

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF AUGUST 10, 2021
OF
PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT NO. 1
OF
THURSTON COUNTY, WASHINGTON

The first regular meeting for August 2021 of the Commissioners of Public Utility District No. 1 of Thurston County was called to order on August 10, 2021, commencing at 5:03 p.m. Commissioners Linda Oosterman and Chris Stearns were present for the teleconference meeting hosted via Zoom; Commissioner Russell E. Olsen was excused from the meeting. The following District employees were also present for the meeting:

- John Weidenfeller, General Manager (GM)
- Julie Parker, Assistant General Manager (AGM)
- Kim Gubbe, Director of Planning and Compliance (DPC)
- Jim Campbell, Director of Field Operations (DFO)
- TaSeana Tartt, Finance and Customer Service Manager (FCSM)
- Ruth Clemens, Administrative Services Manager (ASM)
- Erica Cecil, Operations Specialist
- Kurin Miller, Clerk to the Board

Call to Order:

Commissioner Stearns called the regular meeting to order at 5:03 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda:

Commissioner Oosterman made a motion to approve the agenda as presented; Commissioner Stearns seconded the motion; the motion passed with all in favor.

Consent Calendar:

Approval of Minutes: July 27, 2021

Prequalification of Contractors: None

SMA Contracts: None

Correspondence: None

Voucher Approval:

- 1) Accounts Payables: July 28, 2021, August 4, 2021
- 2) Payroll: August 5, 2021

Other:

- 1) Resolution 21-41, Construction Contract – Keanland Park Water System
- 2) Emergency Waiver of Competitive Bidding Requirements, Crescent Park Water System – August 3, 2021

Approval of Consent Calendar:

Commissioner Oosterman made a motion to approve the Consent Calendar as presented; Commissioner Stearns seconded the motion; the motion passed with all in favor.

Public Comment:

A member of the public was present, and they requested to offer public comment after the Broadband and Telecommunications discussion item later in the meeting.

Information or Discussion of Operations/Policy Issues:

Discussion – COVID-19 Updates

ASM Clemens reported on a change to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) position on face masks in areas with higher risks of transmission. The ASM addressed the District's current policy, and efforts by management for staff's return-to-work scheduled for September 7, 2021. Commissioner Oosterman addressed the recent mask mandate by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction Chris Reykdal. Commissioner Stearns spoke about vaccination mandates for State employees.

Discussion – Broadband and Telecommunications

ASM Clemens reported on a meeting GM Weidenfeller and she attended with the representatives from Yelm, as well as with the Northwest Open Access Network (NoaNet). The ASM also reported on upcoming meetings with various school districts in the area. Commissioner Oosterman asked about meetings with the Yelm and Rainier school districts; the Commissioner also addressed the conflicting information from city councils and students/families. Commissioner Stearns spoke about the limited options available to rural school districts in the area; the Commissioner also asked about the ASM's communication with school districts regarding the Broadband Action Team. ASM Clemens addressed the Commissioners' questions.

Public Comment:

Dale Knutson of Olympia thanked the Board for their work on the Broadband Project. Mr. Knutson spoke about broadband access as an essential utility. Commissioner Oosterman commented on the recent passing of an infrastructure bill by the U.S. Senate and the need to educate children using broadband access support. Commissioner Stearns spoke on the work each Commissioner performs related to broadband and telecommunications in Washington state. Mr. Knutson agreed to be used as a reference for the Broadband Project.

Information or Discussion of Operations/Policy Issues (continued):

Discussion – Water Use Efficiency Report, Leak Report, and Conservation

Senior Operations Specialist Cecil presented the Water Use Efficiency (WUE) and leak reports based on 2020 information. She also presented conservation information, including current conservation programs and rebates that were issued or are pending. GM Weidenfeller also addressed the availability of cellular meters, which allow customers to track their usage and identify leaks, as part of the conservation programs. Commissioner Stearns asked about other rebates available to customers; the Commissioner also spoke about an experience with the Chehalis River Basin and WUE information used by the Department of Ecology. Commissioner Oosterman commented on the ease of using the water timers, and she suggested increasing communications to help customers use these devices.

First Readings – Resolution 21-32, Water System Transfer for Country Club Estates Water System & Resolution 21-34, Adopting Rates, Fees, Charges, and Surcharges for Country Club Estates Water System

GM Weidenfeller gave an update on the acquisition of the Country Club Estates water system. The rates proposed for this water system mirror the rates for the Pattison water system, adopted earlier in the year.

First Reading – Resolution 21-40, Construction Contract – Sward Water System Updates

DPC Gubbe presented Resolution 21-40 which would give staff the authority to award the construction contract for the consolidation of the Sward and Platt water systems. Commissioner Stearns asked about

the expiration date for the loan funding for this project; DPC Gubbe addressed the Commissioner's question.

