Aquarion Water Authority
835 Main Street, Bridgeport, Connecticut 06604
or
***Dial in by phone**
+1 469-965-2517,,1389903# United States, Northlake
Phone conference ID: 138 990 3#

AGENDA

Special Meeting of Thursday, July 23, 2026 at 12:30 p.m.

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1. Call to order

   1.1 Safety Moment

2. Public Comment: The time limit granted to each speaker shall be three (3) minutes. Residents and customers may address the Board.

3. Finance: R. Kowalski/D. Kirven

   3.1 Public Bid Exemptions

   3.2 Review Financial and Operating Reports – June 2026 - *Upon 2/3 vote, convene in executive session pursuant to C.G.S. Section 1-200(6)(E) to discuss matters covered by Section 1-210(b)(5)(B), pertaining to commercial and financial information.*

   3.3 AWA Closing/Pricing Update - Upon 2/3 vote, convene in executive session pursuant to C.G.S. Section 1-200(6)(E) to discuss matters covered by Section 1-210(b)(5)(B), pertaining to commercial and financial information.

4. Business Updates: S. Lakshminarayanan/L. Teixeira

   4.1 AWA Transition Plan - *Upon 2/3 vote, convene in executive session pursuant to C.G.S. Section 1-200(6)(E) to discuss matters covered by Section 1-210(b)(5)(A)(B), pertaining to trade secrets and commercial and financial information.*

   4.2 Strategic Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

RECEIVED
By Marc J Garofalo MPA, MMC, MCTC at 8:57 am, Jul 22, 2026

*Members of the public may attend the meeting in person or by conference call. For questions, contact the board office at 203-401-2515 or by email at jslubowski@rwater.com.

Safety is *No* Accident

EYE WELLNESS

Remember -we rely on our eyes to safely perform daily tasks-and eye protection is one of the easiest and most effective barriers against life-changing injuries.

Field work exposes employees to fast-changing conditions with hazards that include:

I. Arc flash events.
II. Chemical splashes.
III. Dust, wind or unexpected particulate movement.
IV. Flying debris from grinding, cutting, drilling, and digging.
V. Pressurized leaks or sudden releases.
VI. Line of fire exposures caused by other workers or equipment.

Key Safety Reminders

- ✓ Follow HOP principles and pause when conditions change, speak up when barriers exist, and use peer checks to confirm PPE readiness.
- ✓ For Office teams: reduce eye strain by practicing the 20-20-20 rule (every 20 minutes, look twenty feet away for 20 seconds.
- ✓ Inspect eye PPE daily for scratches, cracks, loose arms, or degraded straps.
- ✓ Stay alert for line of fire hazards such as flying debris, stored energy, pressurized lines, or electrical exposures.
- ✓ Wear the correct eye protection for the task (ANSI approved safety glasses, goggles, face shields, arc rates PPE when required).

Procedure when eye incident occurs:

I. Flush eye immediately for 15 minutes.
II. Report the incident promptly, even if it seems minor.
III. Seek medical attention to prevent long term damage.

AQUARION
Water Authority
Stewards of the Environment™

To: David Borowy
Kevin J. Curseaden
Dr. Todd Cort
Catherine E. LaMarr
Mario Ricozzi
Suzanne C. Sack

From: Debra Kirven
Vice President, Finance

Date: July 23, 2023

Subject: Exemption from Public Bidding

Attached are requests for approval of exemptions from the public bidding requirement of Section 49 of Special Act No 77-98 as amended. We have also included the primary reason for the exemption request and the approximation of the associated spending. The summary below is in addition to the attached exemption details.

Exemptions	**Reason**	**Approx. Spending**
Security Incident & Event Mgmt.	Cyber Risk	$105,000
Backup/Ransomeware	Cyber Risk	$130,000
C&D Underwater Maintenance	Availability/Flexibility	$75,000
Kubra	Knowledge/Relationship	$705,000

REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION FROM PUBLIC BIDDING FOR

