

**RESOLUTION NO. 2014-20**

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF BENTON CITY TO JOIN THE SEWER FUNDING COALITION FOR PROMOTION OF SEWER FUNDING SERVICES BETWEEN THE CITY OF BENTON CITY AND THE STATE OF WASHINGTON**

**WHEREAS**, the Sewer Funding Coalition is a coalition of local governments joining together to promote the funding issues related to unfunded mandates by the Washington State Legislature; and

**WHEREAS**, the City has determined that the Sewer Funding Coalition will promote local government concerns as well as economic challenges related to unfunded mandates from the Washington State Legislature. NOW, THEREFORE,

**THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BENTON CITY, WASHINGTON**, hereby resolves as follows:

That the Mayor of the City of Benton City, Washington, is hereby authorized and directed to join the Sewer Funding Coalition by contributing Six Hundred Ten Dollars (\$610.00) (population 3,045 at 20¢ per person). A copy of the statement and promotional material is attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference; and to take all other necessary steps required to complete this transaction.

**ADOPTED** this 2 day of December, 2014, by the City Council of the City of Benton City, Washington, and signed in authentication of its passage this 2 day of December, 2014.

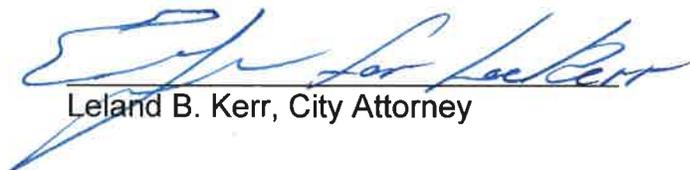
Resolution 2014-20 filed and recorded in the office of the City Clerk of the City of Benton City, Washington, this 2 day of December, 2014.

  
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Lloyd R. Carnahan, Mayor

Attest:

Approved as to Form:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Stephanie Haug, City Clerk/Treasurer

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Leland B. Kerr, City Attorney



[www.sewerfundingcoalition.wordpress.com](http://www.sewerfundingcoalition.wordpress.com)  
[scoalition@ci.shelton.wa.us](mailto:scoalition@ci.shelton.wa.us)  
360-432-5167

### **Mission**

- Secure ongoing revenue for unfunded sewer infrastructure mandates.
- Lobby the Legislature and Governor for multiyear grants.
- Build a coalition of smaller cities and rural local governments.
- Encourage coalition members and supporters to lobby their representatives.
- Educate the Governor and Legislature about the economic and environmental benefits of this funding.

### **Background**

For the past 15 years, Shelton has accumulated millions of dollars of sewer debt due to unfunded mandates. As of 2014, Shelton has \$53.7 million dollars of sewer debt with another \$6.5 million project on the horizon. Shelton's sewer rates have risen - and will rise - dramatically to meet debt service. In 2015 the average residential bill will be \$101 per month and by 2020, it will increase to \$135. With another \$6.5 million project to complete, the associated debt service will make the bills even higher unless the project is funded through grants. The City of Shelton is a low income rural community. It cannot afford the burden of millions of dollars of debt.

Shelton is not in a unique position. There are 241 cities in Washington with a population of 25,000 or less and many, if not most, of them are facing a similar situation. With threats of development moratoriums and reduced funding by the state if wastewater mandates are not met, small cities are in a dilemma. They cannot afford the mandates and they cannot afford to stall economic development or lose any funding from the state.

In January 2014 the City of Shelton hosted its first sewer funding meeting at Lieutenant Governor Brad Owen's office. Cities were invited to share their experience with unfunded sewer mandates. Shelton found that several cities in our region are in the same predicament - sewer mandates are driving current

or future debt. After the meeting, Shelton decided to move forward with forming a coalition of smaller cities to lobby the Legislature and Governor for grants for wastewater mandates.

In June 2014, Shelton hired a recent University of Washington master's graduate as an intern and held the second meeting of the coalition at the Association of Washington Cities conference in Spokane, WA. About 35 people attended the meeting and there was spirited discussion about sewer mandates and lack of funds. People were supportive of the coalition and provided information about their current sewer situation and future capital needs.

We are now solidifying the membership of the coalition and are asking cities to donate funds towards the cost of hiring a legislative advocate. We have conducted conference calls with over 30 city Mayors and City Administrators/Managers. Almost all the cities are taking our request to their cities councils.

### **Accomplishments**

Since early 2014, we have made several accomplishments such as:

- Identified over 60 Washington cities and counties who expressed strong interest in the coalition.
- Identified a program for grant funds to be allocated, the Centennial Fund. (Subject to program changes)
- Continuing to collect research that will help buttress the coalition's case.

### **Planned Request for Funding**

Increase the Centennial fund appropriation from \$50 million to \$200 million with the additional \$150 million restricted for point source sewer grants. We estimate that cities with a population of 25,000 or less will need \$3,231,003,000 to satisfy sewer capital mandates over the next 10 years.<sup>1</sup>

### **Preliminary Proposed Changes to the Centennial Program**

- Increase the \$5M cap per project to \$10M.
- Make funds available for existing sewer capital debt.
- Make growth and commercial needs eligible for grants.

### **Moving Forward**

- Arrange a meeting with Governor Inslee and/or Representative Dunshee.
- Raise funds to hire a legislative advocate for the 2015 session.
- Provide materials to city officials that enable them to effectively lobby their legislators.

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<sup>1</sup> The 10-year wastewater capital need is calculated by surveying 24 cities with a population of 25,000 or less, which is 10% of the cities in Washington with that population. The total wastewater need for these cities is \$323,100,300. This number is then multiplied by 10 to estimate the need for cities with a population of 25,000 or less across the state.



[www.sewerfundingcoalition.wordpress.com](http://www.sewerfundingcoalition.wordpress.com)

[scoalition@ci.shelton.wa.us](mailto:scoalition@ci.shelton.wa.us)

360-432-5167

STATEMENT

September 2014

To: City of Benton

Support Fee for lobbying services in the 2015 Washington Legislative Session

Population 3,045 @ .20 per person

\$610

Please remit to:  
City of Shelton  
525 W. Cota  
Shelton, WA 98584