

# | Agenda Item | cover sheet

for consideration by the Apex Town Council

Item Type: CONSENT AGENDA

Meeting Date: November 23, 2021

## Item Details

Presenter(s): Vance Holloman, Finance Director

Department(s): Finance Department

### Requested Motion

A motion to approve the form of a proposed vendor agreement between the Town and Wake County which will enable eligible Apex utility customers to receive assistance under the Low Income Water Assistance Program(LIHWAP) and authorize the Finance Director to execute the agreement.

### Approval Recommended?

Yes

### Item Details

Wake County is operating a program in conjunction with the State to provide assistance to low income utility customers who have outstanding water account balances and have, or are in danger of having, their water cutoff. The Town of Apex typically cuts off electric services for unpaid amounts. Staff estimates there are approximately 700 water customers who do not receive electric services from the Town. Staff does not know how many of those accounts have been or are in danger of being disconnected or how many would meet the low income criteria set at a household income at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty level.

The vendor agreement has been reviewed by the Town Attorney who indicated the agreement must be approved by the Town Council due to the provision of Item 4 which would obligate the Town not to disconnect the recipient's services for 90 days after receiving a payment for the balance due through the Program. This deviates from the Town's cutoff policy. Typically a customer would be cutoff 45 days after receiving a bill and failing to pay. Staff recommends approval and views the potential brief extension of the cutoff period for these customers justified by the receipt of the past due funds and the value of the assistance to a low income customer.

The County would make payments directly to the Town on the customer's behalf. The customer would have to apply to the County for assistance. If the Town participates in the Program efforts will be made by staff to make customers aware of the Program and how to apply for funds.

## Attachments

- LIHWAP Policy Manual
- LIHWAP Vendor Agreement