Security Information and Event Management Software

AS REQUESTED BY CONNECTICUT SPECIAL ACT NO. 77-98 AS AMENDED

JULY 2026

SPECIFIC STATUTORY PROVISIONS

All contracts in excess of fifty thousand dollars for any supplies, materials, equipment, construction work or other contractual services shall be in writing and shall be awarded upon sealed bids or proposals made in compliance with a public notice duly advertised by publication in one or more newspapers of general circulation or, if there are no such newspapers, in appropriate electronic media, including, without limitation, the authority's Internet web site, as are likely to reach a broad segment of potential vendors, at least ten days before the time fixed for opening said bids or proposals, except for (1) contracts for professional services, (2) when the supplies, materials, equipment or work can only be furnished by a single party, (3) when the authority determines by a two-thirds vote of the entire authority that the award of such contract by negotiation without public bidding will be in the best interest of the authority, or (4) when the procurement is made as a result of participation in a procurement group, alliance or consortium made up of other state or federal government entities in which the state of Connecticut is authorized to participate. The authority may in its sole discretion reject all such bids or proposals or any bids received from a person, firm or corporation the authority finds to be unqualified to perform the contract, and shall award such contract to the lowest responsible bidder qualified to perform the contract.
(Section 49, Special Act 77-98 as amended).

REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION This is for a request for exemption from public bidding for the renewal of Security Incident and Event Management software licenses for the period of 9/1/2026-9/1/2027.

REASON FOR REQUEST

Due to the Cybersecurity risks associated with publicly announcing security tools, we recommend utilizing our existing Security Incident and Event Management (SIEM) platform through a negotiated renewal rather than issuing a public bid for replacement backup software.

Our SIEM is a critical component of Aquarion's cybersecurity, ransomware protection, regulatory compliance, and operational continuity strategy. In 2025, this was a new product selection as a result of a rigorous technology review process. This included requirements gathering, product demonstrations, technical ratings and costs. The selection of the product and award to the vendor Atlantic Data Security as a reseller was based on best features presented with the most competitive pricing. With the approval of a closed bid process, we will solicit three bids prior to awarding the renewal.

Aquarion has invested in hardware, software, network design, and internal resource expertise in this product. We have established operational procedures and recovery workflows based on this SIEM.

SUMMARY

Utilizing an exemption from public bidding for this mission-critical platform protects Aquarion from targeted attacks that exploit publicly disclosed system details. It also optimizes budgets by avoiding the steep capital expenditures required to replace existent and functioning technology.

REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION FROM PUBLIC BIDDING FOR

Backup and Recovery Software

AS REQUESTED BY CONNECTICUT SPECIAL ACT NO. 77-98 AS AMENDED

JULY 2026

SPECIFIC STATUTORY PROVISIONS

All contracts in excess of fifty thousand dollars for any supplies, materials, equipment, construction work or other contractual services shall be in writing and shall be awarded upon sealed bids or proposals made in compliance with a public notice duly advertised by publication in one or more newspapers of general circulation or, if there are no such newspapers, in appropriate electronic media, including, without limitation, the authority's Internet web site, as are likely to reach a broad segment of potential vendors, at least ten days before the time fixed for opening said bids or proposals, except for (1) contracts for professional services, (2) when the supplies, materials, equipment or work can only be furnished by a single party, (3) when the authority determines by a two-thirds vote of the entire authority that the award of such contract by negotiation without public bidding will be in the best interest of the authority, or (4) when the procurement is made as a result of participation in a procurement group, alliance or consortium made up of other state or federal government entities in which the state of Connecticut is authorized to participate. The authority may in its sole discretion reject all such bids or proposals or any bids received from a person, firm or corporation the authority finds to be unqualified to perform the contract, and shall award such contract to the lowest responsible bidder qualified to perform the contract.
(Section 49, Special Act 77-98 as amended).

REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION

This is for a request for exemption from public bidding for the renewal of backup and recovery software Maintenance for the period of 8/1/2026-8/1/2027.

REASON FOR REQUEST

Due to the Cybersecurity risks associated with publicly announcing security tools, we recommend utilizing our existing data protection platform through a negotiated renewal rather than issuing a public bid for replacement backup software.

This software is a critical component of Aquarion's cybersecurity, disaster recovery, ransomware protection, regulatory compliance, and operational continuity strategy. In 2025, this maintenance was competitively bid with the award to the vendor PKA based on lowest price and great service. With the approval of a closed bid process, we will solicit three bids prior to awarding the renewal.

Aquarion has invested in hardware, software, network design, cloud storage and internal resource expertise in this product. We have established operational procedures and recovery workflows based on this software . Replacing the platform would require a significant investment of at least 3 x the cost of the annual renewal.

