

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR
MEETING OF THE COMMISSION**

January 12, 2021

1. Call to Order | Pledge of Allegiance

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Public Utility District No. 1 of Whatcom County was called to order at 8:04 a.m. by Commissioner Atul Deshmane. Said meeting was open to the public and notice thereof had been given as required by law. Those present via Zoom teleconference included Commissioner Mike Murphy, Commissioner Christine Grant, Commissioner Atul Deshmane, Legal Counsel Jon Sitkin and Legal Counsel Tom Mortimer. Staff attending via teleconference: Steve Jilk, General Manager, Ann Grimm, Executive Assistant; Rebecca Schlotterback, Manager of Contracts and Regulatory Compliance; Annette Smith, Director of Finance; Brian Walters, Assistant General Manager; Duane Holden, Director of Utility Operations; Paul Siegmund, Manager of Automation and Technology; Aaron Peterson, IT/SCADA Technician; Mike Macomber, IT/SCADA Technician; Jon Littlefield, Electric System Supervisor; Ian Simpson, Substation Technician; Devin Crabtree, Chief Water Operator; and, Traci Irvine Accountant I.

Public attending via teleconference:

Jill McIntire-Witt, citizen
Bill Colgrove, citizen
Jaco ten Hove, citizen
Daniel Kirkpatrick, citizen
Max Perry, citizen
Dave Olson, citizen
Carryn Vande Griend, PSE
Eddie Ury, RE-Sources

2. Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Deshmane suggested amending the Agenda with a second Public Comment Period after Agenda Item No. 3 for those who wanted to congratulate newly elected Commissioner Grant.

ACTION: Commissioner Murphy motioned to APPROVE THE AGENDA OF JANUARY 12, 2021 AS AMENDED. Commissioner Grant second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval of Consent Agenda:

- a) **Approval of the Meeting Minutes of the Meeting of December 8, 2020 as presented;**
- b) **Approval of the Meeting Minutes of the Meeting of December 15, 2020 as presented; and**
- c) **Approval of the Claims of January 12, 2021:**

VENDOR NAME	AMOUNT
3-D CORPORATION	252.18
APPLIED INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGIES, INC	17.83
ASPECT CONSULTING LLC	7,384.00
BARON TELECOMMUNICATIONS	37.98
BELLINGHAM HERALD	940.00
BROWN & KYSAR, INC.	53,422.75
CENTER ELECTRIC INC.	11,745.13
CENTRAL WELDING SUPPLY	163.50
CHMELIK SITKIN & DAVIS	7,333.00
CLEARLINE ENGINEERING, INC.	19,877.45
CORNERSTONE MANAGEMENT, INC.	787.50
EDGE ANALYTICAL LABORATORIES	20.00
ELECTRICAL RELIABILITY SERVICES	6,500.00
FARMERS EQUIPMENT COMPANY	970.08
FEDERAL EXPRESS	10.47
FERGUSON ENTERPRISES, INC	270.66
FERNDALE ACE HARDWARE	61.22
FERNDALE CITY OF	207.09
GATEWAY CONTROLS	2,703.82
GENEVA CONSULTING	1,608.50
GRAYBAR ELECTRIC COMPANY, INC	3,106.41

