completeness, so I can bring that to the... Do we need to vote on... We voted on it, I guess so I-

Jennifer:

Yeah. Can you see this?

Stephen:

Yeah.

Mark:

Yes.

Jennifer:

Okay.

Stephen:

So that's the proposed resolution that this is complete and I will bring that to the RPB the next meeting. I'll read that.

Jennifer:

Okay.

Mario:

Perfect. So Steve, if I may, this is Mario. So the RPB Thursday night, I'm losing my track of time. I did vote to waive the rules so that this went to consumer affairs and also authorized publication. So by your deeming it complete and if anybody still has questions, please bring them up, because there was not intended to be any kind of a railroading. I thought it would be important for you all to get the first understanding of the project and it's interaction with the customers since you guys are the ones that deal with customers more so than the other two organizations or committees.

Mario:

But if by you deeming it complete, we will then schedule the public hearing. So the public hearing will commence in at our July meeting, our July RPB meeting. And my anticipation in speaking with Jeff, because we have an outside expert involved. It may be more than one evening, so the hearing may

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remain open until our August meeting, but Prem, our September meeting, if you're able to answer all the questions properly, then we should be able to make the decision at our September meeting and that stays within our 120 days from the date of application.

Prem:

That's right.

Mario:

Yeah, Steve?

Stephen:

Yeah, no, you are correct and I remember missing that. We did do that, so you can set the public hearing. It doesn't give us a whole lot of time, I think in terms of the amount of material that's here. So I'd encourage everybody to take a look at that. Be prepared for this meeting. It's an important topic and subject moving forward.

Mario:

Yes. And if I may ask, Jeff, that still works for you, the opening of public hearing.

Jeff:

Yes. It certainly does.

Mario:

Okay.

Jeff:

That's the one that got all the reading to do.

Mario:

And I've asked Steve, I've asked Mark Levine to be our presiding member.

Jeff:

Okay. Have you?

Mario:

Yeah. And his arm is in a sling right now, but he's accepted.

Tony:

Good. So I have a question about Mark. Are you in a nightclub?

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Mark:

Am I in a nightclub?

Tony:

It's very dark. It looks like you could be out dancing or something tonight.

Mark:

You want me to go out dancing? I'm Too busy to go out dancing. Thank you.

## Stephen:

Jeff, I wanted to ask you, the consultant that you have, have they been a consultant for the water authority before directly?

# Jeff:

The name of the firm is USP, Utility Solutions Partners. I think they have done some work with the water authority in the past.

# Stephen:

Okay.

# Jeff:

The original consultant that I was going to use had a conflict, because he works with AAC, which is the authority's consultant for the project.

Stephen:

Oh, okay.

Jeff:

So USP is not currently doing any work for the authority.

## Stephen:

But I'm glad that we do have another independent look at this topic to help us. So how do you anticipate them participating in this? They're going to review this and get back to you?

Jeff:

Well, what I did was I interviewed them and engaged them back on June 10th and gave them a very specific scope of services and a not to exceed price. And I told them they had to charge the same rate that I charge and capped their fees no more than \$10,000, and told them that I've been through one of these projects before. I don't need necessarily an education like I needed the last time. But what I really need is a focus on the specific application, the specific vendor, vendor for the specific platform. And to

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help me understand whether this is the right alternative, there's a number of alternatives that were considered both in the assessment study, as well as in the application, so focus on whether it's the right alternative. And if it is, help me understand what are the likely challenges? What are the likely problems? What types of issues we have?

## Jeff:

So right now they're helping me with interrogatories and they committed to me today, that they'll have their interrogatories to me by Wednesday. So I have a set that I've drafted already. I'll add theirs to mine and get mine to the authority on Thursday, which is June 30th. There's probably going to be at least 20 interrogatories on there. It's not going to be a short set. And part of it is looking for information, not just in the form of answers the questions, but I'd like to see, for example, the presentation that vendor form made, which I understand was videotaped.

