

# +Fisherman Bay Sewer District

P. O. Box 86

Lopez Island, WA 98261

(360) 468-2131

**EMERGENCY MEETING**

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**Wednesday, April 21th @5:00 p.m.**

Please email [clerk@fishbaysewer.com](mailto:clerk@fishbaysewer.com) for your Zoom invite.

**Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8419240498?pwd=SERCWURqQJJEQXVLNGVSVnJoWXlzdz09&from=addon>

## EMERGENCY MEETING MINUTES

### I. CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Commissioners of Fisherman Bay Sewer District held an Emergency meeting on the 21st of April 2021 electronically through Zoom. President Lauren Stephens called the meeting to order at 5:05p.m. Also, attending was the Commissioner Tom McDaniel, Commissioner Donna Hasbrouck, The Superintendent Assistant Zac Ahneman, and the Superintendent Monico Mackinnon

The public attendees were Mary W., Kenny F., Staci F., Erin Hannaford, Laurie, and Crystal Rovente.

### II. NEW BUSINESS

1. Issues between the company board members and employees. Discussed.

### III. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The 3 board members only started another ZOOM session for their private evaluation of the new business. Their discussed topic was covered at the RCW 42.30.110-f & RCW 42.30.110-g.

The board members were back at the Emergency meeting session after about an hour as off 6:10pm.

No decisions were made in the executive session.

### III. CONCLUDE

A review of the responsibilities of the Commissioners meeting will be held on May the 6<sup>th</sup> through a ZOOM meeting. The resignation of the Superintendent, Monico Mackinnon, was accepted with the condition of continuing working with the Fisherman Bay Sewer District as an Executive Consultant. For the good of the district customers and the business, Monico Mackinnon accepted receiving an offer letter for his new job position that the Board will prepare. Zac Ahneman was offered the Interim Superintendent job position to be effective immediately. Zac Ahneman verbally accepted his new job position. Also, Lauren Stephens will present the Climate of the FBSD letter to all at the next meeting. Tom McDaniel moved and Lauren Stephens seconded the decisions made.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:06pm.



Commissioner



Clerk

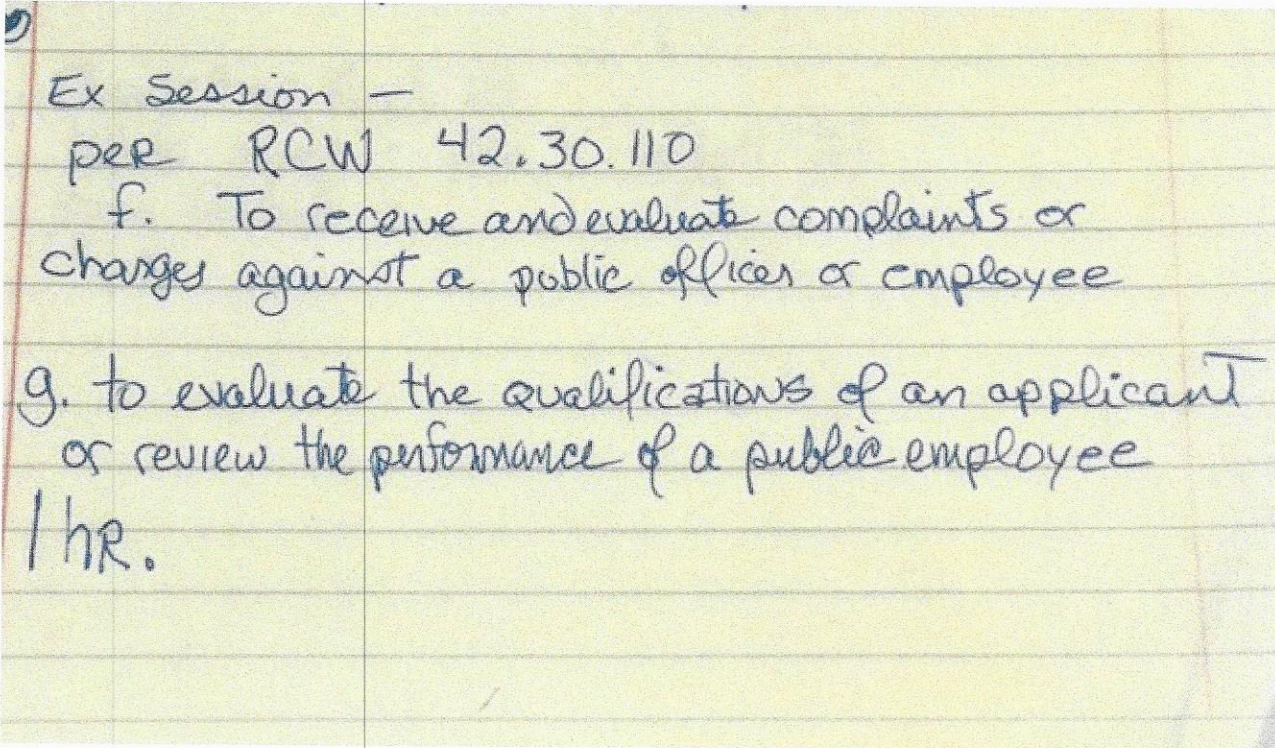
\*Personal appearances will be limited to 5 minutes. Thank you.

