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CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE: September 14, 2021

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

FROM: Water Resources Division, Public Works Department

SUBJECT: Appropriation Of Water Operating Fund Reserves For The Gibraltar Control Tunnel Air Binding Project

RECOMMENDATION: That Council approve an increase in appropriations in the Water Operating Fund in the amount of \$195,798, funded from reserves, authorize the transfer of such funds to the Water Capital Fund, and approve an increase in estimated revenues and appropriations in the Water Capital Fund in the amount of \$195,798, funded by the transfer, for the Gibraltar Control Tunnel Air Binding Project.

DISCUSSION:

The City diverts raw water from Gibraltar Reservoir through Mission Tunnel to the south side of the Santa Ynez Mountain range. At the south portal of Mission Tunnel, water is transferred to the control tunnel and conveyed down the Gibraltar penstock to the City's hydroelectric power plant and Lauro Reservoir, where it blends with Lake Cachuma diversions prior to treatment at the William B. Cater Water Treatment Plant (Cater Treatment Plant). Air binding, which is the existence of air pockets in water pipelines, occurs when making changes to the flow rate of Gibraltar diversions, and becomes worse as the penstock piping reaches capacity. This causes surging in the control tunnel, and limits the amount of water that can be diverted, which then limits the power that can be generated from the hydroelectric plant.

Through a competitive Request for Proposal process, Kennedy-Jenks Consultants was hired by the City to develop and assess solutions for the air binding issue. Kennedy-Jenks Consultants prepared two technical memorandums and made final recommendations to alleviate air binding. A second contract was executed with MNS Engineers to design the plans and specifications for a construction bid package. Following a competitive bid process, CGS Engineering Corporation was the apparent low bidder, whose bid was responsive to, and met the requirements of the bid specifications. Staff recommends appropriating reserves to cover the Control Tunnel Air Binding construction costs.

WATER COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:

This item was presented to the Water Commission at its meeting on August 19, 2021, and the Commission voted **X-X** in support of staff's recommendation.

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BUDGET/FINANCIAL INFORMATION:

Although a portion of the costs associated with operating the Cater Treatment Plant are shared with our Joint Powers Agreement partners – Montecito and Carpinteria Valley Water Districts – the Gibraltar Reservoir facilities, including the control tunnel, penstock, and hydroelectric plant, are solely owned and operated by the City. For that reason, maintenance and repair of these facilities are the responsibility of the City. The Water Fund has sufficient available reserves to fund the recommendation in this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

The recommendation in this report is not subject to the California Environmental Quality Act.

PREPARED BY: Joshua Haggmark, Water Resources Manager/MBH/rb

SUBMITTED BY: Clifford M. Maurer, P.E, Public Works Director

APPROVED BY: City Administrator's Office