

**MINUTES OF REGULAR  
MEETING OF THE COMMISSION**

**March 9, 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 8:01 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, and Legal Counsel Jon Sitkin. 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; Alec Strand, Project Manager; Devin Crabtree, Chief Water Operator; Jon Littlefield, Electric System Supervisor; and, Traci Irvine Accountant I.

**Public attending via teleconference:**

Anna Berg, Jeff Fuller and Todd O’Keefe – The Energy Authority  
Darrell Gray, Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association  
Dave Olson, Cornerstone Management, Inc.  
Curt Schoenfelder, Wilson Engineering  
Willow Cook, Kiki Huntington, Emma Ledsham, Jacob Roman and  
Nick Thomas – WWU Technical Writing Class Students  
Carryn Vande Griend, PSE  
Lauren Turner, Phillips 66  
Rick Maricle, Citizen  
Eric Alm, Citizen  
Josh Edward, Citizen  
Max and Carol Perry, Citizens

**2. Approval of Agenda**

**ACTION:** Commissioner Murphy motioned to APPROVE THE AGENDA OF MARCH 9, 2021. Commissioner Grant second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

**3. Approval of Consent Agenda**

**ACTION:** Commissioner Murphy motioned to APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA OF MARCH 9, 2021: THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF FEBRUARY 26, 2021 AND CLAIMS OF MARCH 9, 2021. Commissioner Grant second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Claims of March 9, 2021:

<b>VENDOR NAME</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
ARBITRAGE GROUP INC.	750.00
ASPECT CONSULTING LLC	5,216.25
BELLINGHAM HERALD	581.25
CARPENTER CABLE SERVICES INC	1,304.40
CENTRAL WELDING SUPPLY	81.75
CESCO NEW CONCEPT CHEMICAL PRODUCTS	157.08
CHMELIK SITKIN & DAVIS	11,088.00
CORNERSTONE MANAGEMENT, INC.	806.25
EDGE ANALYTICAL LABORATORIES	20.00
FERNDALE ACE HARDWARE	15.21
FERNDALE CITY OF	12,822.91
HEALTH PROMOTIONS NORTHWEST	90.00
HOMeward DESIGNS, LLC	1,317.50
INDUSTRIAL SUPPLY, INC	124.30
IVOXY CONSULTING LLC	8,800.00
MASSMUTUAL RETIREMENT SVCS LLC	10,999.99
MILLS ELECTRIC	2,807.01
MOODY'S INVESTORS SERVICE, INC.	25,000.00
MORTIMER, TOM	541.50
NORTHWEST FIBER DBA ZIPLY FIBER	1,403.98
NORTHWEST MOWING & GARDENING	540.26
NP INFORMATION SYSTEMS (3-D CORP)	252.18
NW INTERGOV'L ENERGY SUPPLY COOPERATIVE	12,787.00
PACIFIC SURVEY & ENGINEERING	10,686.00
PACIFIC UNDERWRITERS CORP INC	399.26

PITNEY BOWES GLOBAL FINANCIAL SERVICES LLC	150.90
PLATT ELECTRIC SUPPLY CO	13.10
PUD #1 OF WHATCOM COUNTY	2,494.95
PUGET SOUND ENERGY, INC	5,331.48
REGENCE BLUE SHIELD	40,980.42
REISNER DISTRIBUTION, INC	1,125.63
RICOH USA	184.58
S&P GLOBAL PLATTS	2,864.40
SHRED-IT USA	44.66
SSC - SANITARY SERVICE COMPANY	513.28
TEAMSTER LOCAL #231	528.00
TYLER TECHNOLOGIES-INCODE	488.94
UNITED WAY OF WHATCOM COUNTY	495.00
UTILITIES UNDERGROUND LOCATION	23.22
VERIZON WIRELESS	1,883.32
WA ST DEPT TRANSP-NW REGION	213.55
WASHINGTON DENTAL SERVICE	2,779.10
WASHINGTON TEAMSTERS WELFARE	12,029.15
WATERHOUSE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES CORP	37,782.72
WHATCOM COUNTY TREASURER	702.09
WHATCOM JANITORIAL	1,250.00
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$220,470.57</b>

**4. Old Business**

**a) The Energy Authority – Presentation No. 2**

This is the second workshop and slide presentation by The Energy Authority. Today’s presentation will focus on policies, which the Commission will need to consider that will support the District’s efforts to acquire new energy resources and manage a diverse power supply portfolio that includes both federal and non-federal power supply from a variety of generating sources. Such policies include contract and pricing risks, counterparty credit worthiness, resource portfolio rate structures. Also discussed was District staffing and third parties services required for both the resource acquisition and portfolio management phases.