HEALTH PROMOTIONS NORTHWEST	90.00
HOMEWARD DESIGNS, LLC	5,072.25
INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY, INC	109.27
IVOXY CONSULTING LLC	27,501.46
K ENGINEERS, INC.	182.50
KCDA PURCHASING COOPERATIVE	265.29
MASSMUTUAL RETIREMENT SVCS LLC	10,999.99
MINMAX	2,700.00
MORTIMER, TOM	3,533.75
NORTHWEST FIBER DBA ZIPLY FIBER	1,490.60
NORTHWEST MOWING & GARDENING	1,382.74
NW PUBLIC POWER ASSOCIATION	5,980.13
P&P EXCAVATING, LLC	5,885.28
PACIFIC NORTHWEST UTILITIES	1,000.00
PACIFIC SURVEY & ENGINEERING	10,781.00
PAYLOCITY	25.50
PAYROLL	1,265.53
PLATT ELECTRIC SUPPLY CO	163.56
PORTAL WAY FARM & GARDEN	6.19
PUBLIC UTILITY RISK MANAGEMENT SERVICES	42,091.75
PUD #1 OF WHATCOM COUNTY	2,553.33
PUGET SOUND ENERGY, INC	6,202.30
REGENCE BLUE SHIELD	42,538.51
REISNER DISTRIBUTION, INC	756.44
RICOH USA	180.61
SSC - SANITARY SERVICE COMPANY	513.28
TEAMSTER LOCAL #231	515.00
TENABLE, INC.	12,533.92
UNITED WAY OF WHATCOM COUNTY	695.00
UTILITIES UNDERGROUND LOCATION	20.64
VERIZON WIRELESS	1,901.48
WA ST DEPT TRANSP-NW REGION	488.61
WASHINGTON DENTAL SERVICE	3,092.45
WASHINGTON TEAMSTERS WELFARE	12,029.15
WATERHOUSE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES CORP	17,601.30
WHATCOM COUNTY AUDITOR	141,595.59
WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS	150.00
WHATCOM JANITORIAL	1,250.00
ZYLSTRA TIRE CENTER, INC	2,268.96
GRAND TOTAL	\$484,832.93

ACTION: Commissioner Murphy motioned to APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA OF JANUARY 12, 2021. Commissioner Grant second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

First Public Comment Session:

Jill McIntire-Witt: Congratulated Commissioner Grant; she served with her on the Bellingham Climate Task Force. She has three points: (1) What the status is on a feasibility study proposed (from the Task Force Report) for Whatcom PUD to serve the entire county [with energy], and how can the PUD get this study going? Maybe ask the City of Bellingham for funding or hold a fundraiser? (2) To Commissioner Murphy regarding his interest in Water Conservation: there is a lot of work being done on soil regeneration, the County wants to plant one million trees, and Witt encouraged Murphy to somehow get those trees growing for water conservation and protection. (3) Working on local renewables that are available for the PUD and others in the county and public broadband. Commissioners thanked her for the comments. Deshmane added he will follow up with her regarding the status on the feasibility report.

Bill Colgrove: Seconds the request for hope that Whatcom PUD would consider to expand service through the county or into at least the city of Bellingham. He appreciates the work the PUD has done. And congratulated Christine in joining the Commission, and would appreciate any information or documentation Commissioner Deshmane has on meetings that have occurred with the City. Commissioner Murphy asked Colgrove to clarify his comment of “expanding service” in *what* capacity? Colgrove replied electricity as a primary goal – greater control over the sources of the electricity. While a PUD option would take a great amount of time and an extensive process to accomplish; however, it is something worthwhile and he hopes that the conversations have been worthwhile.

Jaco ten Jove: Lives in Happy Valley, also wants to register support for the Whatcom PUD to explore all feasibilities to extend service to all of Whatcom County for electricity. This would allow a locally controlled utility to provide our electricity instead of a private, for-profit corporation. Washington State has proven this pathway is productive has been a leader in PUD productivity. He encourages the PUD to expedite the study.

Eddie Ury, Climate and Energy Policy Manager, RE Sources: Congratulated Commissioner Grant on her election and the other Commissioners for their service. He sees the following as immediate opportunities that may come before the PUD:

The PUD has been exploring in coordination with the Port and others about expanding broadband service in Whatcom County. The 2021 Energy Strategy just released by WA State Department of Commerce includes expansion of public broadband as an energy strategy as well as a justice and equity strategy benefitting society without reliable internet. There is money allocated for funding introduced by Rep. Shewmake to create a green bonding program to distribute energy resource development and broadband service. Congress’s Act is allocating money for renewable energy development and rural broadband. It seems like the PUD could be exploring this kind of funding for infrastructure. He hopes to see the PUD take action on this. In his role, professionally and personally Ury offered to engage with and assist the PUD staff to navigate the process to secure federal funding.

