



FW: Letter of Submission for January 6 Workshop

From Brandon Hammond <HammondB@cityofboardman.com>

Date Mon 1/5/2026 11:02 AM

To Amanda Mickles <micklesa@cityofboardman.com>

Can you add this to Donna's response

From: Donna Anderson <donnaranderson101@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, January 5, 2026 10:57 AM

To: Brandon Hammond <HammondB@cityofboardman.com>

Subject: Re: Letter of Submission for January 6 Workshop

You don't often get email from donnaranderson101@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Good morning Mr. Hammond,

Thank you for your prompt response. You invited me to share any additional questions that I have so I will address these in this letter. Let me give you a little background for context: we moved here just over a year ago. One of our reasons for moving here was affordability. We came from Wasco County where the cost of living was escalating rapidly with no apparent plan to address the community concerns. Wasco County voted down a school bond that was nearly 1/2 the size of the one that was recently passed in Morrow County.

Shortly after moving here the school bond passed and our property taxes went from \$4,122 to \$4,864. We are retirees and worked very hard to position ourselves to buy a home that is paid for so that we can live on our modest, fixed income. Our garbage bill is increasing by 40% with no option to opt out of a service that we do not need. Now we are looking at a substantial increase in water rates as outlined in my first letter.

I watched the December 2, 2025, City Council, Work Shop several times and it left a lot of unanswered questions, especially regarding the disparity with Industrial use versus residential. The proposed rate hikes appear to be extremely unfair and I believe I am not the only one who will have questions,

Below are the specific questions that I have for you, the mayor and City Council:

A. Bond vs. Rate Increases (Foundational Accountability)

1. Which specific water and wastewater projects approved under the 2020 voter bond have been completed, partially completed, or deferred?
 - Please list each project and its final or projected cost.
2. Which water or wastewater projects currently driving rate increases were not covered by the 2020 bond, and why?
3. At what point did bond funding end and reliance on ratepayer funding begin for system expansion or upgrades?
4. Was the possibility of recurring 10–12% annual rate increases disclosed to voters at the time the bond was approved? If so, where is that documented?

B. Residential vs. Industrial Water Use (Cost Allocation)

5. What percentage of total water production is used by residential customers versus industrial, wholesale, or system operations?
 - Please provide current data.
6. If residential customers represent only a small share of total water use, why are residential rates increasing at 10–12% annually?
7. How are costs for capacity expansion allocated between residential and non-residential users?
 - Is allocation based on actual usage, peak demand, or risk exposure?
8. Are large or industrial users paying proportionally for the infrastructure capacity they require? If not, why?

C. Industrial Users, NDAs, and Transparency

9. Are there non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) between the City and any major water users or industrial customers?
 - If yes, who authorized them and when?
10. Do any NDAs restrict City Councilors or staff from publicly identifying major water users or discussing their impact on system demand?
11. How can residents meaningfully evaluate rate increases if elected officials are constrained from discussing who uses most of the water?
12. Have NDAs been reviewed for compliance with Oregon public records and open meetings laws?

D. Financial Risk and Ratepayer Exposure

13. Does the City's financial analysis rely heavily on revenue from one or a small number of major water customers?
14. If a major industrial or wholesale customer reduces usage or leaves, what is the projected impact on residential rates?
15. Why are residential customers positioned as the financial backstop for this risk instead of the users who drive demand?

E. The \$1 Million Well Project

16. What specific demand is driving the need for the approximately \$1 million new well project?
17. How much of that new capacity is intended for residential use versus industrial or system-level demand?
18. Why are residential customers being asked to fund this project through rate increases if residential demand is not the primary driver?

F. Governance and Representation

19. Can City Councilors openly discuss the primary drivers of water demand and rate increases in public meetings without restriction?

20. If Councilors cannot openly discuss these issues, how are residents being adequately represented?
21. What steps will the City take to ensure future rate decisions are transparent, equitable, and based on actual usage rather than risk shifting?

G. Forward-Looking Safeguards

22. Will the City commit to publishing an annual, plain-language breakdown showing:
 - Who uses the water
 - Who pays for capacity
 - Who bears financial risk
23. Will the City evaluate alternative rate structures that prevent repeated double-digit increases for residential customers?
24. Will the City commit that future industrial or wholesale agreements fully internalize their infrastructure and risk costs rather than shifting them to residents?

Please share this letter with City Council members prior to your Workshop on January 6th.

Thank you for your consideration and for entering this letter into the official record.

Please share this letter with City Council members prior to your Workshop on January 6th. Thank you for your consideration and for entering this letter into the official record.