**ACTION:** No action requested or taken. Information only.

**5. a) Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association Presentation**

**Background:** The Commission has approved funding requests from The Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association (NSEA) since 2010. The funding supported the Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) Crew work on habitat restoration on various streams throughout Whatcom County and Nooksack tributaries. From 2010 to 2019, the Commission has continued to provide funds to support the request from NSEA. There were no funding requests in 2011 and 2020.

For 2021, NSEA is requesting funding to provide project oversight, acquire restoration materials such as plants, vole and beaver protection, and large woody debris for salmon habitat restoration of lowland streams. The work will be performed again by the Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) Crew and managed by NSEA staff. A minimum of 20 salmon habitat restorations projects will be implemented on WRIA 1 lowland streams. NSEA provides a project report to the Commission at the completion of the project.

Darrell Gray, Project Manager of NSEA presented highlights from past work funded by the Whatcom PUD. Whatcom PUD has had no other requests to support habitat restoration other than NSEA’s request for 2021. Funding has been allocated in the 2021 budget for this purpose.

NSEA will follow up with a report and/or presentation of the projects accomplished. The Commissioners thanked Gray for the update and information.

**ACTION:** Commissioner Murphy motioned to APPROVE FUNDING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$20,000.00 FOR NOOKSACK SALMON ENHANCEMENT ASSOCIATION TO SUPPORT WASHINGTON CONSERVATION CORPS CREW WORK ON HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECTS FOR 2021. Commissioner Grant second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Clerk Note: Prior to the next presentation, the Commission recessed for a seven-minute break at 10:53 a.m.

**b) Western Washington University Students – Social Media Presentation**

Background: Students from Western Washington University’s Professional and Technical Writing Class recently approached the District on creating a social media plan using one or more of several different platforms. On February 5, students met via Zoom with Commissioner Grant, General Manager Jilk and Ann Grimm to review their ideas and suggestions on how Whatcom PUD could move forward with a social media plan.

Working in collaboration, the group has benchmarked and did external research on different PUD websites and social media outlets, and presented their results. The students' main recommendation was to go with Facebook, who can reach younger and middle-aged adults and seniors. Instagram was also highly recommended as it is connected with Facebook and can duplicate posts.

The students will provide deliverables including a social media guide, posting calendar and in-depth job description for the social media intern. Commissioner Grant thanked the students for their work and background information on other PUD's social media sites.

**ACTION:** No action requested or taken. Information only.

### c) Water System Plan Update

The District is required to update its Water System Plan to meet Washington State Department of Health (DOH) requirements. The District has contracted with Dave Olson to assist the District in this update. Mr. Olson has also contracted with Wilson Engineering to assist, has worked with legal counsel Tom Mortimer, and our staff in this process.

Olson and Wilson Engineering staff provided a presentation as an update to the process and provide a list of subsequent steps that our consultants will be completing, along with decisions the Commission will be asked to make in order to complete the update and get DOH approval by October of this year.

The **purpose** of the plan is to:

- Identify the PUD's potable water service areas, existing systems, service policies, future needs, and related issues, in a manner consistent with the Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan, WAC 246-290, and other applicable local, state and federal laws
- Non-potable Industrial Water Supply System activities of the PUD are not included as an integral part of this WSP. This approach was selected to provide clarity as to which facilities and operations are under the public water system (DOH) regulatory framework

### Requirements:

- Water systems within a Critical Water Supply Service Area are required to complete a WSP under the Public Water System Coordinate Act of 1977. Upon approval by DOH, this plan update will become a part of the Whatcom County Coordinated Water System Plan (CWSP)
- Water System Plan (WSP) must be updated and submitted to the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) at least every ten years in accordance with the regulatory requirements contained in WAC 246-290-100