Daniel Kirkpatrick: Is a Bellingham citizen and is concerned about the climate crisis. He welcomed Grant to the Commission – adding her to the Commission is way for the PUD to move forward and address climate issues. Kirkpatrick helped put together a forum together on how PUDs could play a role in advancing social justice. In putting the forum together, he contacted several within the state. As he spoke to different PUD commissions, most of the PUDs (many of them) are very active/prominent in providing electricity, broadband and water service in their communities. Then come back to Whatcom County PUD who has a very small footprint in terms of our county and the number of clients we serve. Maybe there is serious untapped potential here. He thinks Grant may have the ability to help move the commission as a team to move towards a more expanded role and serving the people of Whatcom County. This is important when the climate changes (forest fires/flooding/drought), it is important for everyone to address the crisis. He hopes the PUD can step up to serve the people and help the entire planet move toward equilibrium. A feasibility study on how the PUD can provide public power or begin expansion process for broadband are ways the PUD can make a huge impact, and looks forward to what the PUD comes up with.

Rick Maricle: Regarding Broadband Service – He would like to remind Commissioners that per RCW 54.16.330, PUDs are not allowed to provide broadband service to *end-users*. From many comments he has heard today, it sounds as though there might be some confusion on that point.

Commissioners thanked all for the comments.

4. Old Business

Jilk suggested reviewing the results of the Officer Elections at the last commission meeting, wanting to make sure that Commissioner Grant agreed with the selection of: Deshmane as Commission President, Murphy as Vice-President, and incoming Commissioner Grant as Secretary. Grant responded she is satisfied with the results as-is.

5. New Business

a) Approve Professional Services Agreement with Digital Boundary Group

In December of 2020, staff contacted Digital Boundary Group (DBG) regarding performing an IT Security Assessment. The objective of the security assessment is to identify and assess any discovered threats and to recommend mitigation strategies and/or compensating controls to reduce or eliminate potential risk.

DBG is an information technology security assurance services firm providing information technology security auditing and compliance assessment services to clients. DBG performs tests as follows to meet the objectives of an IT Security Assessment; external penetration tests, electronic social engineering engagement, and remote network security assessments. Approval of the PSA with DBG will allow staff to develop a scope of work to perform the IT Security Assessment. Walters noted there was a typo on the PSA under Terms: The expiration date of the agreement should be December 31, 2022 (not 2021).

Deshmane asked why change vendors. Siegmund replied that the IT department is very familiar with DBG with cybersecurity training and events, as well as work DBG does with other members of Northwest Public Power Association. Whatcom PUD’s 2021 Annual Budget includes sufficient funds to cover work to be performed by DBG under the PSA.

ACTION: Commissioner Murphy motioned to APPROVE THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH DIGITAL BOUNDARY GROUP WITH TERM CHANGES NOTED FROM 2021 TO 2023, AND AUHORIZE THE GENERAL MANAGER TO EXECUTE THE AGREEMENT. Commissioner Grant second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

b) Select Committee Commissioner Representatives/Staff Alternates for 2021

Each year the Commission acts to approve Commissioners and staff representatives to agencies that the District is a member of to the following agencies (to have representatives designated by the Commission to speak on behalf of the District as appropriate):

Jilk gave a brief description of each position. The Commission as a whole, discussed then recommended District Representatives for 2021 as follows:

Washington Public Utility Districts Association (WPUDA) Representative: Commissioner Murphy (currently 2020 representative), to remain the same for 2021.

WPUDA Committees and respective District Designees selected for 2021:

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Primary Representative</u>	<u>Alternate</u>
Board of Directors	Mike Murphy	Atul Deshmane
Managers Committee	Stephan Jilk	Brian Walters
Government Relations	Atul Deshmane	Christine Grant
Communications Committee	Atul Deshmane	Stephan Jilk
Energy Committee	Christine Grant	Brian Walters
Water Committee	Mike Murphy	Stephan Jilk
Telecom Committee*	Christine Grant	Brian Walters

*Previously, Whatcom PUD did not have representatives on the Telecom Committee.

Whatcom County Economic Development Investment (EDI) Board: Commissioner Grant accepted to represent this position.

