

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL
MEETING OF THE COMMISSION**

July 6, 2021

1. Call to Order | Pledge of Allegiance

The special meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Public Utility District No. 1 of Whatcom County was called to order at 9:01 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 and teleconference included Commissioner Mike Murphy, Commissioner Christine Grant, Commissioner Atul Deshmane, and Legal Counsel Jon Sitkin. Staff attending via teleconference/Zoom: 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; Paul Siegmund, Manager of Automation and Technology; Aaron Peterson, IT/SCADA Technician; Duane Holden, Director of Utility Operations; and, Traci Irvine Accountant I.

Public attending via teleconference/Zoom:

Jack Wellman, Puget Sound Energy Carryn Vande Griend, Puget Sound Energy
Lauren Turner, Phillips 66 RB Tewksbury, Citizen

2. Work Session on Strategic Plan Update

Deshmane welcomed all and announced the special meeting agenda: To discuss the general manager's appointment/recruitment profile, job description and reviewing initiatives and goals of the current Strategic Plan. Because this is a work session, no public comments or action will be taken.

Jim Darling of Leeward Strategies facilitated today's discussion. Highlights included:

Strategic Assessment 2021

Goal – Successfully navigate the transition to a new General Manager

Achieving Alignment: Governance and Management (the key to success)

The Promise of Strategic Alignment: Developing true alignment on multi-year priorities and effectively *embracing* (understanding what it means in terms of resources and commitment) them, links the present to the future.

Governance and Management

The intent of the reviewing the **Initiatives 2021** look at the past, historic mission and to the future of the PUD. This is a re-commitment to past and future work without going into a full-depth strategic planning effort.

The Commission and Commissioner – Role(s) in the Organization

- Set the Vision;
- Adopt Policies/Procedures;
- Seek policies, financial and technical recommendations from the General Manager;
- Allocate resources;
- Represent the PUD in a variety of forums;
- Embrace and protect the organization's culture (set the tone).

The Commissioner – Profile

- Select Commission officers: President and Secretary;
- Adopt rules governing the transaction of district business;
- Approve the strategic direction of the PUD;
- Select and oversee the General Manager, including periodic performance evaluations;
- Adopt an annual budget and approve property tax levy, if any;
- Receive and respond to public input;
- Approve capital projects; equipment acquisition, borrowings, customer utility rates; agreements and contracts;
- Represent the PUD in the industry and community in concert with the General Manager.

Practical advice for the Commission:

Follow through on all commitments.

Own the Commission's priorities established as a body of the whole.

Communicate effectively both internally and externally.

Understand the issues and seek input from within and without the PUD.

Stick to governance, let the management team manage.

General Manager Profile

The GM executes the direction of the Commission when they act as 'a body of the whole', makes policy, financial, and technical recommendations to the Commission, represents the PUD in a variety of forums, oversees staff, operational systems, and facilities, and administer contracts and agreements, etc.

Initiatives 2021

- Captured the ones that have support
- Need to affirm that support and sense of urgency
- Gauge the capacity of PUD to pursue (People-Financial)
- Assign initiative lead

The initiatives were reviewed and timeframes were discussed on moving forward, whether it be ongoing, immediate, or early, mid or late 2022 as outlined for the future. (Note there is no particular order.)

1. Re-affirm the PUD's commitment to its industrial customer base.
2. Explore new energy technologies-Explore hosting an alternative energy conference.
3. Re-evaluate the PUD's role in the local water rights effort.
4. Re-affirm the PUD's commitment to provide technical support to water associations.
5. Pursue a pilot project (with Ecology and other partners) to demonstrate the feasibility of providing piped water or other water sources to the agricultural community;
6. Explore the PUD's capacity and ability to advance 'green' industry at Cherry Point;
7. Adopt and support a vision of making broadband available to every underserved area of Whatcom County, agree on go forward strategy;
8. Position the PUD to be a reliable community resource for water, power and broadband connectivity issues and education.

Other recommendations:

1. Schedule routine Commission updates by staff on key topics;
2. "PUD Community Contribution Assessment 2022";
Undertake a baseline study to determine the PUD's contribution to the local community, environment and economy.
3. Update Strategic Plan 2025 in 2022.

General Manager Profile

The second part of the work session discussed and defined new parameters for the General Manager's job description/profile to be used for the recruitment process. Highlights included:

Background & Experience

Skills

Selection Process:

- Publish *Initiatives 2021* by August 1;
- Need to begin recruitment by August 1;
- To be completed by Dec 31 (agree on a successful candidate);
- Early 2022 start date for new GM;
- Include a panel or reception with staff and individual candidates.

Discussion of a compensation package is forthcoming.

Next Steps:

Darling will summarize the *Initiatives 2021* for review at the next Commission meeting and the GM Job Description Profile should be ready at the July 27 Commission meeting.

3. Adjourn

There being no further business for the meeting, Commissioner Deshmane adjourned the special meeting at 1:14 p.m.

Atul Deshmane, President

Michael Murphy, Vice President

Christine Grant, Secretary

APPROVED: JULY 27, 2021

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/>