



APPROVED 2-12-20

MINUTES  
City of Tacoma  
Public Utility Board Study Session  
January 22, 2020  
3:00 p.m.

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

Present: Bryan Flint, Chrissy Cooley, Carlos Watson, Karen Larkin, Mark Patterson

**Tacoma Water: Water Reorganization**

Scott Dewhirst, Water Superintendent, shared that when he first arrived at TPU, he started observing and assessing the organization and realized changes that would make a better organization could be instituted. In 2019, Water staff worked with a consultant to align Tacoma Water with what is happening in the industry. The consultant also worked on the communication aspect of changes. Superintendent Dewhirst reviewed the old structure and outlined the new structure: 1) Source Water and Treatment Operations (managed by Greg Volkhardt); 2) Customer and Employee Experience (managed by Heather Pennington); 3) Planning and Engineering (managed by Shannon Wall); 4) Business Services (managed by Sean Senescall); and 5) Maintenance and Construction (managed by Stuart Vaughan). The purpose of the structural changes are to address strategic alignment, a strong workforce, increased efficiency and effectiveness, and empowered decision-making. Superintendent Dewhirst concluded his presentation by sharing a copy of the new strategic plan for 2020-2025.

**Emergency Management Update**

Courtney Rose, TPU Emergency Manager, defined Emergency Management (EM) as the process of creating and implementing strategies and developing plans to prepare for and manage emergencies or disasters. At TPU, we do this by coordinating TPU resources, equipment and personnel as well as working with a host of outside agencies to effectively prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural and man-made disasters. Emergency Response is utilizing the plans, procedures, equipment (includes personnel) and coordinating with partners (local, state, federal) to minimize the impact of the emergency or disaster from a centrally located and familiar location. Potential threats and hazards can be naturally occurring, such as storms, volcanic activity, earthquakes, fire, flood, or mudslides. Man-made incidents can include active shooters, bomb threats, civil disturbance, medical incidents, public health emergencies, terrorist attacks, dam failures, or power outages. Ms. Rose outlined EM's 2019 accomplishments, which includes plan

development, training, and relationship building. EM goals for 2020 were then summarized: 1) Planning; strengthen the EM program including integration of TPU-wide plans and alignment with national planning standards/ guidelines; 2) Training and Exercise; improve the EM capabilities of TPU personnel; 3) Education and Outreach; educate and invest in personnel to foster resiliency at home and at work; 4) Partnerships; build and expand partnerships internally and externally to TPU; 5) Response and Coordination; improve the capabilities of staff to respond and coordinate during an event; 6) EM team; build the EM team and develop a work plan. Discussion ensued with the Board requesting tabletop training on TPU's delegation of authority and leadership succession in an emergency and to be educated on the Board's role in an event.

### **Tacoma Power: Water Conditions Update**

Todd Lloyd, Assistant Power Section Manager, shared that hydropower conditions for Tacoma Power have returned to normal operating ranges and next week staff will be in active water management with maximum generation. All storage reservoirs have risen. Mr. Lloyd shared graphical representations of stream flows, hydro conditions and snowpack. Ying Hall, Assistant Power Section Manager, reviewed the net wholesale revenues that are \$27M below budget. Bill Berry, Rates, Planning, and Analysis Manager, provided an overview of budget impacts, debt service coverage impacts, and possible use of the rate stabilization fund.

### **Discussion of Board Policies**

Board Member Patterson reviewed his edits to Board Strategic Directive 7 (SD7), on Resiliency and Reliability. Board Members requested additional review time and for this item to be placed on the next study session agenda for review on February 12, 2020.

### **Review of Director of Utilities Goal and Review of Director of Utilities Performance Review Document**

Chair Larkin walked the Board through the review instrument for Director Flowers. Cathy Journey, Sr. HR Training Manager, worked in advance to align the document with the City's goals/Vision 2025 and the Board's Strategic Directives. Discussion ensued on whether or not to include performance metrics, development of a work plan, and the timing of the Director's evaluation and goals (August) when the rest of TPU's goals are due on a regular calendar year basis. Director Flowers agreed she would review each strategy and align business unit specific measurements as sub-bullets where applicable; these sub-bullets are due to the Board on January 30. A process timeline will be updated by Ms. Journey and is due on January 30. This item will be reviewed at the joint study session with the City Council and Board on March 3, 2020.

### **Executive Session**

Board Member Patterson moved to convene an executive session at 5:35 p.m. for 30 minutes for the purpose of discussing pending and potential litigation per RCW 42.30.110(1)(i); seconded by Board Member Flint and approved by the Board. The

executive session was adjourned at 6:05 p.m. Attorneys present were Chief Deputy City Attorneys Tom Morrill and Chris Bacha and Deputy City Attorney Joseph Sloan.

**Adjournment**

The study session was adjourned at 6:05 p.m. until the next regularly scheduled study session on Wednesday, February 12, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. followed by a regular meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Approved:

Approved:

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Karen Larkin, Chair

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Mark Patterson, Secretary