

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF AUGUST 11, 2020
OF
PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT NO. 1
OF
THURSTON COUNTY, WASHINGTON

The regular meeting for August 2020 of the Commissioners of Public Utility District No. 1 of Thurston County was called to order on Tuesday, August 11, 2020, commencing at 5:00 p.m. Commissioners Russell E. Olsen and Chris Stearns were present for the teleconference meeting hosted via Zoom; Commissioner Linda Oosterman 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)
- Ruth Clemens, Administrative Services Manager (ASM)
- TaSeana Tartt, Finance and Customer Service Manager (FCSM)
- Joe Rehberger, Chief Legal Counsel (only present during Executive Session)
- Erica Cecil, Operations Specialist
- Kurin Miller, Clerk to the Board

Call to Order:

Commissioner Olsen called the regular meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Commissioner Olsen made a motion to excuse Commissioner Oosterman from the meeting; Commissioner Stearns seconded the motion; the motion passed with all in favor.

Approval of Agenda:

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

Consent Calendar:

Approval of Minutes: June 16, 2020, July 21, 2020, July 28, 2020, July 30, 2020

Prequalification of Contractors: None

SMA Contracts: None

Correspondence: None

Voucher Approval:

- 1) Accounts Payables: July 29, 2020, August 5, 2020
- 2) Payroll: August 5, 2020

Other: Commissioner Meeting Per Diem Form Update

Approval of Consent Calendar:

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

Public Comments:

No members of the public were present.

Information or Discussion of Operations/Policy Issues:

Continuing Update - District Response to Coronavirus, COVID-19 Threat

ASM Clemens reported on several topics related to the COVID-19 pandemic including testing of the new phone program and how this relates to the Customer Service and Field Operations teams, employees working remotely, employee vacations, an extension of the Governor's proclamation on the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA), a federal-level executive order affecting payroll taxes, and possible personnel issues related to remote learning and childcare this fall. The Commissioners and GM Weidenfeller also spoke about these issues.

FCSM Tartt reported on accounts receivables, expenses related to the pandemic, COVID-19 expense reimbursement through FEMA, the District's Customer Support Program, and information forwarded to WPUDA for utility bill relief through the CARES Act. Commissioner Stearns pointed out a correction, and Commissioner Olsen asked a question about federal vs. state funding for possible utility bill relief; GM Weidenfeller asked for an update on the Governor's proclamation regarding past due fees and service disconnection postponement. FCSM Tartt and ASM Clemens provided the requested information to the Commissioners and GM Weidenfeller.

Rate Stabilization Update

AGM Parker reported on revenues so far for 2020. Staff will continue to monitor customer consumption and revenue through August, but the AGM reports that a budget shortfall is likely. Staff will prepare a budget adjustment to cut this year's spending to accommodate the shortfall. Commissioner Stearns asked about a reduction in consumption for former H&R Waterworks customers due to rate increases; he also asked about demographic changes and the impact on revenues. AGM Parker addressed these questions.

Water Use Efficiency (WUE) Presentation

Operations Specialist Erica Cecil presented a summary of the Water Use Efficiency (WUE) reports for the District's Group A water systems, submitted to the Department of Health (DOH) earlier this year. Commissioner Olsen asked about a reduction in customer consumption for former H&R Waterworks customers and how this relates to the consumption trend this year; Commissioner Stearns asked about specific customers that have large consumption. GM Weidenfeller addressed these questions.

Action/Approval Item(s):

Resolution 20-30, Approval to Carryover Accrued Vacation Leave Balances

GM Weidenfeller gave a brief overview of Resolution 20-30. Approval of this resolution would allow employees with over 240 hours of vacation on December 31, 2020 to be able to carry over any vacation hour overages. Employee have until December 31, 2022 to use any hours over 240 hours. This is a one-time exception made as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic which has forced employees to cancel vacations and/or avoid scheduling vacations. Commissioner Stearns asked a question to clarify the expiration date, and Commissioner Olsen commented on his views towards the resolution.

Commissioner Stearns made a motion to approve Resolution 20-30 as presented; Commissioner Olsen seconded the motion; the motion passed with all in favor.

Commissioner Signatures/Break:

Since the meeting was held via teleconference, there were no physical documents to sign.

Presentations:

GM Weidenfeller gave an update on the large leak for a customer of the Tanglewilde-Thompson Place water system. The customer has repaired the leak, and per the GM's request, the Commissioners approved him to authorize a reduction on the outstanding balance of the bill. GM Weidenfeller spoke about a request from Commissioner Stearns to contact WPUA's Water Program Director to present to the Board on municipal water law and the Board authorized scheduling Mr. Kounts and Mr. Clarke at a future meeting. GM Weidenfeller also addressed the conclusion of Commissioner Workshops at the end of August – the Commissioners and the GM discussed this topic in depth.

Commissioner Topics, Discussions and Reports:

Commissioner Olsen reported that there may not be a special Legislative session due to COVID-19. He also reported that the Department of Commerce has completed an analysis on the economic sectors of Washington and production and losses; he suggested using this analysis to make economic decisions within the PUD.

Commissioner Stearns reported on his recent experience with the Water Trust and the water banking issue discussed.

Commissioner Oosterman was excused for this meeting.

At 5:46 p.m., Commissioner Olsen announced that the Board would enter into an Executive Session 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 in accordance with RCW 42.30.110 (1)(b) for ten minutes until 5:56 p.m. At 5:56 p.m., the Executive Session concluded, and the regular meeting resumed. No decisions were made by the Board during Executive Session.

Adjournment: Commissioner Stearns made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Olsen seconded the motion; the motion passed with all in favor. The meeting adjourned at 5:56 p.m.

Assignments:

- 1) Include outcome information on current and past conservation measures in an upcoming monthly newsletter.
- 2) Add a discussion item to the August 18, 2020 Commissioner Workshop agenda regarding Commissioner Workshops
- 3) Schedule a meeting with Mr. Kounts and Mr. Clarke to attend a future PUD Commission meeting.

Russell E. Olsen, Commissioner and President

Attest:

Chris Stearns, Commissioner and Secretary