Whatcom County Council of Governments (WWCOG) Associate Membership: Commissioner Deshmane will represent the District and General Manager Jilk is the alternate for 2021;

Public Utility Risk Management Services (PURMS) – These positions will remain the same for 2021: (Elected) Representative: Commissioner Deshmane as representative; and Steve Jilk (GM) and Annette Smith (Finance Director) as voting alternates.

Watershed Resource Inventory Area No. 1 (WRIA1) – Appoint WRIA 1 Watershed Management Board Representative and alternate; and appoint WRIA 1 Planning Unit representative and alternate. These positions will remain the same for 2021:

<u>WRIA 1</u>	<u>Primary Representative</u>	<u>Alternate</u>
Watershed Management Board	Atul Deshmane	Stephan Jilk
Planning Unit	Stephan Jilk	Rebecca Schlotterback

*Energy Northwest –*Commissioner Murphy will be District representative in 2021, and designated alternate is Christine Grant.

New: *City of Bellingham Broadband Advisory Committee:* Deshmane said the City of Bellingham recently announced selections for the new committee. When discussed last year at a PUD meeting, Commissioners voted that the Deshmane would be the PUD representative. In a phone call with Mayor Fleetwood last week, Deshmane explained that typically, the PUD approves *who represents the PUD*. Assistant General Manager Brian Walters was selected by the City as PUD representative.

Jilk replied he understood the recommendations were from Mayor Fleetwood and Public Works Director Johnson. He explained there are two different components of the Advisory Board: One committee/list as a “voting member”, and other committee/list, as a “non-voting, ex-officio member/staff with technical expertise to act as a resource to the Advisory Board “voting” members. The latter is the committee in question that Walters was asked to serve on.

Murphy asked for clarification on the advisory committee. Jilk reiterated the two different components (as noted above). Gina Stark and about seven others are also on the “non-voting” committee.

Murphy feels the Port and PUD should both be voting members. In order to get a Commissioner onto the voting board, Jilk recommended the Board pass a motion, designating the individual, then send a letter to Mayor Fleetwood and ask to be appointed as such. The PUD can pass a motion to appoint one of our Commissioners as a voting member; however, it is up to the Mayor and City Council to make the appointment.

Murphy supports what Jilk said and wants to put a PUD representative on the voting committee. All agencies (City, Port, County, etc.) need to all work together. Murphy wanted to make a motion to announce one of the Commissioners should be placed on the voting member committee and asked who should be on the letter as representative.

Deshmane said at the last City Council meeting of 2020, he made a public comment as a private citizen. He asked if there was potential for cross-government involvement. Deshmane supports Commissioner Murphy to request a Commissioner to the voting board but also a non-voting member, and to include *all local governments* regarding broadband policies. He doesn't think there is much more to do at this point and suggested approving the other committee appointments first, then this one last.

Commissioner Grant said she discussed the situation with Jilk and is planning to meet with Mayor Fleetwood soon to learn more about the committee and can update him on today's discussion. Murphy suggested the Commission compose a letter as discussed earlier, that Deshmane be the Commissioner to be appointed to the voting committee, and have Grant hand-deliver it.

Deshmane suggested separating the COB Broadband Advisory Committee discussion its own agenda item to avoid confusion with the usual committee appointments.

Murphy agreed and as he did not hear a second to his motion earlier, it was retracted.

ACTION: Commissioner Murphy motioned to APPOINT DESIGNATED REPRESENTATIVES TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES AS DISCUSSED:

- a) MIKE MURPHY AS DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE FOR WASHINGTON PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICTS ASSOCIATION (WPUDA);
- b) WPUDA COMMITTEES

