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AGENDA ITEM MEMO

BOARD MEETING DATE: October 17, 2024

TO: Board Members

THROUGH: Bryan McMath, Executive Administrator
Ashley Harden, General Counsel
Rebecca Trevino, Chief Financial Officer
John T. Dupnik, P.G., Deputy Executive Administrator, Water Science & Conservation

FROM: John Sutton, Manager, Municipal Conservation
Erika Mancha, Director, Conservation and Innovative Water Technologies

SUBJECT: Contract Authorization for Enhanced Technical Assistance with Water Loss Audits

ACTION REQUESTED

Consider authorizing the Executive Administrator to execute an interagency contract for an amount not to exceed \$407,000 to provide enhanced technical assistance with water loss audits to utilities.

BACKGROUND

In 2023, the 88th Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 28 (SB 28), in which Section 8 directs the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) to adopt rules establishing a program to provide technical assistance to qualifying retail public utilities to (1) conduct water loss audits required by Chapter 16 of the Texas Water Code and (2) apply for financial assistance from the TWDB to mitigate the utility system's water loss. The TWDB is also required to prioritize technical assistance offered to qualifying retail public utilities based on submitted water loss audits, the population served by the utility, and the integrity of the utility's system.

SB 28 further requires the publication on the agency's website of (1) water loss data according to population of retail public utility and regional water planning area, (2) measures taken by retail public utilities to reduce water loss, and (3) a list of those retail public utilities who received technical and financial assistance to mitigate a retail public utility's water loss. The TWDB can contract or partner with other entities to help implement any aspect of the program as established by rule in 31 Texas Administrative Code (TAC) § 358.6.

Our Mission

Leading the state's efforts
in ensuring a secure
water future for Texas

Board Members

Brooke T. Paup, Chairwoman | L'Oreal Stepney, P.E., Board Member | Tonya R. Miller, Board Member
Bryan McMath, Executive Administrator

KEY ISSUES

To provide the assistance required by SB 28, the TWDB will contract with the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) via an interagency agreement to offer enhanced technical assistance for submitting water loss audits to approximately 710 utilities. The UTA will provide two types of support:

- Assistance to approximately 210 utilities to submit their water audits including completion of water loss audits, water use surveys, and submittal of documentation required for water loss audit validation. This assistance will be offered from January through August of 2025 and then again in 2026.
- Assistance to approximately 500 utilities to correct data issues identified in their water loss audits and water use surveys, if applicable. The TWDB will identify utilities that have submitted water loss audits containing data issues and provide this list to UTA. This assistance will be offered from September through December 2025.

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive Administrator concludes that providing enhanced water loss audit technical assistance to utilities pursuant to new SB 28 statutory charges will improve the accuracy of water loss data in the state and contribute to the conservation of existing water resources. The Executive Administrator recommends approval of this request.