



APPROVED 2-27-19

MINUTES
City of Tacoma
Public Utility Board Meeting
January 23, 2019
6:30 p.m.

Chair Jones called the Public Utility Board meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. in the auditorium at Tacoma Public Utilities.

Present: Woodrow E. Jones, Jr., Mark Patterson, Christine Cooley, Bryan Flint, Karen Larkin

The meeting was quorate.

Minutes of the Previous Meetings

Ms. Larkin moved that the minutes of the previous meetings be adopted; seconded by Mr. Flint. Voice vote was taken and carried. The minutes were declared adopted.

Recognitions

Joe Wilson, T&D Manager, reported that there were three wind storms in the last six weeks and summarized TPU's storm response. Six line electricians, present to represent all line electricians who worked the storm response, attended the meeting: Brandon Parlacoski, Andrew Burkhard, Sean Keely, Adam Lang, Ryan Streeter, and Dan Wonderly. All Board Members and Director Flowers extended appreciation to all and made positive remarks about the storm response efforts.

Comments from the Public

There were no comments from the public.

Consent Agenda

There were no items on the consent agenda.

Regular Agenda

- D-1 Resolution U-11056 – Award contracts and approve purchases:
1. Increase contract with Lewis County Public Utility District No. 1 to construct and lease a dark fiber network link between the Mayfield project boundary and Lewis County's Salkum Substation (\$52,098.78. Cumulative total \$228,624.78, plus applicable taxes).

Ms. Larkin moved to adopt the resolution; seconded by Mr. Flint.

Voice vote was taken and carried. The resolution was declared adopted.

D-2 Resolution U-11057 – Establish a special project in the Utility Technology Services section of Tacoma Power for the implementation of WorkForce Connect across Tacoma Power, Tacoma Water, and City of Tacoma Environmental Services.

Ms. Larkin moved to adopt the resolution; seconded by Mr. Flint

Tony Landrith, Assistant Power Section Manager, summarized the resolution. TPU and General Government currently provide laptops to field technicians with software installed that allows capturing of information gathered on requests; i.e. customer service requests, maintenance inspections, etc. This information, once collected, is integrated with back-office systems such as SAP. The current system, 15 years into the original implementation and no longer supported by the vendor, provides the opportunity to move away from paper-based processes of collecting work details to electronic-based tools. The Workforce Connect (WFC) project will replace the existing legacy field mobile solution that is utilized across TPU and General Government. This is required to address a system that has reached end of life and extended vendor support, increase the number of end users, and extend and improve system functionality. This resolution will enable the participating organizations to staff and fully participate in appropriate phases of the project with technology and business subject matter experts.

Board Members made positive remarks about the collaboration and coordination between TPU and General Government on this project as it leverages resources to reduce project costs. In response to a Board inquiry, Mr. Landrith described special projects of limited duration as a method to staff initiatives. Full-time employees are needed for long-term demands and shorter-term demands usually utilize contracted staff augmentation. For the work in between for larger, more complex initiatives that require project employees, special projects of limited duration can be used.

Voice vote was taken and carried. The resolution was declared adopted.

Resolution U-11058 – Establish a special project in the Utility Technology Services Section of Tacoma Power for the implementation of the TPU 2019/2020 Technology portfolio.

Ms. Larkin moved to adopt the resolution; seconded by Mr. Flint

Tony Landrith, Assistant Power Section Manager, summarized the resolution. TPU has implemented a multi-pronged resource strategy to mitigate resource constraints that are created as a result of project-related demands. This resource strategy approach includes use of permanent FTEs, contracted staff augmentation, and project FTEs via special projects of limited duration. The use of project FTEs via the designation of special projects helps to reduce project labor costs, without committing permanent FTE positions where long-term resource demand does not exist. This request allows UTS an option to help reduce overall portfolio and project costs, while mitigating project resource demands. Funding has been included within the 2019/2020 O&M capital budgets of the respective divisions.

In response to a Board request, Mr. Landrith described the three special projects in this portfolio: TV Tacoma upgrade, conference room technology upgrades, and Network Operations Center centralization for cyber security and network monitoring. The projects will take approximately 18-24 months.

Voice vote was taken and carried. The resolution was declared adopted.

H. Reports of the Director

Director Flowers introduced footage from the current airing of “Tacoma Report” which highlights Assistant Customer Services Manager, Francine Artis, speaking about TPU’s low income assistance programs. Board Members made positive remarks about the work Ms. Artis and her Customer Solutions team are doing to increase awareness and usage of TPU’s low-income assistance programs.

I. Comments by the Board

Board Member Flint encouraged customers experiencing bill payment difficulties due to being a furloughed federal employee or other reasons, to reach out to Customer Services to inquire about payment arrangements.

J. Adjournment

There being no further business or comments, the Public Utility Board was adjourned at 7:07 p.m. until Wednesday, February 13, 2019 for a study session beginning at 3:00 p.m. at Tacoma Public Utilities, followed by the regular meeting at 6:30 p.m. at Tacoma Public Utilities.

Approved:

Woodrow E. Jones, Jr. Chair

Bryan Flint, Secretary