

Thurston PUD Public Participation Guide

I. Purpose of Strategy: How to use this Public Participation Guide

The purpose of this written strategy is to ensure that Thurston PUD's public process is available to all persons regardless of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex or prior exercises of rights or opposition to actions protected under federal and state non-discrimination laws.

This document is intended to be a living document that can adapt to changes in technology and best meet the needs of the customers of Thurston PUD. Therefore, this strategy is reviewed annually and updated as necessary. Methods that have failed will not be removed but will be reviewed and documented so that the same mistakes will not be made in the future. The results will identify strengths and weaknesses and allow staff to maximize outreach methods. This feedback loop will create a continuous review process that enables Thurston PUD employees to make improvements to strategy.

II. Identify State and Local Laws/Rules Relating to Public Meetings

Chapter 42.30 RCW, Open Public Meetings Act, governs public meetings in the state of Washington.

At the regular meeting held on January 6, 2005, the Thurston PUD Board of Commissioners unanimously adopted a meeting schedule of two regular meetings per month, effective March 8, 2005. The meetings are held at the administrative offices of the District (PUD Headquarters), currently located at 1230 Ruddell Road SE, Lacey, WA 98503, which is accessible to the public. In response to the coronavirus pandemic, on March 24, 2020, the Board of Commissioners adopted a hybrid model allowing for virtual attendance for regular Commission meetings via the Zoom teleconferencing system.

In accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act, within 10 days of the first meeting of the Thurston PUD Commissioners in each year, Thurston PUD will publicly post a list stating the dates, times, and places of all its regular meetings at its principal office and online at www.thurstonpud.org. If there is a change in schedule, within three days of the meeting in which the change is made, Thurston PUD will post a notice stating the new dates, times, and places for regular meetings. For special meetings, Thurston PUD will post a notice indicating the date, time and place of the meeting at least 24 hours before the meeting.

Any citizen can request to be added to the email distribution list that the Thurston PUD maintains so that they are notified in advance of all meetings. Email distribution list

requests can be directed to Kurin Miller, Administrative Services Coordinator, at kmiller@thurstonpud.org or (360) 763-5839.

Agendas for each regular and special meeting will be posted online and on the front door of PUD Headquarters at least 24 hours before the scheduled meeting.

Resolution 25-04. The PUD Board of Commissioners adopted Governance Policies, updated in Resolution 25-04, that set forth the values of the Board of Commissioners and the rules in which public meetings would be conducted. Appendix 1 to this resolution contains the standard agenda format to be used for all open public meetings of Thurston PUD. At the bottom of the standard agenda format is the following statement:

Note: *Thurston PUD provides reasonable accommodations to persons with disabilities. We invite any person with specific needs to contact PUD staff at (866) 357-8783 at least 24 hours before a meeting to discuss accommodations.*

III. Identify Stakeholders

Thurston PUD is a water utility consisting of 271 water systems in five counties serving approximately 10,250 connections. Thurston PUD is authorized to serve in rural areas outside of incorporated cities. Demographic information on rural water systems spread across 5 counties is not available and continues to be gathered.

Thurston PUD has gathered information about the five counties in which it serves and has compiled information on household languages by household limited speaking status. From this information, it can be determined that roughly 10,050 of the 10,250 households served by the PUD are English speaking. Of the remaining, 77 households speak Spanish, eight households speak French, six households speak Russian, 22 households speak Chinese, 39 households speak Korean, and 30 households speak Vietnamese.

Stakeholders of the public participation process depend on the issue that is before the Board of Commissioners in the open meeting. For general budget and rate issues, the Stakeholder could be any customer served by Thurston PUD. Alternatively, Stakeholder groups could be an HOA in a community that has a water project pending approval.

IV. Tools to Inform the Public

The following methods are often used to advertise public meetings:

- Newspaper publications
- Website posting
- Posting at PUD Headquarters, located at 1230 Ruddell Rd SE, Lacey, WA 98503
- Direct mailing to customers affected by a project or action considered by the PUD Board of Commissioners
- Attachments to utility billing statements (including monthly newsletters)

- Text messages to customers who have opted in to receive messages.

A list of contact names for obtaining language assistance services for limited-English proficient persons, including translation of documents and/or interpreters for meetings is as follows:

- NWI Global (Document Translation)
 - projects@nwiglobal.com
 - (360) 566-0492
- Universal Language Service (Audio Interpretation)
 - ezequiel@languageexchangeinc.com
 - (949) 733-2446
- KARASCH (Captioning/Accessibility Services)
 - CMoore@Karasch.com
 - (800) 621-5689 x117

Users who need accessibility assistance can also contact us by phone through the Federal Information Relay Service at [\(800\) 877-8339](tel:8008778339) for TTY/Voice communication.

Assistive listening devices are available at PUD Headquarters for individuals attending Commission meetings in-person.

V. Communicating Results

List of relevant staff members, including phone numbers and email addresses.

- John Weidenfeller, General Manager
 - (360) 763-5838
 - jweidenfeller@thurstonpud.org
- Julie Parker, Assistant General Manager
 - (360) 763-5840
 - julieparker@thurstonpud.org
- Kim Gubbe, Director of Planning and Compliance
 - (360) 763-5848
 - kgubbe@thurstonpud.org
- Jim Campbell, Director of Field Operations
 - (360) 763-5842
 - jcampbell@thurstonpud.org
- TaSeana Tartt, Finance Director
 - (360) 763-5845
 - ttartt@thurstonpud.org
- Kurin Miller, Administrative Services Coordinator and Clerk to the Board of Commissioners
 - (360) 763-5839
 - kmiller@thurstonpud.org

- David Gruver, Assistant Director of Field Operations
 - (360) 763-5842
 - david.gruver@thurstonpud.org
- Mariah Montague, Customer Service Supervisor
 - (360) 763-5836
 - mariah.montague@thurstonpud.org

VI. Evaluating Success

Develop a list of past and present community concerns. Develop and implement a plan of action taken to address concerns.

Develop and implement a contingency plan for unexpected events.