



City of Needles, California Request for City Council Action

☒ CITY COUNCIL ☒ NPUA

☒ Regular ☐ Special

Meeting Date: September 9, 2025

Title: Ordinance 676-AC, Approving an Ordinance of the City of Needles, California Establishing a Procedure for Property Owner Objections to Proposed Water/Sewer Fees or Special Assessment **2nd Read Adopt**

Background: Ordinance 676-AC was introduced for approval at the August 12, 2025, Regular NPUA/HACN/City Council Meeting. A motion and a second were made, and the Ordinance was approved by a 6-0 vote in favor.

California recently enacted AB 2257, a bill sponsored by the ACWA and authored by Assemblymember Lori Wilson (D-Suisun City), which assists local agencies in defending against lawsuits under Proposition 218, which governs assessments, fees, and charges levied by local agencies. The bill establishes a formal objection procedure for ratepayers to raise concerns about proposed rate changes before litigation becomes an option. This process is designed to address disputes during the public participation stage, reducing the likelihood of surprise lawsuits after rates are approved. AB 2257 aligns with existing constitutional provisions and Proposition 218, which set standards for public notice, hearings, and protest procedures.

Justification/Analysis: This legislation mirrors the California Environmental Quality Act process, emphasizing transparency and early resolution of disputes. It does not bypass the public participation process mandated by Proposition 218 but enhances it by creating a parallel objection mechanism. By fostering communication between agencies and ratepayers, AB 2257 seeks to minimize litigation risks and promote collaborative problem solving in public rate-setting processes.

Fiscal Impact: This action does not necessitate additional budget adjustments or impose new costs. This action helps ensure long-term financial stability by implementing sound financial management practices and minimizing risks.

Recommendation: Adopt Ordinance 676-AC, Approving an Ordinance of the City of Needles, California Establishing a Procedure for Property Owner Objections to Proposed Water/Sewer Fees or Special Assessment

Submitted By: John Pinkney, City Attorney

City Manager Approval: Patrick J. Martinez Date: 9/4/2025

Other Department Approval (when required): _____ Date: _____