**A.J. Kocak**

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**From:** Lauren Stephens <whodathought@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 22, 2021 4:53 PM  
**To:** A.J. Kocak  
**Subject:** Add to minutes

Add this wording and RCW reference to the announcement for executive session for the meeting 4/21/2021.  
Thanks,  
Lauren



Sent from my iPad

## A.J. Kocak

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**From:** Monico Mackinnon  
**Sent:** Friday, April 16, 2021 8:32 PM  
**To:** Staff  
**Subject:** Resignation

Hi all,

It is with a very heavy heart that I bring this news to you. In light of the growing trend of toxicity in this organization, it is time that I leave you. I sadly feel that I have been driven from my position and am losing a significant source of my livelihood and security for my family due to the ceaseless aggression and derision coming from this board. I think it is reprehensible for elected officials to act in this fashion and to make people struggling to make a living feel so badly just going to their daily job.

We worked on the frontlines of a deadly pandemic with zero recognition until the eleventh hour after it was pointed out. We were made to feel that our concerns were baseless and overreactive. I have had more and more responsibility and tasks assigned to me yet have been told that I am not worth any more money and subsequently have been passed up for performance increases to my pay for years. A minor COLA does not equate to a raise. I have been strictly forbidden to work more than 40 hours and yet have been treated as if I don't do enough. I came to this organization with zero pertinent experience and still have risen to every challenge and excelled in nearly every role I am required to fill. You have sincerely under valued my efforts and over emphasized my lack of experience while expecting me to self train once I find knowledge that I lack.

This negative behavior has steadily increased over years and has ranged from belittlement, gender discrimination, a complete lack of confidence, baseless accusatory statements, and vaguely hostile and threatening communication. There has been conflict after conflict that has all stemmed inadvertently and sometimes directly from the board. I have filed several conflict complaints with this board that have been disregarded with no resolution or practical solutions.

The practices and policies of the (over) involvement of the board in administrative duties that have steadily developed are (in my eyes) completely inappropriate and poisonous to the organization. I think you have absolutely failed to value the hard working employees that make their living by tirelessly working to further and better the District that I have come to love.

Today will mark the beginning of my last two weeks serving the fine customers of this district. I highly recommend engaging with Zac in a healthy and positive light as he has the knowledge and skill to carry on with the business at hand. My last day will be April 30th.

I intend to see the Milagra project through to a successful repair, and to oversee a significant tank replacement for Tower Park. Next week I will begin the work of transferring the reigns to Zac as the (now) Lead Operator for this organization. I will begin working with Ecology to get him set up with the necessary SAW account and introduce him to Stephanie Allen. I have also completed purchasing most everything needed to see us through this next year without needing anything significant. I have drafted a Commissioner Protocol Manual based off of another District's format which is based in RCWs, and Local, State, and Federal laws. I highly recommend adopting it as it is written into policy. It was noted that one of the board had possession of the current manual and had never even reviewed it - which means the most recent commissioner also has no idea what role is appropriate or expected.

I truly wish the best for this organization and hope that someday it finds its way back to a healthy place.