## Jeff:

So they're a technical advisor to me. I've told them what I don't need from them, which is, I don't need them to explain to me what CIS is and I've done a lot of industry research on my own, so I understand what other utilities and water utilities have been doing, so I don't need that help. I need very specific, very tailored analysis of the alternatives that were considered, the business case evaluation, the recommended or proposed alternative, and what likely issues we're going to have, so I can form an opinion about whether to support the application or not. And if so, what concerns do I flag to help be a tool and a productive resource for the authority. So that's, their scope and that's the way that I see them participating is helping me with interrogatories.

## Jeff:

And then once we receive the responses to the interrogatories, they're going to give me their report as to what their thoughts are. And I've told them, to keep it as a memo to me, because they could just so I understand the way that I think, and I think most of you know this about me already from the last 14 years. They could tell me they're in favor of it, but that doesn't mean that I'm in favor of it, or they could tell me they're opposed to it and that doesn't mean I'm opposed to it. They are an independent consultant, that is one tool in helping me analyze the application. They're not making up my mind for me.

## Stephen:

No, that sounds great, because those were my concerns. I'm not an expert in this area, but I thought someone else who was, were dealing with a kind of a dynamic fluid subject matter here. And to know that this is the right alternative, or maybe this is the alternative, but want to know what the limitations are of it. We've been through this process before. I don't expect it's going to be a 100% perfect or any of the approaches, but we need to know what we're dealing with, what the vulnerabilities may be. And I think from what you've outlined, we're going to get that kind of information.

Jeff:

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Yeah. I've had several very good calls with them. The person that I'm dealing with is Steve Cassazza, who's the president founder of the firm, so it's not a one person shop. It's a pretty significant Washington, DC based consulting firm. So I'm happy with the technical expertise that they bring to me as a tool to help me do my job.

Stephen:

Very good. Any questions for Jeff?

Rich:

So Jeff, when we talk about alternatives, give me an example, what's an alternative? It's a different package, or it's solving the problem without necessarily investing in a CIS?

Jeff:

I don't want to get into the merits of the application, but I do want to answer your question. Alternatives are a patch to the existing product, right?

Rich:

Right.

Jeff:

A new SAP platform, an Oracle platform, or some other platform.

Rich:

Yeah. Okay.

Jeff:

And likewise functionality, breaking up the functionality into different platforms instead of relying on CIS to provide all of the functionality that the authorities seeks. So those are a few examples of alternatives.

Rich:

So this question may not be appropriate here and/or it's been answered and I just didn't pay attention. But in choosing a solution, we put together requirements, we have must haves, nice to haves, et cetera. And we basically check the boxes based upon the different proposals and cost and look to choose that which meets most, if not all of our hard requirements. At a very high level, that's kind of the methodology used to select a solution. Is that right?

Jeff:

Yes. What the authority did was first, they issued an RFP for a consultant and went through that process to hire the consultant. And then they issued an RFP for the provider, the vendor and received... I won't

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say dramatically different, but different approaches to solving the challenge. So it's multiple step procurement. The reason I'm hesitating is again, I don't want to get too much into that.

Rich:

Yeah, no, I appreciate that. But we've provided our requirements with the RFP.

Jeff:

Yeah. First, they hired a consultant so they could figure out what the requirements were going to be. And then once they did that, they put together an RFP to actually get a solution that would meet their needs.

Rich:

Thank you.

Stephen:

Rich, I hope you'll bring that question to the discussion, because it's very relevant, I think, in terms of always looking for another way that the same problem may be solved, considering the money we continually spend on these projects.

Rich:

I've spent my entire too long career in information systems and developing corporate solutions and big solutions, so I know a little bit about it. Not necessarily with in terms of public utilities, but nonetheless, a lot of it is common.

Stephen: Okay, great. No, we can't get into it tonight, but-

Rich:

Yeah.

Stephen: Another time it's very relevant.

Mario:

That would be good if people have their thoughts and have those questions to provide them through Jennifer in the form of an interrogatory. You just call it an email with a bunch of questions on it, that would probably suffice. And if it's something that you want to see presented at the public hearing, they can also work it into the presentation more than likely.

Rich:

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Is there going to be a Q&A session during that hearing?

Mario:

Yes. It'll be just like all of our other capital projects hearings we've just had, where they'll do a presentation. Jeff will have a chance to ask questions. Jeff will present some information and the public will be allowed to ask questions. At the end of that, then we'll have to make a determination whether all the information has been provided, or if there's still some pending questions, whether we keep the record open, whether we keep the public hearing open. That'll be a decision for the hearing officer there, presiding member.

