



APPROVED 1-23-19

MINUTES  
City of Tacoma  
Public Utility Board Study Session  
January 9, 2019  
3:00 p.m.

Mr. Jones called the Public Utility Board study session to order at 3:01 p.m. at the Public Utilities Administration Building.

Present: Woodrow E. Jones, Jr., Bryan Flint, Christine Cooley (arrived 3:42), Mark Patterson, Karen Larkin

**TPU Employee Survey Results**

Dan Drennan, Marketing and Development Manager, summarized the TPU employee satisfaction survey project goals, which were to: 1) Assess (conduct survey, establish baseline, benchmark comparisons); 2) Understand (measure and evaluate, identify critical elements of the employee experience, learn what employees value); 3) Act (use feedback to enhance employee experience, fuel the success of growth). Holly Lucht, Market Development Research Analyst, then walked the Board through the results. The top three most and least favorable responses were outlined. Favorable: 1) I feel good about the ways TPU contributes to the communities we serve; 2) TPU takes a genuine interest in the communities we serve; 3) The benefits provided by TPU meet my needs. Least favorable: 1) Where I work, decisions get made without undue delay; 2) Where I work, promotions go to those who deserve them; 3) When changes in programs and procedures are made where I work, communications are usually handled well. In summary, strengths to leverage are TPU's community focus and workload. Areas to watch are feedback/accountability and career/development. Opportunity areas for action are operational effectiveness and communication. The action plan in response to the results was then summarized. This includes the creation of specific, measurable, actionable, realistic, time-bound goals that take situational factors and the broader context for the lines of business into consideration. Once priorities and the action plan are identified, the results will also be used to inform year two of the LEAD training. Discussion ensued and the Board's collective desire is to be kept informed once the evaluation of and action plan for the results has been completed.

## **Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) Program Update**

Joe Tellez, Power Section Manager, made introductory remarks outlining the three concepts in this AMI presentation: the concept of digital transformation; AMI technology and review of the calibrated business case; and review of a series of Board actions related to contracts. Digital business transformation initiatives include equitable access for all customers, Tacoma economic and workforce development; protect/steward the environment, and resilience/reliability.

Andre Pedferri, AMI Program Manager, began with a review of AMI infrastructure, which is composite technology of meters, communications networks, and software systems that automate the collection of meter data and provides a two-way connection between customers and the utility. A review of the selected vendors, Sensus, Omnetric, Utegration, and Z2 solutions was provided. The AMI governance structure, 2018 accomplishments, and program schedule were summarized. Mr. Pedferri then provided an overview of the AMI business case calibration. As AMI transitions from procurement to implementation, TPU must recalibrate the AMI business case to accurately reflect known program costs and realized benefits. The next comprehensive AMI business case calibration will occur in the mid-2020 timeframe as the program transitions from implementation to deployment. Business case assumptions and the business scope were then summarized. The scope involves installation of approximately 180,000 electric meters and 110,000 water meters, installation of the AMI network, and implementation of a meter data management system. Also included is AMI/SAP integration, transition to monthly billing, and deployment of a customer usage portal. For the vendor selection approach, TPU engaged a consultant to facilitate the vendor selection process. The selection panel was comprised of key subject matter experts across TPU and City IT. Vendors were equally evaluated via a competitive RFP process. Mr. Pedferri then summarized the vendor scopes of work.

Rebekah Anderson, Community and Media Relations Manager, summarized the communications and outreach strategies for AMI, which is to provide ongoing messaging updates to leadership, employees, and customer-facing materials that illustrate program benefits, coordinate messaging timelines with project phases, and use all available marketing channels as well as community and stakeholder relationships for outreach.

Discussion ensued with Board Members expressing the desire to see a robust and detailed communication/outreach plan, including talking points, and for information on how vendors will utilize existing telecommunications infrastructure.

**Adjournment**

The study session was adjourned at 5:56 p.m. until the next regularly scheduled study session on Wednesday, January 23, 2019 at 3:00 p.m.

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Woodrow E. Jones, Jr., Chair

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Bryan Flint, Secretary