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:	PRIMARY/MURPHY	ALTERNATE/DESHMANE
MANAGERS COMMITTEE:	PRIMARY/JILK	ALTERNATE/WALTERS
GOVT RELATIONS:	PRIMARY/DESHMANE	ALTERNATE/GRANT
COMMUNICATIONS:	PRIMARY/DESHMANE	ALTERNATE/JILK
ENERGY COMMITTEE:	PRIMARY/GRANT	ALTERNATE/WALTERS
WATER COMMITTEE:	PRIMARY/MURPHY	ALTERNATE/JILK
TELECOM COMMITTEE:	PRIMARY/GRANT	ALTERNATE/WALTERS
- c) CHRISTINE GRANT AS REPRESENTATIVE FOR WHATCOM COUNTY EDI BOARD;
- d) ATUL DESHMANE AS REPRESENTATIVE FOR WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS, STEVE JILK AS ALTERNATE;
- e) ATUL DESHMANE AS REPRESENTATIVE FOR PUBLIC UTILITY RISK MANAGEMENT SERVICES, STEVE JILK/ANNETTE SMITH AS VOTING ALTERNATES;
- f) ATUL DESHMANE AS REPRESENTATIVE FOR WR1A1 WATERSHED MANGEMENT BOARD AND STEVE JILK AS ALTERNATE; STEVE JILK AS REPRESENTATIVE AND REBECCA SCHLOTTERBACK AS ALTERNATE FOR PLANNING UNIT; AND,
- g) MIKE MURPHY AS REPRESENTATIVE FOR ENERGY NORTHWEST, CHRISTINE GRANT AS ALTERNATE.

Commissioner Grant second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

City of Bellingham Broadband Advisory Committee

Commissioner Deshmane asked Murphy to reintroduce discussion of the motion to request appointment on the advisory committee.

ACTION: Commissioner Murphy made the motion REGARDING THE CITY OF BELLINGHAM BROADBAND COMMITTEE, A REQUEST BE MADE THAT THE COMMISSIONER DESHMANE BE PUT ON THE VOTING MEMBERS COMMITTEE. Murphy then asked Sitkin for advice on wording of the motion.

Commissioner Grant suggested tabling this discussion until the next meeting, after she has the opportunity to meet with Mayor Fleetwood and gather more information. Grant can report back and then the Commission can decide how to move forward. She doesn't sense a tremendous amount of emergency for the timing. Jilk agreed on the suggestion and added that her discussion with the Mayor and possibly the Public Works Director on broadband, there is an opportunity to include energy, telecom, and other items between the City, Port and PUD, and if there is interest, this could be an opportunity to broaden the discussion on all the issues.

Deshmane commented that Grant could take the conversations and express the Commissioner's concerns from today's meeting to the Mayor.

Murphy did not realize the members were picked. If not all members are chosen, his urgency is to get the PUD on their agenda and move quickly to express their feelings. Murphy supports Grant on discussing where the PUD is at, and then she can return with feedback.

Grant can convey the information to the Mayor; however, her experience on similar boards is that we have a Commissioner/elected representative as a voting committee member and a staff person as a non-voting committee member. It is important that the PUD have a staff person there as well. Grant doesn't know what the formal process is to do next. Sitkin said that a motion would be appropriate if you are trying to state a collective position. Otherwise, Commissioner Grant can convey the expressions of the Commission.

Timing is a concern. Sitkin said PUD meetings are scheduled the day after a City Council meeting, so there is a risk that our response would be "reactive". The next City Council Meeting is January 25; the PUD's is on the 26th. He said the Commission might want to consider sending the letter ahead of time. Deshmane asked Sitkin to prepare a draft.

Jilk's thought is the PUD's engagement in the City's committee is less about driving the direction of that city's committee, but as more of an opportunity to participate in dialogue about all things broadband, with the City, County and others. Deshmane suggested scheduling a special meeting for the Commission, at our earliest convenience, to discuss the community's telecommunication/broadband infrastructure, and to invite someone from the Port, City and the County, and have the PUD lead the meeting. The Mayor is welcome to attend.

Deshmane proposed to motion A SPECIAL MEETING AT THE EARLIEST CONVENIENCE TO DISCUSS TELECOM AND BROADBAND, WITH NO SPECIFIC AGENDA BESIDES SINGLE TOPIC OF THE COMMUNITY'S BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE.

