

Dear Council Members,

The proposed water and wastewater increases will be detrimental to our community. They do not support the vitality of our businesses, schools, nonprofits or residents.

We need water and wastewater rates that support our whole community today and tomorrow.

We need people, businesses and visitors to keep using water to generate the revenue for the system. The rate increases are simply too high – some over 100%.

We need to cap all rate increases at 25%. That is a huge jump but more manageable than the 50% being imposed on businesses and nonprofits.

Sebastopol sits on an aquifer, which is a community asset. We have plenty of water. We have old infrastructure that needs significant upgrading and replacement.

Goals:

- 1) Keep people using water to ensure we have revenue and that people's quality of life is not negatively impacted as we have plenty of water and don't need to conserve;
- 2) Raise revenue for infrastructure;
- 3) Be business friendly by having water rates which make businesses viable today and tomorrow;
- 4) Keep public spaces attractive so that community members and visitors can enjoy our public spaces;
- 5) Support nonprofits with reasonable water rates;
- 6) Support our 4 local schools with reasonable water rates as they do not have means to have significant water and wastewater rate increases;
- 7) Support our urban canopy as it is one of the primary mitigations against warming surface temperatures.
- 8) Meter rates should be adjusted 25% for water and 30% for sewer and then CPI thereafter;
- 9) Water and Sewer rates should be adjusted 25% or less and then CPI thereafter.

In order to do this, we need to have consistent funding for infrastructure and consistent water usage.

To support the community as whole, we need a more sophisticated means of billing.

A model which has an infrastructure fee with more modest rate increases would satisfy these goals. It also would earmark money for infrastructure and reserves, which is distinct from Operations and Maintenance to make sure money is set aside for infrastructure and reserves. An infrastructure fee recognizes that everyone needs infrastructure regardless if they use 10kgal or 100kgal – they still need the same pipes, pumps, wells and processing.

Examples of a rate structure that supports water use and also raises funds for infrastructure:

Residential Option #1 for uses who will usage falls below 16kcal per billing cycle or about 8Kgal per month. – Includes SFR and up to 4 multi units

\$50 ANNUAL infrastructure fee (\$25 water enterprise and \$25 sewer enterprise)

Tiered billing with 2 tier pricing 25% more than what people are currently paying. Water would be move from \$4.52 to \$5.65. Tier 2 water usage and to \$5.20 for Tier 1 water usage (15%) increase. For wastewater, it would be 25% increase \$76.61 to \$95.76 for meter and then 25% increase for wastewater processing from \$10.31 per kgal to 12.89 per kgal.

Residential Option #2 for users who usage falls above the 16Kgal per billing cycle or more than 8Kgal per month

\$300 Annual Infrastructure Fee (\$150 water enterprise and \$150 sewer enterprise)

No tiered billing.

All water billed at 2 tier pricing 25% more than what people are currently paying. Water would be move from \$4.52 to \$5.65. Tier 2 water usage and For wastewater, it would be 25% increase \$76.61 to \$95.76 for meter and then 25% increase for wastewater processing from \$10.31 per kgal to 12.89 per kgal.

Commercial

All commercial water rates would increase by 15% (not 50%) from \$4.52 to \$5.20.

Annual Infrastructure Fee would vary by Square footage

Under 3000 sf \$250 annual infrastructure fee (\$125 water and \$125 sewer)

3000-10,000 square feet \$500 annual infrastructure fee (\$250 water and \$250 sewer)

over 10,000 square feet \$1000 annual infrastructure fee (\$500 water and \$500 sewer)

Non Profits and Schools and City

All non-profit, school and City rates would increase by 10% to \$5.00

Under 3000 sf \$250 annual infrastructure fee (\$125 water and \$125 sewer)

3000-10,000 square feet \$500 annual infrastructure fee (\$250 water and \$250 sewer)

over 10,000 square feet \$1000 annual infrastructure fee (\$500 water and \$500 sewer)

Irrigation

All Irrigation water rates would increase by 15% (not 135%) from \$4.52 to \$5.20.

\$500 annual infrastructure fee (\$500 water)

Multi- Units and Hotels

Rates would increase by 15% (not 50%) from \$4.52 to \$5.20.

Under 10 units \$1000 annual infrastructure fee

20 units \$2000 annual infrastructure fee

30 units \$3000 annual infrastructure fee

40 units \$4000 annual infrastructure fee

50 units \$5000 annual infrastructure fee

60 units \$6000 annual infrastructure fee

70 units \$7000 annual infrastructure fee

80 units \$8000 annual infrastructure fee

90 units \$9000 annual infrastructure fee
100 units \$10,000 annual infrastructure fee
and onward with each additional unit \$100 additional annual fee

Annual fee would be charged in January, when it is low water usage and potentially lower bills.

I urge Council to reject the current proposal and to start brainstorming on a proposal that will support our community as a whole.

The current proposal is generic and will end up being hugely detrimental to our whole community.

Best,
Kate Haug