SUMMARY

Utilizing an exemption from public bidding for this mission-critical platform protects Aquarion from targeted attacks that exploit publicly disclosed system details. It also optimizes budgets by avoiding the steep capital expenditures required to replace functional legacy technology.

REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION FROM PUBLIC BIDDING FOR

C&D Underwater Maintenance, LLC

AS REQUESTED BY CONNECTICUT SPECIAL ACT NO. 77-98 AS AMENDED

July 2026

SPECIFIC STATUTORY PROVISIONS

All contracts in excess of fifty thousand dollars for any supplies, materials, equipment, construction work or other contractual services shall be in writing and shall be awarded upon sealed bids or proposals made in compliance with a public notice duly advertised by publication in one or more newspapers of general circulation or, if there are no such newspapers, in appropriate electronic media, including, without limitation, the authority's Internet web site, as are likely to reach a broad segment of potential vendors, at least ten days before the time fixed for opening said bids or proposals, except for (1) contracts for professional services, (2) when the supplies, materials, equipment or work can only be furnished by a single party, (3) when the authority determines by a two-thirds vote of the entire authority that the award of such contract by negotiation without public bidding will be in the best interest of the authority, or (4) when the procurement is made as a result of participation in a procurement group, alliance or consortium made up of other state or federal government entities in which the state of Connecticut is authorized to participate. The authority may in its sole discretion reject all such bids or proposals or any bids received from a person, firm or corporation the authority finds to be unqualified to perform the contract, and shall award such contract to the lowest responsible bidder qualified to perform the contract.
(Section 16, Special Act 77-98 as amended).

REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION

We request an exemption from public bidding for the continuation of services by C&D Underwater Maintenance LLC to perform mechanical vegetation removal from various reservoirs during calendar year 2026.

REASON FOR REQUEST

For AWA to effectively manage aquatic vegetation for the purpose of enhancing reservoir water quality, specialty equipment is required and timing of the work is an important variable to optimize results (i.e., working with the plant life cycle to maximize biomass removal and minimize the spread/reproduction). There are only a small number of vendors in the area with the equipment to do this work and with the flexibility to meet our desired schedule. C&D Underwater is familiar with our reservoir contours, boat launch locations, and has consistently met our requests for timing and total days of work where other vendors have not been able to do so.

SUMMARY

The result of the exemption would benefit AWA by assuring availability, providing flexibility and would allow us to maximize the results of the aquatic vegetation management program.

REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION FROM PUBLIC BIDDING FOR

(Kubra/ Payment)

AS REQUESTED BY CONNECTICUT SPECIAL ACT NO. 77-98 AS AMENDED

JULY 2026

SPECIFIC STATUTORY PROVISIONS

All contracts in excess of fifty thousand dollars for any supplies, materials, equipment, construction work or other contractual services shall be in writing and shall be awarded upon sealed bids or proposals made in compliance with a public notice duly advertised by publication in one or more newspapers of general circulation or, if there are no such newspapers, in appropriate electronic media, including, without limitation, the authority's Internet web site, as are likely to reach a broad segment of potential vendors, at least ten days before the time fixed for opening said bids or proposals, except for (1) contracts for professional services, (2) when the supplies, materials, equipment or work can only be furnished by a single party, (3) when the authority determines by a two-thirds vote of the entire authority that the award of such contract by negotiation without public bidding will be in the best interest of the authority, or (4) when the procurement is made as a result of participation in a procurement group, alliance or consortium made up of other state or federal government entities in which the state of Connecticut is authorized to participate. The authority may in its sole discretion reject all such bids or proposals or any bids received from a person, firm or corporation the authority finds to be unqualified to perform the contract, and shall award such contract to the lowest responsible bidder qualified to perform the contract.
(Section 16, Special Act 77-98 as amended).

REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION

This is for a request for exemption from public bidding for the renewal of (MPX)/ Payment for the period of December 31st 2026 to December 31st 2028.

REASON FOR REQUEST

Kubra has been Aquarion Water Authority's primary billing provider for many years and is responsible for supporting critical customer-facing services, including payment processing, the customer portal, mobile application, e-billing, and related customer communication channels. Throughout this long-standing partnership, Kubra has operated under a bid exemption and has developed a deep understanding of Aquarion's business operations, regulatory requirements, customer communication needs, and billing processes.