### Process:

- Consultants were engaged 2020: WAC 246-290-040 requires a licensed P.E to prepare and submit the WSP. Some elements are best developed by PUD staff and consultants while others plan elements must be completed by a P.E. such as the hydraulic analysis for example
- A preplan meeting was held with DOH Regional Planners to establish content needed for approval
- A draft WSP is being prepared for staff and commissioner review
- PUD will hold a WSP public informational meetings to receive public comment
- Adjacent utilities and local agencies will be engaged at various levels for input
- A Water Use Efficiency Goals (WUE) public forum will be held followed by adoption of WUE Goals
- The WSP will be adopted and then submitted to Whatcom County for a consistency review
- The WSP will be submitted to DOH for approval
- DOH will forward a copy to Ecology for review and comment
- Upon approval by DOH the PUD Commissioners will adopt the final WSP

### Next Steps:

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|-------------|--|
| April 2021  | Update draft WSP after Healthy Pet non-potable demand is off the potable system<br>Commissioners and staff internal review of draft WSP  |
| Spring 2021 | Public Forum to introduce Water System Plan<br>Public Forum on service areas followed by adoption of amended service areas<br>Public Forum on Water Use Efficiency followed by WUE goal setting<br>Adoption of Cross Connection Control Program<br>Adoption of Water System Plan for submittal to WSDOH and Whatcom County |
| Fall 2021   | Adopt Final Water System Plan following WSDOH approval   |

**ACTION:** No action requested or taken. Information only.

## 6. General Manager's Report

Looking at the Minutes of Commission Meetings through this year's meeting, Commissioner Grant and Jilk recommend to abbreviate and limit the Minutes more to action items. Recently some of the Minutes were several, up to 19, pages long. Because we are now recording our meetings on Zoom and potentially the same in the future, all meeting details can be accessed there. Sitkin said that would be appropriate as

long as there is a reference to the Zoom recording in the Meeting Minutes.

Jilk received an action alert from WPUDA during the meeting this morning indicating they are expecting a vote in the Senate Committee on SB 1336, this Thursday. WPUDA is asking PUDs to contact their local Senators to voice their support.

#### **7. Get-to-Know You**

This is an opportunity for staff members to introduce themselves to the Commission. This week, Annette Smith introduced herself with a brief description of her tenure (15 years this fall) at the PUD. Dave Olson shared his background in working with staff and the Commission for about the last 20 years.

#### **8. Commissioner Reports**

Murphy – no report.

Grant – Seth Vidana (City of Bellingham) has asked for a second meeting with Walters, Jilk and Grant to discuss possible roles of the PUD as the City talks about their climate goals. She had a call with George Caan (WPUDA) to discuss telecom bills. They are still trying to push SB 1336 but also want to work with Senator Wellman with SB5383.

Deshmane – Is planning to attend a PPC event on power supply and the Simpson Proposal (removing Snake River dams) and providing an update on finding a new General Manager for the PUD. Deshmane plans to take on the process in four steps: (1) Identify a consultant to support Commission of identifying a GM (2) Work with Commission to define a detailed position description; (3) Identify where we should seek recruitment for the position; (4) Process of evaluating candidates. He wants to start the process now and plans to oversee the process on behalf of the Commission to search and identify a consultant. He would like to have a “GM Recruitment Update” at each future Commission meeting. Murphy agrees with the steps and hiring a consultant, but unsure if Deshmane is referring to seeking candidates in-state or out-of-state. Grant agrees and hopes that they will find a facilitator on which the Commission all agrees with. Deshmane plans a transparent process showing major milestones in finding a consultant. Murphy also commented on the length of our Commission meetings and the need to focus on the most important items. Five hours is too long and people begin to lose focus.

#### **9. Public Comment**

Eric Alm, representing a small community of Stuart Mountain and the Y Road, wants to emphasize that the PUD is a great hope for him to get his neighborhood connected to broadband. He would like to see a local network from a provider. Wave Communications has stopped returning his calls. Alm is frustrated with the private internet provider(s) and thinks the PUD can be a potential to serve and work with other entities to bring connections out to underserved areas.

Max Perry is recommending the PUD goes back to public (in-person) meetings as soon as possible. Due to technical difficulties, we could not clearly receive Mr. Perry’s comments

#### **Adjourn**

There being no further business for the meeting, Commissioner Deshmane adjourned the regular meeting at 1:04 p.m.

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Atul Deshmane, President

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Michael Murphy, Vice President

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Christine Grant, Secretary

**Commission Clerk Note:** Video recordings of the Whatcom PUD Commission Meetings are available online at the following link on the PUD’s Website: <https://www.pudwhatcom.org/the-commission/2021-agendas-packets-meeting-minutes-recordings/>

**APPROVED: 23 MARCH 2021**