Best regards,

Donna Anderson

On Wed, Dec 31, 2025 at 3:27 PM Brandon Hammond <HammondB@cityofboardman.com> wrote:

Ms. Anderson,

Thanks so much for reaching out and sharing your concerns about water rates. I really appreciate you taking the time to speak up—hearing directly from community members helps us understand what people are experiencing and what questions we need to do a better job answering. If you have questions or want to share more, I would be happy to visit or help set up a meeting/conversation with any of our elected officials. You’re always welcome to connect outside of Council meetings, and we’re glad to hear from you whenever something comes up.

Thanks again for being involved and for helping make Boardman better.

Warmly,
Brandon Hammond
City of Boardman

From: Donna Anderson <donnaranderson101@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 31, 2025 2:50 PM
To: Brandon Hammond <hammondB@cityofboardman.com>
Subject: Letter of Submission for January 6 Workshop

You don't often get email from donnaranderson101@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Donna Anderson
544 Anthony Dr.
Boardman, OR 97818

City of Boardman
City Manager and City Councilors
Boardman, Oregon 97818

December 31, 2025

Dear Mayor and City Councilors,

My name is Donna Anderson, and I am a resident of Boardman. I am submitting this letter for inclusion in the official public record regarding the City's current water and sewer rate discussions and the January 6, 2026 workshop materials.

In 2020, the City went to voters and passed a general obligation bond to fund major water and wastewater improvements—wells, tanks, pipes, lagoons, and other core infrastructure. The message to residents at the time was straightforward: this bond would modernize and expand the system to support growth while ensuring long-term reliability.

Now, only a few years later, residents are being told that water and sewer rates must increase by approximately 10–12% per year, year after year, for an extended period of time. These are not one-time or modest adjustments. Compounded annually, these increases will significantly raise household utility bills and create long-term affordability concerns for families, seniors, and fixed-income residents.

This leads to a reasonable and unavoidable question:

If voters already approved a bond to pay for major water and wastewater infrastructure, where exactly did the bond funding stop and the annual 10–12% rate hikes begin?

At the same time, the City's own water audits and rate analysis show that residential customers do not use most of the water produced by the system. Residential consumption represents only a small portion of total water sales. The majority of water is associated with large users and system-level operations—industrial demand, wholesale supply, testing, and operational flows.

That raises another fundamental concern:

If residents use only a small share of the water, why are residential customers being asked to absorb repeated 10–12% annual rate increases?

From a household perspective, it appears that residents are being asked to pay escalating rates not because of their own usage, but to support capacity, risk, and financial exposure tied to large-scale users. This concern is reinforced by the City's own financial analysis, which acknowledges that a significant portion of water revenue depends on a single major customer relationship. The analysis further states that if this relationship were to change, residents could face sudden and severe rate shocks.

In other words, households appear to be positioned as the financial safety net—both now, through repeated 10–12% increases, and in the future if industrial or wholesale arrangements change.

What makes this especially difficult for residents to accept is the lack of transparency in public discussions. At recent workshops, City Councilors appear constrained from openly discussing who actually uses the vast majority of the City's water. If elected representatives cannot clearly identify the primary drivers of water demand and system expansion in public meetings, residents are left without the information needed to understand why their rates are increasing so sharply.

At the same time, residents are being asked to accept a new approximately \$1 million well project and long-term rate increases, even though residential use accounts for only a small portion of total demand. From the citizen's point of view, this creates the impression that households are paying for infrastructure and risk created by others, without proportional responsibility or open disclosure.

To be clear, residents are not saying “do not maintain the system.” We understand that infrastructure requires ongoing investment. What residents are asking for is fairness, transparency, and accountability, including:

- A clear explanation of which projects were covered by the voter-approved bond and which are now being shifted into ratepayer bills.
- An honest, public discussion of who uses most of the water and who drives system expansion.
- Assurance that residential customers are not being asked to shoulder repeated 10–12% annual increases to backstop industrial or wholesale risk.
- Confidence that City Council can openly discuss these realities while representing the citizens who elected them.

These are reasonable questions for anyone who opens a monthly water bill and is told to expect double-digit percentage increases year after year, despite having already voted to fund major infrastructure.

I respectfully ask the Council to address these concerns directly, transparently, and on the public record, and to ensure that future decisions reflect equitable cost-sharing based on actual water use—not simply the ability of residents to absorb compounding rate increases.

Thank you for your consideration and for entering this letter into the official record.

Sincerely,

Donna Anderson