



APPROVED 1-25-17

MINUTES  
City of Tacoma  
Public Utility Board Study Session  
January 17, 2017  
3:00 p.m.

Mr. Patterson called the Public Utility Board study session to order at 3:00 p.m. at the Public Utilities Administration Building.

Present: Bryan Flint, Woodrow Jones, Mark Patterson, Karen Larkin, Monique Trudnowski

**Tacoma Water: Curran Road Mutual Water Association Water System Acquisition**

Ryan Flynn, Sr. Principal Engineer, provided an overview of the service area expansion policy. In order to acquire a water system, a request for extension of service must be received and is at the expense of the requester. Service extension areas larger than 10 acres must be approved by the Board and Council. Mr. Flynn then provided an overview Curran road system composition. There are 620 service connections and Curran Road currently receives all of its water from Tacoma Water. The benefits of acquisition, system replacement strategy, and system improvement strategy, were then detailed. The customer surcharge will cover the cost of identified system improvements and the ready-to-serve charge is by meter size. Mr. Flynn concluded the presentation by outlining the next steps which include Board review in May and Council review in June 2017.

**TPU Equity initiative**

Joy St. Germain, Human Resources Director, introduced TPU Manager Rhonda Kelly and Kat Flores, HR Analyst. Ms. St. Germain began defining equity and empowerment at TPU. Tacoma residents recognize that TPU is a fair and equitable organization that welcomes candidates with diverse backgrounds, multicultural skill sets and experiences for job opportunities. The community knows that equitable services are provided to all customers. Ms. St. Germain then highlighted the five areas of the initiative: 1) awareness; 2) communication; 3) hiring and recruitment; 4) focus groups; 5) outreach. Metrics showing composition of the TPU workforce from the 2016 EEO report and community outreach efforts were then reviewed. In summary, TPU will continue to provide Tacoma residents and current staff opportunities for gainful employment, education, training, and advance. TPU has a diverse group of individuals that offer a variety of skills, knowledge, and abilities. TPU recognizes that when it values individual differences and collaborates as a team, the results include increased productivity, innovation, and improved organizational success. TPU's customers are always in the forefront of everyday business.

### **Tacoma Water; Community Outreach Workforce Planning Project**

Ray West, Water Distribution Manager, provided background on what was formerly known as the Youth Build Tacoma (YBT) program. The YBT objective was to hire youth in under-represented classifications and focuses on the development of accountability, interpersonal skills, and hands-on training. Tacoma Water has participated for 16 years. The program has created value in Tacoma Water by creating a workforce representative of the community and promotes an environment of diversity, tolerance, and acceptance. Mr. West then outlined several success stories of YBT youth that have gone on to be hired by Tacoma Water. Metrics outlining program data from 1999 to 2016 were then outlined. YBT is now Tacoma Training and Employment Program (TTEP) and has modified the program to a service delivery model from sole source provider to multiple agencies and has a 12 week trades discovery curriculum with offerings such as carpentry, drywall, plumbing, electrical, welding, and iron works. The focus is still on youth 18 – 24, but those over 25 are now eligible to participate if class space is available. At a future Board meeting, Tacoma Water will come forward with a request for creation of a project for 2017-2020 with three budgeted employees in support of this program.

### **Tacoma Power: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife/Natural Resources Fish Program Update**

Keith Underwood, Tacoma Power Natural Resources Manager, began by outlining Tacoma Power's compliance responsibilities to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) license as it relates to recreation, wildlife and land management, fish facilities and programs, the environment, and safety. Mr. Underwood then reviewed activities and success in 2016 at both the Cushman and Cowlitz Hydroelectric Projects. Challenges for both hydroelectric projects in 2017 were both outlined. These include obtaining an agreement with PSE, optimizing the fish collector performance, and building fish management plans at Cushman. Challenges in 2017 for Cowlitz include trout hatchery production and improvements, Mayfield fish survival improvements, and a fish hatchery management plan rewrite. The Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) contracts in 2015/2016 were reviewed. These included WDFW work for hatchery monitoring, evaluation, and enforcement. The 17 projects identified in the WDFW funding request and budget for the current biennium, which will be brought before the Board for consideration at a future meeting, was detailed. The projects include work on fish health, water quality, chinook eggs, trout stocking, fish facility operations, project management, and enforcement at Cushman, Cowlitz, Nisqually, and Alder Dams. Mr. Underwood then reviewed how contract management will be implemented, Natural Resource staff and organization, and the check system in place to hold staff members and contractors accountable.

### **Tacoma Power and Water Rates Follow-up**

Ray Johnson, Power Assistant Section Manager, reviewed the principles and objectives of Tacoma Power's rate design proposal as a follow-up to the presentation the Board received on December 14, 2016. There was then discussion with the Board, staff, and consultant Ron Amen of Black and Veatch on the residential customer charge, the application of the customer charge to commercial and industrial classes, impacts on low-income customers, impacts on distributed generation, impacts on conservation, and the rate impact of moving the rate increase to January instead of April. Any further questions for staff will be submitted by individual Board Members to the Director's Office. The next steps in the rate process were then outlined. This includes a public hearing on February 8, Board consideration on February 22, Government Performance and Finance Committee presentation on March 1 and City Council readings on

March 7 and March 21. During this policy maker consideration, public outreach will take place. The planned rates effective date is April 1, 2017.

**Adjournment**

The study session was adjourned at 6:11 p.m. until the next regularly scheduled study session on Wednesday, January 25, 2017 at 3:00 p.m.

Approved:

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Mark Patterson, Chair

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Woodrow E. Jones, Jr., Secretary