Grant agrees, and said being engaged with the City of Bellingham's process is important, however, there are other areas with interest such as Blaine, Ferndale, and Sumas; and, not to forget about the rest of Whatcom County. The Commission should take some time to strategize our efforts.

Murphy thinks it is important to get involved on the board quickly, he hopes the City will want to get involved with the PUD, but Murphy is willing to wait. Murphy suggested Deshmane for the voting committee position. He asked what the timing is. Sitkin indicated the next meeting is the 25th, ours is the 26th and it may be possible to get Action on the City Council Agenda for the 25th, possibly, it may happen.

Sitkin suggested the following motion (with the goal of sending it out by the end of the week):

The Commission formally request that the City of Bellingham formally appoint a PUD Commissioner on the Broadband Advisory Committee;

- (1) That Commissioner ___(name)___ will be the designated PUD Representative; and,
- (2) Staff prepare a letter to the Mayor and Council expressing reasons for this request to be signed by Commission President.

Commissioner Murphy motioned for COMMISSIONER DESHMANE TO BE THE PUD REPRESENTATIVE. Commissioner Grant second the motion.

Deshmane then asked Grant if she wanted to be considered as a primary representative on that committee. Grant said she thinks would be similar efforts going on with the county or smaller cities like Ferndale, Blaine and Sumas. She suggested learning from experience and passing it along to benefit Whatcom County. She would like to engage and attend but has concerns about the Open Public Meetings Act. Sitkin then explained the OPMA and difference between attending a WPUDA meeting vs. a City Council/other type meeting of meeting. It is a gray area but in urging transparency and caution, simply do not attend the same meeting. In other meetings in which she participates that are presumably open to the public, to be very vigilante as it becomes a violation if she interacts. Do not participate; if Deshmane is on the board and voting.

Murphy asked why Grant couldn't be the non-voting member committee because of her expertise. Sitkin said once both are on the committee, voting or not voting, and deliberations begin between the two Commissioners, it becomes a Special Meeting. If both Commissioners were on the Advisory Board, they

are both considered “meeting members” it would be considered a Special Meeting. If Grant were simply in attendance to “receive” information, it would not be considered as a Special Meeting. Both can be appointed to the Board; however, it becomes a Special Meeting when two or more Commissioners attend.

Jilk suggested returning to the motion. Sitkin repeated the motion:

- (1) Make the request to the Council that the PUD Commission have a voting member from the Commission on the Bellingham Broadband Advisory Committee;
- (2) That Commissioner (Deshmane) will be the designated PUD Representative; and,
- (3) Staff prepare a letter to the Mayor and Council expressing rationales for this request, focusing on the countywide issue, to be signed by Commission President.
(and mailed by end of week)

A discussion of an Amendment to the motion would be to ask to add a non-voting member to the committee (Commissioner Grant); then each meeting would be a Special Commission Meeting.

Deshmane asked Jilk about retracting the original motion, and for his comments. Jilk replied that if every single meeting they both attend, it would become a Special Meeting, and technically, the Commission President would have to call the meeting to order “inside” another entity’s meeting. Deshmane said it is a situation that many other entities have and certainly, there are ways to address it. Sitkin added logistically, the City would have to send the Zoom invite, that the meeting is recorded and paralleled/synced with the PUD Special Meeting and to work with the chair of the advisory board. It could be complicated administration-wise – just alerting the Commission of all the technical aspects.

Murphy is ready to move forward and because of potential complications, to *not* appoint Grant as a non-voting member, and questions the motion on the table and can we go back to the original motion made, to request a representation from the PUD Board of Commissioners. Sitkin again summarized the motion.

Grant thought the Commissioners also wanted Walters to be the non-voting member; Murphy said Walters was already appointed by the Council. Grant suggested that Brian Walters be the PUD Representative as the non-voting committee member instead of herself (which was part of the earlier discussion). Grant asked that it be included in the motion.