Rich:

The guy with his arm in a sling?

Mario:

The guy with his arm in a sling. Exactly. How's your arm doing by the way?

Rich:

He's on a call right now.

Rochelle:

He's on the phone.

Stephen:

Hopefully, his mind is still working. Mario with regard to that, I understand that it's nice to have a question.

Mark: What happened? What did I do?

Stephen:

You were just fired from your job, Mark.

Mark:

Ah, well, what the hell? I never answer my phone during meetings. This time, I got caught.

Mario:

Yes, Steve.

Stephen:

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My concern on all of these projects. When the questions come up ahead of time, I understand why it's great to have the time to provide a correct answer or do the research on it. But I also feel that it becomes another piece of paper people have and don't read, and those thoughts don't get in front of the whole board. So I really like to see those questions that get asked ahead of time, also get answered in the presentation. I think that's not just a written form, but in terms of verbal communication to the whole board.

## Mario:

That's a very valid point that I know Rochelle will probably is making a note of that and I know Prem is.

#### Prem:

We are ready, right? We just want to get going on the questions and make sure that it's a great open conversation and it's going to be good and I can see that already.

#### Mario:

But you're right, Steve, that is something that you're getting hundreds of pages of an application and then you have the confidential information included, that you have to log in and put in your password. And then you get an email from Jennifer that says, "Here's the questions." Then you get another email back from Jennifer saying, "Okay, here's the answers to the questions that you saw a week and a half ago." Meanwhile, the meeting notice comes out and you've got all these other things to look at, so that's a very valid point. And Prem, I'm sure has written that down and we'll make sure he covers everything in the meeting.

## Stephen:

Well, it might be important for the public too, if anybody ever decides to come to one of our meetings, so the opportunity to hear it. And you and I talked about the confidentiality information and it was pretty broad in this application. But I understand that, the RWA doesn't want to put potential vulnerabilities out there. I was fine with it. I don't know if anybody else has any questions about the confidential material.

## Mario:

No, we just have to be careful during the hearing. And if we can, we'll try and group the questions that refer the confidential information to a point where we can group them, take care of the open session, then go into an executive session instead of, okay, question one, we answer. Question two, oh, let's go in executive session. You're out of executive session. Question three, we answer. Question four, we answer. Question five, okay. Executive session again, let's pop in and out. That doesn't help anyone.

## Stephen:

I had the same thought, because of the subject matter. It's hard not to discuss certain aspects of it, when you're asking these questions. Okay. Sounds good. Any other comments, questions on this topic? Want to thank Prem and Jeff for helping us out today. Appreciate it.

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Mario:

Well, thank you all for taking it on as a challenge.

#### Stephen:

Thank you as well, Mario.

#### Suzanne:

And Steve, I'd like to compliment the committee for asking what I think are really good questions and putting this in the right context. It's a big project. It's a big cost and it's not necessarily in any single person's wheelhouse, so I appreciate everybody's effort to get it right.

#### Stephen:

Yeah. I work a little bit with computers. I'm not an expert. Most of the board is not, and we're being asked to review and potentially approve a lot of money here and I don't believe you were here the last time, right? How long have you been with us now, Suzanne?

Mario:

Suzanne was not here.

## Stephen:

Yeah. So it hasn't been that long since myself and a number of other people on the board have been through this and we spent a lot of money at that time. So I definitely have some questions about the past and moving forward, with regard to a solution for this particular problem.

Rich:

There's an old saying in the business, because users often see tools at conferences and they like colors and they like bells and they come back and say, "We want this tool." And I've seen it happen so many times. And there's kind of a cynical saying on the information system side of the technology side, which is, "A fool with a tool is still a fool." And what it means is, a lot of times we buy things we don't need, and we don't know enough to know we don't need them. So anyway, something to keep in your mind, there's almost a skepticism about it. I think that's a healthy way to approach these, is really think about why we don't need it. And if you can't come up with that, then you're probably doing the right thing by getting it.

Stephen: Interesting. Thanks, Rich.

