

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

November 12, 2025

The special joint meeting of the Board of Public Utilities and Needles Public Utility Authority (NPUA) / City Council held on the 12th day of November, 2025, was called to order at 6:38 p.m. with CHAIRMAN TERRY CAMPBELL presiding and the following COMMISSIONERS present:

COMMISSIONERS JONES, WALTERS, BROWN, McNEIL, CAIRNS AND POWELL

NPUA/CITY COUNCIL: MAYOR JERNIGAN, MEMBERS FORD, McCORKLE, CAMPBELL, POGUE AND LONGBRAKE

Also Present: CITY MANAGER MARTINEZ, UTILITY MANAGER TORRANCE, BOARD SECRETARY SALLIS, CITY CLERK CLARK AND CITY ATTORNEY WADE

PUBLIC HEARINGS – WATER AND WASTEWATER RATE INCREASES

1. Board of Public Utilities / NPUA / Council: Public hearing noticed to consider all evidence and testimony for or against a proposed increase in water rates for water services
 - Staff Report – Utility Manager Torrance provided a PowerPoint presentation on the utility services provided by the city including electric, water and wastewater. She noted that three community meetings were held on the proposed rate increases for water and wastewater and there was one resident at one hearing and two residents at another. The proposed rate increases include a 3% increase in water and 6% in wastewater each year for the next five years with the last increase October 1, 2029.
 - Board / NPUA / Council questions of staff - None
 - Mayor to open the public hearing – 6:49 p.m.
 - Public Comment – Ruth Musser-Lopez asked that the protests be read into the record and not just announced how many were received. She voiced her objection to the rate increases speaking on city employees increases in salary and benefits, social security for seniors being 2.8% but the utilities increasing more every year and not considering use of cannabis business tax for utilities in the general fund or amortization of capital improvements over 30 years. She asked when rates will go down with no inflation.
Donna Rohr questioned if the rates projected for water overages are increasing and Utility Manager Torrance explained the proposed new rate for the basic service charge and volumetric rate (water used).
 - Mayor to close the public hearing – 6:54 p.m.
 - City Clerk will announce the final number of written protests received under Prop 218 and whether a majority protest exists – City Clerk Clark announced that 15 written protests were received which do not constitute a majority.
 - Board / NPUA / Council Discussion / Deliberation – None

- **BOARD ACTION:** COMMISSIONER McNEIL MOVED, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BROWN, to waive the reading and adopt Resolution No. 11-12-25 BPU establishing and recommending rates for water service effective February 1, 2026; and rescinding all prior resolutions relating to the establishment of water rates subject to adoption of new rates by the City Council and Needles Public Utility Authority. Motion carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL, COMMISSIONERS JONES,
WALTERS, BROWN, McNEIL, CAIRNS AND POWELL
NOES: NONE
ABSENT: NONE

- **NPUA ACTION:** MEMBER McCORKLE MOVED, SECONDED BY MEMBER POGUE, to waive the reading and adopt Resolution No. 11-12-2025-NPUA approving rates for water service effective February 1, 2026, and rescinding all prior resolutions relating to the establishment of water rates. Motion carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: MEMBERS FORD, McCORKLE, CAMPBELL, JERNIGAN,
POGUE AND LONGBRAKE
NOES: NONE
ABSENT: MEMBER BELT

- **COUNCIL ACTION:** COUNCILMEMBER POGUE MOVED, SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER McCORKLE, to waive the reading and adopt Resolution No. 2025-47 approving rates for water service effective February 1, 2026, and rescinding all prior resolutions relating to the establishment of water rates. Motion carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: COUNCILMEMBERS FORD, McCORKLE, CAMPBELL,
POGUE AND LONGBRAKE
NOES: NONE
ABSENT: COUNCILMEMBER BELT

2. Board of Public Utilities / NPUA / Council: Public hearing noticed to consider all evidence and testimony for or against a proposed increase in wastewater rates for wastewater services

- Staff Report – Previously provided
- Board / NPUA / Council questions of staff - None
- Mayor to open the public hearing – 6:57 p.m.
- Public Comment – Ruth Musser-Lopez noted her objection comments are the same as water. She does not feel it's right to take the inflation rate and then only allow protests. There should be a cap when inflation rates are unreasonable, and it should not be a protest vote but should go on the ballot. People cannot afford to pay and she felt this is wrong.
- Mayor to close the public hearing – 7:00 p.m.
- City Clerk will announce the final number of written protests received under Prop 218 and whether a majority protest exists – As reported during the water rate public hearing increase.

- Board / NPUA / Council Discussion / Deliberation - None
- **BOARD ACTION:** COMMISSIONER POWELL MOVED, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER CAIRNS, to waive the reading and adopt Resolution No. 11-12-25-1 BPU establishing and recommending rates for wastewater service effective February 1, 2026; and rescinding all prior resolutions relating to the establishment of wastewater rates subject to adoption of new rates by the City Council and Needles Public Utility Authority. Motion carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL, COMMISSIONERS JONES,
WALTERS, BROWN, McNEIL, CAIRNS AND POWELL
NOES: NONE
ABSENT: NONE

- **NPUA ACTION:** MEMBER McCORKLE MOVED, SECONDED BY MEMBER POGUE, to waive the reading and adopt Resolution No. 11-12-2025-1-NPUA approving rates for wastewater service effective February 1, 2026, and rescinding all prior resolutions relating to the establishment of water rates. Motion carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: MEMBERS FORD, McCORKLE, CAMPBELL, JERNIGAN,
POGUE AND LONGBRAKE
NOES: NONE
ABSENT: MEMBER BELT

- **COUNCIL ACTION:** COUNCILMEMBER McCORKLE MOVED, SECONDED BY COUNCILMEMBER FORD, to waive the reading and adopt Resolution No. 2025-48 approving rates for wastewater service effective February 1, 2026, and rescinding all prior resolutions relating to the establishment of wastewater rates. Motion carried by the following roll call vote:

AYES: COUNCILMEMBERS FORD, McCORKLE, CAMPBELL,
POGUE AND LONGBRAKE
NOES: NONE
ABSENT: COUNCILMEMBER BELT

City Manager Martinez commended the Board and NPUA/Council for the tough decisions that had to be made to protect the financial stability of the utilities. He also thanked the staff that were involved in the process to get to this action today.

CHAIRMAN CAMPBELL declared the special joint meeting of the Board of Public Utilities and Needles Public Utility Authority (NPUA) / City Council held on the 12th day of November, 2025 adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

ATTEST: _____

Chairman

Secretary