

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, on February 5, 2022, the City issued a city-wide precautionary boil water notice due to an internal treatment process issue that resulted in high turbidity within the Ulrich Water Treatment Plant; and

WHEREAS, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) determined Austin Water failed to meet the minimum treatment technique requirements for the month of February 2022 and faced a multiple barrier failure treatment technique violation and combined filter effluent turbidity readings above 5.0 NTU; and

WHEREAS, due to the nature and severity of the violation, the TCEQ required a public notice to all Austin Water customers to boil their water prior to consumption; and

WHEREAS, emergency water use restrictions were also issued to protect public health, safety, welfare, infrastructure, and other available resources to ensure water would be available for basic needs; and

WHEREAS, on February 6, 2022, the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Office established a limited supply of bottled water for distribution throughout the community, prioritizing the high-needs communities, such as those in the top ten food insecure zip codes; and

WHEREAS, on February 7, 2022, Austin Water completed Step 2 of the 5-step process to lift the boil water notice due to all three Austin Water treatment plants being fully operational and producing normal volumes of water and Austin Water also received approval from the TCEQ to begin Step 2, which prompted the water sampling process; and

26 **WHEREAS**, on February 8, 2022, Austin Water lifted the boil water notice
27 for all customers and businesses and residents were notified they no longer needed
28 to boil water used for drinking, cooking, and making ice; and

29 **WHEREAS**, Water quality testing was submitted to the TCEQ, which
30 confirmed the tap water met all regulatory standards safe for human consumption;
31 and

32 **WHEREAS**, the boil water notice experienced in February 2022 further
33 compounded the hardships experienced by customers due to Winter Storm Uri; and

34 **WHEREAS**, the boil water notice in February 2022 also occurred during
35 the wastewater billing average period, which runs mid-November through March,
36 and therefore has impacted customers best possible fixed monthly rate for the
37 remainder of the year; and

38 **WHEREAS**, the Austin Water utility is responsible for a \$654 million
39 operating budget, nearly 1,300 employees, and a Capital Improvement Plan for
40 fiscal years 2022 to 2026 projected to cost approximately \$1.1 billion; **NOW,**
41 **THEREFORE,**

42 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF AUSTIN:**

43 The City Manager is directed to provide recommended temporary ordinance
44 changes related to mitigating adverse utility bill impacts experienced by customers
45 due to the February 2022 boil water event, including but not limited to:

- 46 • one-time bill credit and fee adjustments, and
- 47 • excluding unusually high utility bills in the 2022 wastewater averaging.

48 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

49 The City Manager is directed to also provide alternative recommendations to
50 reduce risk which, for instance, may involve a one-time reallocation into Austin
51 Water's operating budget or its 5-yr Capital Improvement Plan in lieu of direct
52 utility bill relief to customers. The recommendation shall consider the potential
53 amount of utility bill relief available to Austin Water customers as a result of the
54 February 2022 boil water event.

55 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:**

56 The City Manager is directed to report back his recommended actions and
57 bring any necessary ordinance changes back to the Council beginning with the
58 March 24, 2022 City Council meeting.

59
60 **ADOPTED:** _____, 2022 **ATTEST:** _____
61
62 Myrna Rios
63 City Clerk
64