Their extensive experience with our organization enables them to execute projects efficiently and accurately while requiring minimal oversight. Kubra's familiarity with our systems, business processes, implementation timelines, and the unique requirements of the regulated utility industry helps ensure a seamless customer experience and reduces operational risk.

Transitioning to a new vendor at this time would require a significant investment of time and resources to bring a provider to the same level of knowledge and operational understanding. Given Aquarion's current focus on the SAP S/4HANA transformation project, pursuing a vendor transition is not feasible. Such a change would introduce considerable risk to critical customer services, including payment processing, billing operations, customer communications, and revenue collection. Any disruption could negatively impact both Aquarion employees and our customers by causing payment delays, service interruptions, or customer dissatisfaction. In addition, Kubra currently supports our e-billing solution through an established partnership with our bill print vendor. If Aquarion were required to evaluate and implement an alternative provider, the company would likely incur significant costs to either establish a new e-billing

solution or develop and maintain a third-party integration, resulting in additional complexity, expense, and implementation risk.

Kubra's historical knowledge of Aquarion's systems, processes, and prior projects is especially valuable as we move through the S/4HANA implementation. They play a critical role in supporting integration efforts and ensuring continuity across customer payment channels, the customer portal, and the mobile application. Their proven reliability, institutional knowledge, and ability to maintain a consistent customer payment experience make them an essential partner during this period of significant organizational transformation.

SUMMARY

Kubra has been Aquarion Water Authority trusted billing and payment services provider for many years, supporting critical customer functions including payments, e-billing, the customer portal, and mobile app. Their deep understanding of our operations, regulatory requirements, and customer needs enables efficient service delivery with minimal oversight. Given the ongoing SAP S/4HANA transformation, transitioning to a new vendor would create significant operational, financial, and customer service risks. Kubra's institutional knowledge, proven reliability, and critical role in system integrations make extending the partnership the most effective and low-risk option for Aquarion.

Aquarion Water Authority

Public Affairs Framework

Overview

This framework outlines communications and stakeholder engagement priorities for Aquarion Water Authority's first six months of operation. The objective is to establish confidence in the new Authority, reinforce continuity of service, support implementation of its governance structure, and maintain productive relationships with municipal leaders, customers, employees, regulators, and other key stakeholders.

Communications should remain coordinated, factual, and operationally grounded. While the ownership and governance structure has changed, customers should continue to experience the same reliable service, operational expertise, and customer support they have come to expect.

The framework also serves as a coordinating document for transition-related public affairs activities, helping align stakeholder outreach, governance implementation, customer communications, and supporting materials across the Authority.

Strategic Priorities

1. Establish Confidence in the New Authority
Position AWA as a stable, transparent, and accountable public authority by communicating clearly about its governance structure, leadership, and responsibilities. Early communications should help municipalities, customers, and other stakeholders understand how the Authority operates and where decisions are made.

2. Reinforce Operational Continuity
Communicate consistently that the transition does not change the day-to-day delivery of water service. Customers should continue to experience the same workforce, operational standards, customer service, and emergency response while understanding the limited operational changes associated with the new ownership structure.

3. Support Effective Governance
Support the successful launch of the Representative Policy Board through coordinated municipal outreach, onboarding resources, and governance communications. Municipal leaders and board members should have the information necessary to participate confidently in the Authority's early operations, including appointment processes, onboarding expectations, governance responsibilities, and available resources.

4. Maintain Consistent, Credible Communications

Provide timely, accurate, and coordinated communications across all audiences while monitoring recurring questions and emerging issues. Public information should remain accessible, internally consistent, responsive to stakeholder needs, and coordinated across all communications channels.

Priority Audiences

Primary

- Municipal leaders and town CEOs
- Customers
- State elected officials
- Regulatory stakeholders
- Media
- RPB appointees
- Authority Board members
- Aquarion employees

Secondary

- Regional governmental and stakeholder organizations
- COGs
- Business and civic stakeholders
- General public

Core Messaging Framework

Continuity of Operations

The transition to AWA changes the organization's governance and ownership structure, not the day-to-day delivery of water service. Customers will continue to receive safe, reliable service from the same workforce, customer service teams, field personnel, and leadership responsible for operating the system today. Water quality, maintenance activities, emergency response, and customer support will continue without interruption.