ACTION: The motion was made to: (1) MAKE THE REQUEST TO THE COUNCIL THAT THE PUD COMMISSION HAVE A VOTING MEMBER FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE BELLINGHAM BROADBAND ADVISORY COMMITTEE; (2) THAT COMMISSIONER DESHMANE BE THE DESIGNATED PUD REPRESENTATIVE; AND, (3) STAFF PREPARE A LETTER TO THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL EXPRESSING RATIONALES FOR THIS REQUEST, FOCUSING ON THE COUNTYWIDE ISSUE, TO BE SIGNED BY COMMISSION PRESIDENT.

Commissioners Murphy and Grant agreed to accept as a friendly amendment to the motion that Walters remain on the non-voting member committee. As such, Grant second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Follow up: Deshmane asked Jilk for his comments. Jilk reiterated what he said earlier, that the action of going to the mayor is a strong order of interest for the PUD to be involved in the broader discussion of broadband in the county. In talking with the mayor, hopefully he will support this decision and is the door of opportunity for the Port, PUD and others to work collectively.

Deshmane urged the Commission to schedule a Special Meeting to discuss broadband policy, as soon as possible. Jilk suggested waiting until the second meeting in February. Deshmane said that is too late. Grant’s meeting with the Mayor is the 15th. Deshmane proposed next Tuesday at 8:00 a.m. Jilk is concerned that there is no direction on how the Commission wants to proceed. Deshmane wants to focus on the Commissioners’ discussion and include someone from the Port, in order to get the Commission on the same page. No decisions would be made, just a discussion.

Sitkin indicated that with the holiday weekend coming up, there is not much time for staff to prepare structure and information for the Special Meeting. He encouraged Deshmane provide information staff to help guide the discussion. Deshmane said there is no pre-work except setting up the Zoom link and providing meeting notice. Grant agreed there is a lot for the Commissioners to share as far as the direction of moving forward and is in support of having the Special Meeting. Jilk clarified: It will be a public meeting, but considered a work session so no public comments will be taken. It will be a dialogue amongst Commissioners to share thoughts/ideas/experiences and come out of the meeting not with specific decisions, but a sense of direction for the Commission and staff as to what the next step will be.

ACTION: Commissioner Grant motioned to HOLD A SPECIAL MEETING ON JANUARY 19, 2021 at 8:00 A.M. FOR THE PURPOSE OF HAVING A WORK SESSION ON BROADBAND. Commissioner Murphy second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

6. General Manager’s Report

No report due to time constraints of upcoming Executive Session.

7. Commissioner Reports

Murphy: No report due to time constraints of upcoming Executive Session.

Grant: Introduced herself and said it is an honor for her to be serving as a Commissioner. She shared a photograph of her taking the oath of office alongside her four-year-old daughter. She has spent most of her career in a range of different organizations and teaches energy policy at WWU. During her campaign it was clear to her that so many people in the community need help with broadband, and to help the PUD tee up for a win-win situation with clean air and clean water, investing in infrastructure that align with our environmental values that attracts jobs and industry. She pledges to work hard to make and thanked Steve, staff and the other Commissioners for the warm welcome.

Deshmane: Noted the WPUDA January Committees meetings, which include new commissioner training, are this week.

8. Public Comment

None made.

9. Executive Session

Commission President Deshmane requested an Executive Session pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1) (i) to discuss potential litigation. The estimated time for Executive Session was forty minutes. The Commission President indicated that no action was anticipated be taken after the adjournment of the Executive Session. Following a five-minute recess, the Commission adjourned to Executive Session at 10:50 a.m.

- The Commission held Executive Session on a separate Zoom webinar platform for privacy, security matters and Open Public Meeting Act requirements.
- At 11:30 a.m., an additional twenty minutes was requested.

Executive Session Adjourn

There being no further business for Executive Session, the Commission rejoined the Special Commission Meeting webinar platform at 11:55 a.m.

10. Adjourn

There being no further business for the meeting, Commissioner Deshmane adjourned the regular meeting at 11:58 a.m.

ACTION: Commissioner Murphy motioned to ADJOURN THE REGULAR MEETING AT 11:58 A.M. Commissioner Grant second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Atul Deshmane, President

Michael Murphy, Vice President

Christine Grant, Secretary

APPROVED: JANUARY 26, 2021