

## BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

March 18, 2025

The regular meeting of the Board of Public Utilities held on the 18th day of March, 2025, was called to order at 4:00 p.m. with VICE CHAIRMAN LeJEUNE presiding and the following COMMISSIONERS present:

COMMISSIONERS BROWN, McNEIL, CAIRNS AND POWELL

Also Present: SECRETARY SALLIS, CITY MANAGER MARTINEZ, UTILITY MANAGER TORRANCE AND OTHER KEY STAFF

EX ABSNC COMMISSIONER BROWN MOVED, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER McNEIL, to grant an excused absence to CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL. Motion carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: VICE CHAIRMAN LeJEUNE, COMMISSIONERS BROWN,  
McNEIL, CAIRNS AND POWELL  
NOES: NONE  
ABSENT: CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL

APPROVAL COMMISSIONER McNEIL MOVED, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER  
AGENDA BROWN, to approve the agenda. Motion carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: VICE CHAIRMAN LeJEUNE, COMMISSIONERS BROWN,  
McNEIL, CAIRNS AND POWELL  
NOES: NONE  
ABSENT: CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL

CORSPNDN: None

PBLC APRN: None

CNST CAL: COMMISSIONER BROWN requested to pull agenda item 3 (authorize Phillips Construction to replace six (6) water meters not to exceed \$59,600 utilizing water asset replacement funds).

COMMISSIONER McNEIL MOVED, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BROWN, to pull agenda item 3 and approve agenda items 1 and 2.

1. Approval of minutes of the regular meeting held February 18, 2025
2. Authorize the City Manager to execute the 2025 California Forbearance Agreement on behalf of the City of Needles along with Coachella Valley Water District, Imperial Irrigation District, The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, and Palo Verde Irrigation District

Motion carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: VICE CHAIRMAN LeJEUNE, COMMISSIONERS BROWN,  
McNEIL, CAIRNS AND POWELL  
NOES: NONE  
ABSENT: CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL

REPLACE Utility Manager Torrance briefly explained the need to replace six large  
WTR MTRS commercial water meters which must be in aboveground vaults and city crews are not able to do it in a timely manner. COMMISSIONER BROWN asked if Phillips Construction was a city preferred vendor and, as such, did not require a bidding process to which Utility Manager Torrance responded yes.

COMMISSIONER BROWN MOVED, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER POWELL, to authorize Phillips Construction to replace six (6) water meters not to exceed \$59,600 utilizing water asset replacement funds. Motion carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: VICE CHAIRMAN LeJEUNE, COMMISSIONERS BROWN,  
McNEIL, CAIRNS AND POWELL  
NOES: NONE  
ABSENT: CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL

REG ITEMS: Secretary Sallis read an email from CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL sharing his views on the purchase of 60 decorative wreaths using electric FY25 budget: 1) street lights are a public safety issue, therefore under the Needles City Council purview, as such a taxpayer supported expenditure; 2) some time in the past street lights have become incorrectly ratepayer supported; 3) therefore purchase of decorations, if rate payer i.e. FY 25 funds are used, a reasonable accommodation would be credited to the due to / due from financial ledger Utility to City.

HOLIDY  
WREATHS

Utility Manager Torrance gave a brief history on the NPUA purchase of the current wreaths back in 1990 which now need to be replaced and should be done ahead of the holiday season. The decorative light poles which the wreaths are placed on are very lightweight and not able to handle the weight of a heavy wreath.

COMMISSIONER BROWN pointed out that CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL's concern is who is paying. City Manager Martinez spoke on the light poles being used are owned by the utility and the wreaths are an extension of the light pole; the benefits of the new wreaths to the community; and funding is available and budgeted in the electric department.

COMMISSIONER BROWN MOVED, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER McNEIL, to authorize the purchase of sixty (60) 36" decorative holiday wreaths from Holiday Outdoor Décor not to exceed a cost of \$26,000 utilizing the adopted FY25 electric budget. Motion carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: VICE CHAIRMAN LeJEUNE, COMMISSIONERS BROWN,  
McNEIL, CAIRNS AND POWELL  
NOES: NONE  
ABSENT: CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL

ELECT  
STEEL  
BLDG  
CONSTR

Utility Manager Torrance explained that the 60'x120' steel building has been a capital project in the electric department for a long time. The vehicles and inventory are stored at different locations outside and this will get them indoors at one location. This project went out to bid.

COMMISSIONER CAIRNS noted that he owns a house on California Avenue so City Manager Martinez looked up and confirmed that the address is outside the area which would require COMMISSIONER CAIRNS' recusal.

COMMISSIONER CAIRNS spoke on work previously done on the flood control channel and the contractor impeding access behind the homes and the alley along the tracks. He hoped the city will watch this contractor in keeping the area cleaned up and open. Utility Manager Torrance explained that this is city property and not an access. City Manager Martinez responded this is a city project and staff will make sure the contractor is in compliance.

COMMISSIONER BROWN questioned the 15% contingency and if it was for change orders, etc. Utility Manager Torrance explained the city will be doing the electric and landscaping so will have its own costs that will be charged to the project in addition to any change orders.

COMMISSIONER BROWN MOVED, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER POWELL, to recommend award of contract to Shipley Construction for the purchase & installation of a 60' x 120' steel building, including all site grading, driveway approach, concrete slab, installation of utilities, fencing, and ADA parking at a cost of \$585,697 plus a 15% contingency of \$87,855 for a total project cost not to exceed \$673,552 to be funded by electric asset replacement funds. Motion carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: VICE CHAIRMAN LeJEUNE, COMMISSIONERS BROWN,  
McNEIL, CAIRNS AND POWELL  
NOES: NONE  
ABSENT: CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL

ALT ENG  
AD HOC  
COMM

COMMISSIONER McNEIL MOVED, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER POWELL, to appoint COMMISSIONER CAIRNS to fill a vacant position on the Alternative Energy Ad Hoc Committee. Motion carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: VICE CHAIRMAN LeJEUNE, COMMISSIONERS BROWN,  
McNEIL, CAIRNS AND POWELL  
NOES: NONE  
ABSENT: CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL

March 18, 2025

Page 4

RATEMK COMMISSIONER CAIRNS MOVED, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER  
AD HOC POWELL, to appoint COMMISSIONER McNEIL to fill a vacant position on the  
COMM Ratemaking Ad Hoc Committee. Motion carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: VICE CHAIRMAN LeJEUNE, COMMISSIONERS BROWN,  
McNEIL, CAIRNS AND POWELL  
NOES: NONE  
ABSENT: CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL

REPORTS: VICE CHAIRMAN LeJEUNE acknowledged the following reports: 1) Present  
Perfected Rights Report for February 2025; and 2) Western Area Power  
Administration FY25 Q4 Term Purchase (April, May & June 2025)

MGR'S RPT: Utility Manager Torrance reviewed a written Manager's Report – March 18<sup>th</sup>  
which she distributed at this meeting.

BRD RQSTS: None

VICE CHAIRMAN LeJEUNE declared the regular meeting of the Board of Public Utilities held  
on the 18th day of March, 2025, adjourned at 4:38 p.m.

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Vice Chairman Secretary