## For me to stay:

1. Name me General Manager immediately with a pay range of 80,000 – 120,000 (to be renegotiated/reassessed every two years)
2. Return the supervision of the office to the administrator of the District (GM).
3. Draft a minimum of a 3-year contract for my continued participation.
4. Replace Lauren Stephens immediately. Kit Ledbetter has indicated that he would be interested and willing to immediately take over.
5. Name Zac Ahneman “District Manager” which would encourage him to take a more administrative role in the District and be the immediate supervisor to the Tech we will hire.
6. Immediately adopt the FBSD Commissioners Protocol Manual.
7. Award me a 10% raise retroactively to Jan 2021 (when I should have received a raise and to make up for years of increased duties and responsibilities without an increase) and a standardized 3.5% for all employees every year in addition to the cola. This would bring my rate up to 44.79 starting Jan 1<sup>st</sup> and next year it would go to 46.36+ a COLA etc...
8. Allow me to budget for PERS retirement program starting ASAP.
9. Tom will immediately make plans to attend training in professional communication and conflict resolution. The entire board (and I) will participate in training on how to properly be a commissioner.

## A.J. Kocak

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**From:** Zachary Ahneman  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 18, 2021 12:10 PM  
**To:** Staff  
**Subject:** Administration of the District  
**Attachments:** Hasbrouck Notes.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

As I sit down to write this, I am concerned for my career. I will enclose notes from Donna from 5/28/18 which indicates that there is a track record for when complaints are made about Lauren Stephens that Lauren Stephens will change the subject to my employee performance. Thus, making following our dispute resolution procedure useless. It should speak volumes to the board that in my closet at home I keep a file folder titled "Lauren Stephens Incidents." I do not have file folders for incidents with any other board members.

I read through Monico Mackinnon's letter of resignation and feel the need to express that this has been an experience I have shared with Monico in my time with this organization. I have made complaints to my direct supervisor which in turn have gone up to Donna Hasbrouck (our acting HR), to have nearly zero action be taken.

I was recently verbally accosted by Paula Lavoie our former clerk on the phone, I remained professional and immediately followed dispute resolution policy. It wasn't until after my request to follow dispute resolution that the counter claim of my performance came to light. Another glaring example that if I complain the tables will be turned and focus will be shifted to my performance. Lauren Stephens asked both Monico and A.J. if they heard me say anything over the phone. Lauren never asked me what happened and never dealt with the clerk which she was supervising at the time for being out of control. A true double standard seen with treatment of male employees (Monico Mackinnon & Zachary Ahneman) and that of female employees (Ande Finley & Paula Lavoie).

I feel that my requests for a title change have gone un-heard partly due to retaliatory actions by the President of our Board (Lauren Stephens). Luke and I have discussed that I was removed from our monthly board meetings based off of expecting Lauren Stephens to act in a fashion that wouldn't be bullying, hostile and remotely threatening. It felt to me like it was easier for Lauren Stephens to limit my witness to her behavior than to act professionally.

I officially am asking that Lauren Stephens voluntarily steps down as a Commissioner to the Fisherman Bay Sewer District. It is my opinion that she has driven off multiple employees, damaged customer relationships through using her position of authority to pursue customers she doesn't like. It is my opinion she has overstepped her duties as a Commissioner by overseeing the day to day activities of an employee (the clerk). I have documented notes from Donna Hasbrouck that both Luke and I have made complaints about Lauren Stephens gender bias when Luke and I were told that we were inherently threatening due to being males.

Every employee we have comes in to do a good job and does not deserve to be bullied or belittled.

I ask that Tom McDaniel be asked to complete the same level of communications training that the rest of the Board and staff have underwent.

I ask that all Board Members review the new Commissioner packet Monico put together as well as familiarize themselves with RCWs pertaining to Boards, familiarize themselves Washington State Open Public Meetings Act Guidance packet, available online ( I have a copy that could be copied).

If Monico leaves I ask the board to appoint me as Superintendent, which has long been the track record of promoting within for this position.

I ask that we attempt to keep Monico Mackinnon as a paid consultant to the district. His wealth of knowledge is invaluable and he has the ability to help me walk into the Superintendent position much smoother.

I ask that we get together as the Board and staff and look at ways in which we can come back together as a team and really work at the things that are most important.

