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PRESS RELEASE

DuPage Water Commission extends water redistribution contract with the City of Chicago 17 Years

The shortened contract extension will allow the DuPage Water Commission the opportunity to explore other options for water service to DuPage County

DuPage County, IL – Today, the DuPage Water Commission (DWC) announced they have signed a 17-year contract to extend their current water redistribution agreement with the City of Chicago, as they continue to advance alternative, long-term water solutions for DuPage County residents. The DWC was established to solve difficult water quality and quantity problems in DuPage County, resulting in the initial 40-year agreement between the DWC and the City of Chicago beginning in 1984. The new contract comes one month before the expiration of that original 40-year agreement.

“The shorter contract reflects our intention to explore all options for providing water services to our nearly 1 million residents in the most effective manner possible,” said James Zay, Chairman of the DuPage Water Commission. “We will continue to engage with the City of Chicago to explore ways to enhance our partnership in the interest of our residents, but we have a responsibility to consider all available alternatives.”

The length of the contract extension reflects DWC’s concerns over the maintenance and condition of the Chicago-owned Lexington Pumping Station, the primary station through which all of DuPage County water flows. The facility needs considerable infrastructure repairs and enhancements, a point the DWC has continued to stress to Chicago officials.

“The condition of the Lexington station, and lack of necessary investments to maintain it is concerning,” said Paul May, General Manager of the DuPage Water Commission. “We are Chicago’s largest annual revenue source, but more importantly have a responsibility to provide DuPage County residents with a reliable and quality water source. If the Lexington station fails, it would impact the water supplier for nearly 1 million DuPage County residents. Therefore, we continue to advance all options for water supply that make financial and operational sense for DuPage County, including the construction of a new regional suburban water system.”

In 2022, the City of Chicago agreed to an agreement with Joliet to provide water at a rate of roughly \$2.50-\$3 per 1,000 gallons and plans to build a direct pipeline funded by Joliet. In contrast, DuPage County will pay the City of Chicago \$122M this year to pump water to residents, paying \$4.54 per 1,000 gallons.

“Our conversations have not only included the City of Chicago, but we’ve met with other governing bodies to explore all potential opportunities,” said Zay. “We’ve evaluated the financials and timelines of these

alternatives and will continue working directly with suburban municipalities and other regional water agencies.”

As a result, the DWC has commissioned various studies researching the viability of the construction of a new Alternative Source Water Project providing access to Lake Michigan water directly; concluding that it is technically feasible and financially viable for the region. Concurrently with advancing the Alternative Source Water Project, the DWC will remain in contract negotiations with the City of Chicago in an effort to develop a favorable long-term contract.

Currently, DuPage County receives Lake Michigan water through the Lexington Pumping Station. From there, water is conveyed to the DuPage Pumping Station which is then redistributed throughout 30 cities and villages including Naperville, Downers Grove, and Wheaton.

The new 17-year extension will be effective immediately following the expiration of the DWC and the City of Chicago’s original agreement.

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About DuPage Water Commission: DWC has delivered nearly a trillion gallons of fresh Lake Michigan water to its one million customers during 30 years of pumping operations. It has become the standard for safe, clean, affordable Lake Michigan water in Illinois. A new water project to Oswego, Montgomery, and Yorkville will be among the largest in the state and will begin in 2024 and be completed by the end of 2027.