

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMISSION

January 10, 2017

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Public Utility District No. 1 of Whatcom County was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Commissioner Paul Kenner. Said meeting was open to the public and notice thereof had been given as required by law. Those present included Commissioner Mike Murphy and Legal Counsel Jon Sitkin. Staff: Steve Jilk, General Manager; Ann Grimm, Administrative Assistant; Rebecca Schlotterback, Manager of Contracts and Regulatory Compliance; Brian Walters, Director of Utility Operations; Annette Smith, Director of Finance; Duane Holden, Manager of Construction and Facilities; Alec Strand, Project Manager; Paul Siegmund, Manager of Automation and Technology; Mike Macomber, IT/SCADA Tech; Aaron Peterson, IT/SCADA Tech; Fred Disch, Water Systems Supervisor; Jon Littlefield, Electric System Supervisor; and, Lew Gaskill, Accountant I; and Traci Irvine, Accountant I.

Public attending: Robin Dexter, Environmental Working Group; Dave Olson, Citizen;
Max and Carole Perry, Citizens; TJ Lee, Phillips 66

◆ **Public Comment**

No comments made.

◆ **Approval of the Meeting Minutes and Claims**

The Commissioners were presented with the Minutes of the Special Meeting December 20, 2016 and the following Claims of January 10, 2017:

VENDOR NAME	AMOUNT
3-D CORPORATION	1,409.70
APERTURE ELECTRICAL	10,441.20
APPLIED DIGITAL IMAGING	44.57
BELLINGHAM HERALD	1,084.25
BIRCH EQUIPMENT COMPANY	2,913.16
CENTRAL WELDING SUPPLY	100.88
CHMELIK SITKIN & DAVIS	8,411.26
CORNERSTONE MANAGEMENT, INC.	2,921.00
CRABTREE, DEVIN	190.56
CULLIGAN NORTHWEST	78.85
FCS GROUP	1,207.50
FERNDALE ACE HARDWARE	81.95
FERNDALE CITY OF	157.55
FERNDALE LUBE	69.40
FRONTIER	1,392.13
GRAINGER	158.99
HARDWARE SALES, INC.	137.36
HD FOWLER CO, INC	71.30
HEALTH PROMOTIONS NORTHWEST	90.00
IVOXY CONSULTING LLC	5,574.19
KCDA PURCHASING COOPERATIVE	69.34
LAPLAUNT, DAVID	61.12
LAW SEMINARS INTERNATIONAL	830.00
LENOVO US INC.	1,692.93
LITHTEX NW LLC	124.78
MALLORY SAFETY & SUPPLY LLC	196.72
MASSMUTUAL RETIREMENT SVCS LLC	8,458.33
MINMAX	2,400.00
MORTIMER, TOM	337.50
NESS CRANE SERVICE, INC	813.08
NORTH COAST ELECTRIC COMPANY	6,490.04
NORTHWEST MOWING & GARDENING	447.42
PACIFIC SURVEY & ENGINEERING	3,765.68

PLATT ELECTRIC SUPPLY CO	1,424.58
PORTAL WAY FARM & GARDEN	131.49
PUBLIC POWER COUNCIL	7,966.00
PUGET SOUND ENERGY, INC	17,416.33
REGENCE BLUE SHIELD	35,552.43
REISNER DISTRIBUTION, INC	1,382.35
RICOH USA	291.14
SMITH MECHANICAL	1,659.74
SSC - SANITARY SERVICE COMPANY	513.66
SURETY PEST CONTROL	59.79
TEAMSTER LOCAL #231	410.00
UNITED WAY OF WHATCOM COUNTY	315.00
VERIZON WIRELESS	1,244.50
WA ST SUPPORT REGISTRY	250.00
WASHINGTON DENTAL SERVICE	2,853.65
WASHINGTON TEAMSTERS WELFARE	9,747.90
WHATCOM COUNTY AUDITOR	98,065.66
WHATCOM FARMERS CO-OP	3,563.19
WHATCOM JANITORIAL	877.50
GRAND TOTAL	\$245,947.65

ACTION: Commissioner Murphy motioned to approve the MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING HELD DECEMBER 20, 2016 and the CLAIMS OF JANUARY 10, 2017. Commissioner Kenner second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

◆ **Weather/Operations Update**

Director of Utility Operations Brian Walters provided an update and slideshow of the recent extreme wintery conditions, frazil ice on the river and how it is creating quite a challenge for our Water Operations Crew. Highlights included:

- *Watching the Weather:*
When low temperatures and high northeast winds are forecasted, Water Operations anticipates frazil ice will occur. Large diesel-fueled rental compressors were delivered, and additional crew was placed on standby status.
- *Frazil Ice Occurrences:*
Two (2) frazil ice events occurred: December 16 - 18, 2016 and January 3 – 5, 2017. The second event had considerably more impact than the first.
- *Frazil Ice Mitigation Strategy:*
Air burst intervals for the fish screen blow-offs are decreased. Normally, a blow-off occurs every two hours to remove sediment and during frazil ice, blow-offs are scheduled to occur within minutes apart. Freeze gates in the settling basins are opened for proper water flow through the system and pumping is reduced when necessary. When needed, the crew also manually de-iced parts which were frozen over. On January 3, a “perfect storm” arose and blow-offs were scheduled every 25 seconds which barely allowed enough water to be drawn into the plant. Pumping capacity was decreased significantly due to the frazil ice. A photograph from 2004 depicted the entire river froze to solid ice, however, withdrawal capacity remained at normal as no frazil ice occurs at this stage.
- *Effects on Settling Basins:*
With continuous northeast wind and freezing conditions, the west end of the basins at Plant 1 became iced over. At Plant 2, the new basins were more exposed to conditions. These were drained in an effort to keep possible equipment damage minimal.
- *Lessons Learned:*
Exposure of the settling basins to the northeast wind continues to be an operations issues and additional compressor capacity under “ideal” frazil ice conditions is needed at the Plant 2 Intake. And the lack of storage on the industrial water system limits options and impacts our customers. Walters reiterated the importance of the intertie line, which is critical to moving water when either water plant is having difficulty.
- *Measures Considered to Mitigate Frazil Ice Impact on Operations:*
Installing weather coverings over Plant 2 settling basins would help with ice and algae bloom issues in the summertime. Purchasing a large compressor to keep onsite, although cost for a used one is pricey. Reconsider the storage option for the industrial water system, and urge customers to consider onsite storage and pressurization of their water distribution systems. Since Plant 1 is the oldest and most vulnerable, a new substation and standby generator is recommended.

As this wintery weather continues, Water Systems Supervisor Fred Disch indicated that the PUD will keep the compressors here on standby. Commissioner Murphy thought that the covers for the basins made sense, especially on double duty for winter and summer conditions. Jilk said the greatest need is to get the water into the intakes and the district had looked at a Teflon-type of coating to repel ice on the screens. He will readdress the water storage options later this year. Walters added that Disch and the water operations crew has done a great job during these events. The Commissioners added their appreciation for the crew's hard work as well.

◆ **Manager's Report**

No report.

Election Districts Update

Background: For Whatcom County government elections the county was originally divided into three voting districts and as such the Port of Bellingham and the PUD mirrored these district boundaries. In November 2015 the voters of Whatcom County approved an amendment to the Whatcom County Charter to require that the county be divided into five districts (Ordinance 2015-029), with each district being comprised of (as nearly as possible) one-fifth of the county's population. In April 2016, new County election district boundaries were approved. These changes affected elections for County government elected County officials.

Per PUD statutes, the PUD district boundaries do not have to follow County (or Port) rules and create two additional districts. Legal Counsel Sitkin explained that according to RCW 54.12.010 (6) that the boundaries of the public utility commissioner districts may be changed only by the public utility district commission, and shall be examined every ten years to determine substantial equality of population in accordance with chapter 29A.76 RCW. District staff is charged to develop a process to review the district boundaries (the current district boundaries are equal in population) for the Commission to evaluate and then a required public hearing would be scheduled. More information on this will be forthcoming.

New District Staff

Annette Smith introduced the District's newest employee, Traci Irvine. Traci's background is in payroll and accounting, and she will be replacing long-time employee Lew Gaskill who is retiring at the end of January as the Accountant 1 position.

◆ **Executive Session at 8:45 a.m.**

Commissioner Kenner requested an Executive Session to review and consider potential litigation. Kenner stated that no formal action will be asked of or taken by the Commission following the Executive Session. He estimated the time for the Executive Session will be approximately 20 minutes.

There being no further business for the regular meeting, the Commission adjourned the regular meeting at 8:45 a.m. to Executive Session.

◆ **Executive Session Adjourn**

There being no further business for the Executive Session, the Commission reconvened to the regular meeting at 9:12 a.m.

◆ **Adjourn**

There being no further business for the regular meeting, the Commission adjourned the regular meeting at 9:13 a.m.



President/Commissioner



Secretary/Commissioner

Commissioner