Rich: For what that's worth.

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#### Stephen:

We're going to have some questions on this, for sure. Moving on to the agenda. Item four is the report of the OCA, Jeff.

#### Jeff:

Sure. So in addition to the CIS project in May, I had a couple other projects on my desk. One was writing the memo to the RPB on the Lake Gaillard Treatment Plant Valve Replacement project, which you heard, and also reviewing the application and submitting my memo to the RPB on the phase one Lake Whitney Dam project. So that was a pretty time consuming endeavor, because there were 800 pages of confidential information that I looked at. A lot of which was very, very helpful, because of the extensive history of reviewing the Lake Whitney Dam, as I talked about in my testimony at the public hearing on that.

#### Jeff:

So May was a pretty busy month. June has been busy on the CIS front. We've had a couple of consumer issues, nothing that really made its way to me. Louise has done a really good job of giving me a heads up when there's something that might land on my desk. So we had somebody who got a \$37 bill and didn't understand why and the authority took care of that. And then we had another consumer who was very unhappy about his bill after the conversion to monthly billing, there were some inconsistencies reflected in his bills and he was pretty stressed out about it. But again, the authority took care of it internally, so I never really had to get involved, other than just looking at the correspondence to make sure that the consumer was satisfactorily handled and happy with the outcome.

## Stephen:

The person with the \$37 bill. Were they unhappy that it was too low or did they think it was an error?

Jeff:

They didn't know what it was. It was just basically a service charge.

Stephen:

Yeah. Okay.

Jeff:

They didn't have any consumption. They didn't understand why they were getting a bill.

Stephen:

Prem, are we getting calls on the monthly billing still or any-

Prem:

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No, I think we do have some clarification calls we do get, and of course it just stabilized quite a bit. I would say the call warning was pretty high in March, and now we are kind of it's in the course of the project, we are stabilizing more. So we are coming back to the normal call volumes now, pre-pandemic levels, so it's been pretty good. So there's not really a concern to Jeff's point earlier. There were a couple things, but we took care of it and we had some conversation and a lot of them was more clarification stuff, so we are okay.

Stephen: Very good. Okay. Thanks Jeff. Anything else?

Jeff:

Thank you. No, that's it. Thanks.

Stephen:

Okay. Item five is approval of the OCAs invoice for May, for 376483. Do we have a motion?

Tony:

I move, we accept his billing.

Stephen: Thank you, Tony. Second?

Naomi:

I second it.

Stephen:

Thanks, Naomi. Any comments? Any questions for Jeff on the bill? Hearing none. All those in favor?

Group:

Aye.

Stephen:

Any opposed? Any abstentions? So that, motion carries unanimously. Item six is a schedule of volunteers to attend authority meetings. Tony, since it was last minute, I appreciate your situation, but I attended the authority meeting, it was a very long meeting. Much of it was devoted to strategic planning, both what had happened last year, what was going on in the future. So it was good to be at that meeting, hear that from a customer service point of view. A lot of the staff spoke individually and we got information from a lot of people working on this.

Tony:

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Thanks for filling in for me.

Stephen:

Yeah, no problem. Would you be able to do the September meeting since we hadn't determined-

Tony:

Yes.

Stephen:

Okay. Thank you. I appreciate that. It should take care of our obligations for the authority meetings. It's important that one of us go and if you do go, please take a few notes, bring back to the consumer affairs meeting.

Tony:

You got it.

Stephen:

What you've heard that you may think may be relevant. It's a little more detailed too, that's provided in those meetings. So we get a little more information that way. Item seven is notification of the committee chair election in July. I am eligible to serve one more year and I would like to do that. If anybody has an interest, please also let me know, but we'll do that in July. If not, we do need someone moving forward to think about taking over the committee too.

Stephen:

So that's, out there to think about. Our next meeting is July 18th at 5:30. And I want to take a motion to adjourn, unless there's any other questions before we adjourn? Comments? Who made the motion? Tony?

Tony:

Tony.

Stephen:

Yeah. Second?

Naomi:

Second.

Stephen: Thank you, Naomi. All in favor.

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Group:

Aye.

Stephen:

Thanks everybody. We're adjourned for this meeting.