



APPROVED 5/14/25

MINUTES  
City of Tacoma  
Public Utility Board Study Session  
April 23, 2025  
3:00 p.m.

Chair O'Loughlin called the Public Utility Board study session to order at 3:00 p.m. in the third-floor conference room (LT1) of the Public Utilities Administration Building.

**Present:** John O'Loughlin, Elly Claus-McGahan, Devin Hampton

**Excused:** William Bridges, Anita Gallagher

**Tacoma Power: Bonneville Power Administration Product Decision Overview**

Chris Robinson, Power Superintendent, made introductory remarks. The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) contract is a relatively inexpensive, reliable, flexible power supply portfolio. Tacoma Power has special access to it as a public utility. Leah Marquez-Glynn, Asst. Power Mgr, and Rachel Gardner-Clark, Integrated Resource Plan Mgr, presented information in this presentation. As background, BPA is a federal power marketing agency. Tacoma Power has been a BPA preference customer since 1940 and is BPA's fourth largest customer. The power is primarily hydro and very low carbon. Power is sold at cost. BP power accounts for sixty percent of Power's generating portfolio and BP power bill accounts for thirty percent of Power's revenue requirement. Delivery of power under the new contract would span October 1, 2028 to September 30, 2044. An overview of product options evaluated by Tacoma Power: Slice component (percentage share of federal system); Block component (monthly block of power with same amount in all hours); Block with shaping capacity (monthly block of power, more provided in heavy load hours, some flexibility to further shape when energy comes); and Load following (BPA takes responsibility for meeting peak load, designed for customers that are not balancing authorities and without significant resources of their own, significant uncertainty around implementation). The standard framework to evaluate product options are resource adequacy and cost. Staff recommendation is that the BPA Slice product remain the best product option for Tacoma Power. The final deadline to execute the contract is December 5, 2025.

### **Tacoma Power: Advanced Distribution Management System**

Chris Robinson, Power Superintendent, made introductory remarks. Many utilities have moved forward on implementation of an Advanced Distribution Management System (ADMS). This is an investment in modern operating technologies to meet today's and future challenges. John Nierenberg, T&D Assistant Mgr, and Corey Bedient, Technology Mgr, presented the information in this presentation. An Outage Management System (OMS) is a software platform to predict where outages are occurring, track the number of customers impacted, dispatch and coordinate repair crews, communicate outage status and restoration timelines to customers. Tacoma's OMS is outdated and struggles during large or complex outages. ADMS (Advanced Distribution Management System) offers many benefits: ability to defer upgrades and/or builds to substations and feeders; safety benefits; voltage management; improved cyber security; cut customer outage numbers in half for automated switched feeders; implement automation for operational business workflow improvements; reduce wait times for customer response on outages; provide system intelligence to system operators; fewer truck rolls; quicker dispatch; and less overtime. The implementation cost through 2029 and associated contracts coming before the Board for consideration were reviewed.

### **Board/Director Comments/Updates**

Lauren Adler, Federal Affairs Mgr, provided an update on federal legislative activities affecting TPU, Water and Power. Rail's legislative meetings will take place in May.

Chair O'Loughlin made positive remarks about attending the Pierce Transit 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary event and the downtown EV charger ribbon cutting.

### **Adjournment**

The study session was adjourned 5:34 at p.m.

Approved:



John O'Loughlin  
Chair



Elly Claus-McGahan  
Secretary