I will not be forced to resign from my position, I will not be driven from my livelihood based off of all of these inequalities. I will continue to show up and perform to the best of my ability. I have been instrumental in getting the sewer district to the current level we are at, and I will be instrumental in our next stage of growth. I want my voice to be heard! I want credit where credit is due. I want respect from this board and I want my coworkers to feel good about their careers.

Notes from Meeting with Luke and Zack

Date: ? May 2018 12 noon

Luke requested I come talk about a Human resources issue

I arrived at the Sewer Plant and was met by Luke and Zack., the concerned parties.

They explained the Background and what the issue they are raising regarding a meeting with Lauren.

Background: On a typical day at the Sewer Office , there was an interaction between Paula, Luke and Zack which Luke and Zack felt was inappropriate workplace behavior.

Luke called Lauren for a meeting to discuss this. Luke and Zack were concerned that Paula needed some intervention and thought it was appropriate to contact Lauren as she is Paulas direct supervisor.

Lauren visited Paula nd then came to the Sewer plant to let Luke and Zack know what she found out.

During this conversation between Lauren , Luke and Zack, Luke and Zack felt that inappropriate comments were made by Lauren.

The concern by L&Z is that Lauren shifted topics from the concern to which they had called her, to their performance. L & Z were told they were inherently threatening because they are male, and Luke was labeled as threatening. And according to Luke, Lauren made references to Luke having threatened our prior Clerk.

Solution to this type of interaction:

Lauren to review the dispute resolution section of the Sewer District Employee handbook, as well as the information Clive Prout provided us regarding workplace relationships.

Of concern to Luke and Zack is that they called Lauren to discuss an issue and the discussion was turned by Lauren away from the issue.

This type of action makes it difficult for the concerned parties to continue to involve Lauren as a non biased participant in future conversations.

Donna Hasbrouck

5/28/18

4/21/21

Zachary Ahneman

Statement for meeting

I have not prepared any supporting documents for the opinions in my e-mail. My e-mail and opinions expressed followed the conflict resolution training I received from the Fisherman Bay Sewer District. The entire staff received conflict resolution training from Clive Prout (set up by Donna Hasbrouck). Monico and I also attended an additional training through the family resource center which was paid training and I was signed up to attend by my direct supervisor. The e-mail I wrote was purely opinion and was how I intended to follow the steps of the training I received from Fisherman Bay Sewer District. I will not be making any more opinions and I do not wish to participate in answering any questions about my opinions. I am attending tonight's meeting to see how we move forward from here. My interests are solely focused on keeping the Fisherman Bay Sewer District running smoothly.

Zachary Ahneman



# **Fisherman Bay Sewer District**

**P.O. Box 86**

**Lopez Island, WA 98261**

**Phone – (360) 468-2131**

**Plant – (360) 468-2724**

**[fishermanbay@centurytel.net](mailto:fishermanbay@centurytel.net)**

April 21, 2021

Dear Monico Mackinnon,

The board of Fisherman Bay Sewer District has reviewed your resignation letter and given it due consideration. We want to confirm our acceptance of your resignation. Per your letter of resignation, your last workday will be April 30, 2021.

We appreciate the effort you have put forth as an employee of the sewer district. We are concerned about losing your valuable expertise and would like to discuss retaining you as a consultant. If you are interested it being a consultant, please let us know and we will schedule an appointment to work out the details.

We wish you the best of luck in your future pursuits.

Sincerely,

Lauren Stephens

Board Chairperson

Fisherman Bay Sewer District

**A.J. Kocak**

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**From:** Zachary Ahneman  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 27, 2021 2:25 PM  
**To:** Staff  
**Subject:** Ahneman resignation effective immediately

At the end of the day yesterday, I turned in keys, credit card, computer passwords, and all items to Monico Mackinnon. I also gave him my letter of resignation effective immediately. We had internet problems at the plant yesterday or this would have come sooner. Luke has spoken with ecology and will be notifying you of how to proceed. Thank you for the opportunities, however I have other pressing opportunities to move ahead with. I will not be available any longer in any capacity for the Fisherman Bay Sewer District. I will meet Monico later in the week to sign payroll and submit my last time sheet.

-Zachary Ahneman