



APPROVED 5/28/25

MINUTES
City of Tacoma
Public Utility Board Study Session
May 14, 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, Anita Gallagher

Excused: William Bridges

Tacoma Rail: Battery Electric Locomotives

Alan Matheson, Rail Superintendent; Dan McCabe Rail CIO/CFO; and Kari Halliday, Chief Mechanical Officer, provided the information in this presentation. The purpose of the Battery Electric Locomotives (BEL) is to reduce Rail's reliance on fossil fuels. The total project cost estimate for 2,000 horsepower locomotives is \$19M - \$20M. Cost scenarios with and without federal funding were reviewed. On-site improvements required to have BELs at Rail and a historical timeline of events were shared. Mr. Matheson concluded by saying the staff recommendation is to wait for clarity on federal funding and grants; the Board will be kept informed by the Director of any movement that will cause Rail to take further action on BELs.

Public Records Office: City of Tacoma Public Records Policies

Martha Lantz, Deputy City Attorney, shared that the Public Records Office (PRO) has updated its policy to inform requestors of the city's protocols, requirements, and expectations regarding records requests. As background, the State requires disclosure of records upon request, with certain exemptions. The Public Records Act (PRA) directs public agencies to publish policies regarding requests. The city has seen an increase in records requests; 4,029 were received in 2024. Some of the new policy elements include: Requestors will utilize the city's on-line records request system; PRA authorizes a charge for production of records; The request will not be processed if the fee isn't requested; Allows production of records to be satisfied in installments; Allows a deposit prior to processing voluminous or complex requests; and the policy provides PRO staff clear authority to close requests that haven't been paid for or retrieved within

the stated time. The Council will be updated on this policy at a future meeting, followed by final consideration by the City Manager and Director of Utilities for adoption.

TPU Climate Action Plan

Rochelle Gandour-Rood, Education Outreach Manager and Sustainability Liaison; and Brittany Broyles Customer Energy Solutions Manager, presented the information in this presentation. The Climate Action Plan's (CAP) 2030 indicator targets for tracking progress towards Tacoma's net zero emissions by 2050 target will guide the work over the next nine years. The 2024 CAP had 66 actions to track. TPU co-led or led the work on seven of these actions of which five were completed, one had good progress, and one had little progress. The final reporting for each of the operating divisions on the 2024 CAP were summarized. TPU's actions for 2025 – 2027 were summarized: Reduce water usage during summer months; Ensure city buildings exceed compliance with the clean building performance standard; Advance residential, commercial, and industry building solutions by promoting energy efficient upgrades; Recognize green businesses; and Fleet decarbonization accelerator program.

TPU Youth Education Program Update

Rochelle Gandour-Rood, Education Outreach Mgr, provided the Board with an overview of the Pre-k to 12th grade youth education program. Utilities education has three components; operations, career development, and environmental sustainability. All three ensure that utility services meet the needs of the community now and into the future. Operations education exists to help build communities who understand the value of utilities services. Career development education is to encourage career aspirations and recruit a workforce that reflects the communities served by TPU. Environmental sustainability education encourages conservation and emphasizes stewardship of resources. Ms. Gandour-Rood then spoke about TPU's involvement in youth programs like TPU Academy, STEM, and Girl Scouts. From 2023 – 2024, TPU had more than 55 youth engagement events reaching over 3,000 people. TPU subject matter experts are the teachers; 110 employees have engaged with youth this year. TPU interns have also worked with youth for near-peer youth learning motivation.

Board/Director Comments/Updates

Alan Matheson, Rail Superintendent, reported that Tacoma Rail participated in lobbying meetings in Washington DC and spoke to legislators about industry concerns.

Chair O'Loughlin made positive remarks about the annual employee-supported TPU Bow-A-Thon that benefits the Boys & Girls Club.

Chair O'Loughlin made positive remarks about the Bonneville Power Administration joining Markets+ and Tacoma Power's role in the industry.

Chair O'Loughlin congratulated Director Flowers for receiving the Woman Business Leader of the Year Award from the University of Washington Tacoma School of Business.

Adjournment

The study session was adjourned 5:12 at p.m.

Approved:



John O'Loughlin
Chair



Elly Claus-McGahan
Secretary