Action/Approval Items:

Schedule Public Hearing – Country Club Estates Water System

Commissioners Oosterman and Stearns approved scheduling the Public Hearing for the 2021 proposed rates, fees, charges, and surcharges for the Country Club Estates water system during the next regular Commission meeting on Tuesday, August 24, 2021.

Resolution 21-38, DWSRF Loan Contract for Country Club Estates Water System

GM Weidenfeller briefly presented Resolution 21-38. **Commissioner Oosterman made a motion to adopt Resolution 21-38 as presented: Commissioner Stearns seconded the motion; the motion passed with all in favor.**

Resolution 21-39, DWSRF Loan Contract for Pattison Water System

GM Weidenfeller briefly presented Resolution 21-39. **Commissioner Oosterman made a motion to adopt Resolution 21-39 as presented: Commissioner Stearns seconded the motion; the motion passed with all in favor.**

Commissioner Signatures/Break: None

Presentations:

GM Weidenfeller reported on the last two weeks which were challenging for staff due to emerging issues and projects, like the issues at the Keanland Park and Tanglewilde-Thompson Place water systems. DFO Campbell also briefly addressed these last two weeks. Commissioner Stearns asked about the Pattison water system and the rapport with customers there regarding maintenance and service issues. DFO Campbell addressed the Commissioner's question.

GM Weidenfeller also reported on several other topics, including the Department of Health rule-making process for rates related to PFOS/PFOA, the Water 101 seminar for the new Utility Rate Advisory Committee (URAC) member, and a new Geographic Information System (GIS) opportunity. Commissioner Stearns asked about the GIS opportunity, and both GM Weidenfeller and AGM Parker addressed this topic in further detail.

AGM Parker reported on an issue with the metering software program for the Pattison water system. The AGM also presented a short-term solution to the issue at a reduced cost to save staff time. Commissioner Stearns asked for further clarification which AGM Parker provided. The Commissioners approved the solution presented by AGM Parker.

Commissioner Stearns asked DFO Campbell about how the heat has affected the District's water systems' infrastructure; DFO Campbell addressed the Commissioner's question. Commissioner Oosterman, Commissioner Stearns, and DFO Campbell discussed this topic at length.

GM Weidenfeller discussed the September Association meetings for WPUDA. The Board discussed this topic briefly. FCSM Tartt gave the Board a brief update on the Utility Relief Assistance Program and the applications received for the open Payroll Specialist position. GM Weidenfeller also mentioned that a Seasonal Laborer position has been advertised.

Commissioner Topics, Discussions and Reports:

Commissioner Oosterman reported that she planned to attend a Maritime Resilience Program for the south Puget Sound area which is related her work with emergency preparedness/management. She also reported on drought issues, forest fires in Washington state, and how electricity outages relate to these topics. The Commissioner also briefly spoke about the upcoming heat wave projected for western Washington. She completed her report by commending staff for their hard work and dedication to the District.

Commissioner Stearns attended a recent Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC) meeting. He addressed the topics presented at that meeting and his experience on these topics in further detail. The Commissioner also shared his concerns on levies and taxes to be assessed by the District in the future. The Board and GM Weidenfeller discussed this in further detail, including a ballot measure that may be proposed by the Board of Thurston County Commissioners to increase the number of commissioners from three to five members.

Executive Session:

At 6:33 p.m., Commissioner Stearns announced that the Board would enter into an Executive Session in accordance with the provisions of RCW 42.30.110 (1)(b), to consider the selection of a site or the acquisition of real estate by lease or purchase when public knowledge regarding such consideration would cause a likelihood of increased price, for 12 minutes until 6:45 p.m. At 6:45 p.m., the Executive Session ended and the regular meeting resumed. No decisions were made during the Executive Session.

Adjournment: Commissioner Oosterman made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Stearns seconded the motion; the motion passed with all in favor. The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Assignments:

- 1) ASM Clemens will reach out to Mr. Dale Knutson as a reference for the Broadband Project.
- 2) Schedule and advertise for the Country Club Estates Public Hearing on Tuesday, August 24, 2021.
- 3) Follow up with the Commissioners about attending the WPUDA September Association meetings in-person.
- 4) Forward the article regarding the possible ballot measure to increase the number of seats on the Port of Olympia and Thurston County Commission Board from three to five members in an upcoming ballot measure.
- 5) Forward the login information for the Olympian newspaper to Commissioner Oosterman.

Christopher Stearns
[Christopher Stearns \(Aug 27, 2021 15:59 PDT\)](#)

Chris Stearns, Commissioner and Vice President

Attest:

Linda Oosterman
[Linda Oosterman \(Aug 29, 2021 11:16 PDT\)](#)

Linda Oosterman, Commissioner and Secretary









Minutes 08102021

Final Audit Report

2021-08-29

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