Local Governance and Accountability

AWA establishes a governance structure centered on municipal representation and public oversight. Through the Representative Policy Board and Authority Board, member communities will have a direct role in governance, long-term planning, and oversight of the Authority. This structure creates a clear framework for accountability while preserving the operational expertise that customers and municipalities already rely upon.

Responsible Stewardship

AWA is structured to support the long-term management of the region's water system through responsible planning, continued investment, and public accountability. The Authority's focus is maintaining reliable service today while ensuring the water system remains well-managed and positioned to meet the needs of the communities it serves in the years ahead.

Strategic Workstreams

1. Municipal & Government Relations

Objective
Maintain proactive relationships with municipal leaders, COGs, legislators, and board members to support governance implementation, answer questions, coordinate outreach, and build confidence in the new Authority.

Key Activities

- Coordinate outreach to municipal leaders, COGs, and other governmental stakeholders.
- Support Representative Policy Board appointments, onboarding, and governance implementation.
- Develop governance FAQs and reference materials.
- Conduct targeted municipal briefings and outreach conversations.
- Maintain ongoing communication around significant governance and organizational milestones.
- Maintain centralized tracking of municipal appointments, outreach, stakeholder contacts, and follow-up activities.
- Coordinate follow-up meetings with municipal leaders after introductory communications.
- Identify relationship owners and priority engagement opportunities across member municipalities.

2. Governance Support

Objective
Support the successful launch of the Representative Policy Board by providing the resources necessary for effective governance during the Authority's formative months.

Key Activities

- Develop orientation materials for incoming board members.
- Coordinate onboarding sessions as appointments are finalized, with additional refresher sessions following full board formation.
- Support development of presentation materials, reference guides, and meeting resources for new board members.
- Coordinate communications surrounding board meetings and governance milestones.

3. Customer Communications

Objective
Provide customers with clear, factual, and accessible information regarding operational continuity and transition-related questions.

Key Activities

- Develop customer FAQs and continuity messaging.
- Coordinate customer communications through existing channels, including bill inserts and e-bill communications.
- Ensure customer-facing staff have consistent approved messaging.
- Develop approved talking points for customer-service representatives responding to transition-related questions.

4. Media & Public Communications

Objective

Support accurate public understanding of AWA while reinforcing continuity of service and confidence in the new governance structure.

Key Activities

- Develop approved messaging and media response language.
- Prepare communications for significant organizational events or milestones.
- Coordinate spokesperson guidance and media response protocols.
- Monitor public coverage and respond to inaccurate information when appropriate.

5. Digital Communications

Objective

Maintain the website as the primary public resource for governance information, customer resources, FAQs, public meetings, and Authority updates.

Key Activities

- Maintain centralized repositories for approved FAQs, stakeholder resources, governance materials, and public-facing communications.
- Publish board information and public meeting materials.
- Update customer information as needed.
- Ensure digital content remains accurate, accessible, and consistent.

Response Preparedness

Develop coordinated messaging and internal response protocols addressing:

- Governance structure and board responsibilities
- Customer service, billing, and account questions
- Rates and the rate-setting process
- Financing and major organizational milestones
- Media inquiries
- Municipal questions

Communications Priorities

Organizational Launch (July)
Establish AWA's communications foundation by aligning messaging, confirming communications protocols, launching governance resources, supporting municipal outreach, customer notifications, Representative Policy Board implementation, and reinforcing continuity of service following closing.

Governance Implementation (July–December)
Support Representative Policy Board operations through ongoing municipal engagement, RPB onboarding, governance resources, and coordinated communications throughout the Authority's early governance implementation.

Stakeholder Communications (July–December)
Maintain ongoing relationship management with municipalities, board members, customers, employees, regulators, and other stakeholders while responding to questions, monitoring public discussion, and updating communications materials as needed.

Planning for 2027 (Late 2026)
Evaluate communications activities, stakeholder feedback, and recurring issues to identify priorities and resource needs for the Authority's ongoing communications program.

Desired Outcomes

By the end of 2026:

- Representative Policy Board governance processes are established and supported by clear communications.
- Municipal leaders understand the Authority's governance structure and have established communication channels with AWA leadership.
- Representative Policy Board members receive consistent onboarding materials and have a clear understanding of their governance responsibilities.
- Customer communications reinforce continuity of service while minimizing confusion regarding the transition.
- Public communications remain coordinated, accurate, and consistent across all channels.
- AWA has an established communications framework capable of supporting ongoing operations beyond the initial transition period.