

Minutes of
PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT NO. 1 OF PEND OREILLE COUNTY
February 1, 2022
VIRTUAL VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Present: Curtis J. Knapp, President
Richard A. Larson, Vice President
Joseph B. Onley, Secretary

Staff Present: F. Colin Willenbrock, General Manager
Management/District Staff
Tyler Whitney, General Counsel & Assistant General Manager
Karen Willner, Clerk of the Board

Others: Gretchen Koenig, Member of the Public
Sonya Scauftaire, Selkirk Sun

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Curtis J. Knapp, President.

A roll call was taken.

CONSENT AGENDA:

The minutes from the January 18, 2022 meeting, the January 24, 2022 special meeting, today's agenda, and the vouchers were reviewed.

As of this date, February 1, 2022, the Board, upon motion by Commissioner Larson and seconded by Commissioner Onley approved the following:

- The agenda for February 1, 2022, the amended minutes of the January 18, 2022 meeting, and the amended minutes of the January 24, 2022 special meeting.
- Vouchers audited certified by the auditing officer as required by RCW 42.24.080, and those expense reimbursement claims certified by RCW 42.24.090, have been recorded on a listing, which has been made available to the Board. Payment of those vouchers, included in the list referred to above and further described as follows: Voucher Nos. 6538 through 6597 in the total amount of \$333,862.32; ACH payments in the total amount of \$687,463.48; Wire Transfers in the total amount of \$1,279,124.49; and ACH payroll transactions in the total amount of \$214,071.16 for the payroll ending January 15, 2022.

The motion passed unanimously.

BOARD WORKSHOP:

Commissioner Knapp asked if the commissioners had any topics for discussion. The commissioners did not have any topics for discussion.

Colin Willenbrock, District General Manager attended a Northwest Public Power Association Wildfire Conference on January 19 in Seattle and reported good lessons were learned. He provided an overview of SB 5803. Discussion was held regarding liability insurance coverage, which is limited and more expensive, through the Public Utility Risk Management Services.

He reported we continue to work on the Northwest Open Access Network (NoaNet) and Zipl evaluation proposals for a partnership of getting more fiber in the county.

He reported we are at the end of our year-end employee job performance evaluation process. Once completed with this process, we plan on having an April workshop with the Board regarding Strategic Plan progress.

He provided an update on our discussions with Ponderay Industries/Allrise. The Allrise discussions are going well and we are working on the energy agreements. Discussion was held regarding the agreement, loads, and the cost of the BPA study.

SAFETY SPOTLIGHT:

Adam Wiltse, District Safety Manager provided a COVID-19 update. The Northeast Tri-County Health District updated its decision tree for time to quarantine and isolate from ten to five days in some cases. He provided an overview of the new decision tree. Commissioner Onley inquired about the status of employees working from home. Mr. Willenbrock reported we still have some employees working from home and are allowing certain employees who are quarantining to work from home.

CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT:

Sarah Holderman, District Director, Treasury, Broadband & Strategic Planning reported today is the day for customers to apply for energy assistance appointments with Rural Resources. They can apply online to schedule an appointment. Customers have six days in total to apply for appointments, three dates to apply for appointments online and three dates to apply for appointments via phone.

She reported we have 14 solar customers and in the past two months have received five new applications. Discussion was held on how solar meters and incentive payments work.

COMMISSION REPORT:

Commissioner Knapp attended virtual Energy Northwest meetings on January 25 – 27, met with the Pend Oreille County Commissioners on January 25, met with Don Gronning, Newport Miner on January 28, and talked with customers regarding various topics throughout the week.

Commissioner Larson attended a virtual Tri-County Economic Development District (TEDD) meeting on January 26 where topics included a Department of Retirement Services retirement review, childcare, and a Stevens County and Spokane County Broadband Action Team discussion regarding broadband and broadband grants.

Commissioner Onley had a phone call from Robert Rosencrantz, Pend Oreille County Commissioner. Commissioner Knapp reported Commissioner Rosencrantz had reached out to him to attend the County's meeting and that he was only there as a participant and not on behalf of the District. Commissioner Larson commented that it is good to have and keep the lines of communication open.

COMMISSION BUSINESS:

- Pre-Approval of Commissioner Travel or Meeting Attendance for March.
Commissioner Knapp will attend the virtual PUD Board meetings on March 1, 15 and 29, the virtual Washington Public Utility Districts Association (WPUDA) meetings on March 16 – 18 and the Energy Northwest meetings on March 23 - 24, either as in-person or virtual. Commissioner Larson will attend the virtual PUD Board meetings on March 1, 15 and 29, a virtual North Pend Oreille Chamber of Commerce meeting on March 7, a virtual NoaNet Board meeting on March 9, a virtual Broadband Action Team (BAT) meeting on March 10, the virtual WPUDA meetings on March 17, and a virtual TEDD meeting on March 23. He noted the Friday WPUDA Board of Directors meeting and that all commissioners are able to attend but only one commissioner should receive per diem. Commissioner Onley will attend the virtual PUD Board meetings on March 1, 15 and 29, a virtual Greater Newport Area Chamber of Commerce meeting on March 1 and the virtual WPUDA meetings on March 16 – 18.

Discussion was held regarding the Friday WPUDA Board of Directors meetings. Commissioner Larson does not believe the District can justify having more than one commissioner get paid per diem for attending. Commissioner Onley had no comment.

Commissioner Knapp asked if the Board is ok with rotating attendance. Commissioner Onley is fine with that and commented that he finds the meeting interesting.

Discussion was held on having a townhall meeting in the spring. Commissioner Knapp asked if anyone had a north county meeting date and suggested an April in-person meeting, depending on the COVID situation. Mr. Willenbrock suggested a July mid-county townhall meeting where we could host both the north and south ends. More discussion will be held at the February 15 meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner Onley and seconded by Commissioner Larson to approve the commissioner travel or meeting attendance for March as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Following a 9-minute recess, the meeting resumed.

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Commissioner Knapp asked if there was any business from the public.

Gretchen Koenig, member of the public, commented that she has trouble joining the meetings using Microsoft Teams and suggested using Zoom where she has no trouble in joining the meetings. She endorsed having a townhall meeting in mid-county and suggested having it at the Kalispel Tribe of Indians Camas Wellness Center. She asked for clarification on the Allrise power service agreements. Discussion was held. Commissioner Knapp thanked Ms. Koenig and the other members of the public for attending and commenting.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Damage Claim DC-215157. Based on staff recommendation, a motion was made by Commissioner Onley and seconded by Commissioner Larson to deny the damage claim in the total amount of \$2,810.60. The motion passed unanimously. Staff will proceed as appropriate.
- Resolution No. 1459 – Appointing Agent for Damage Claims. Tyler Whitney, District General Counsel & Assistant General Manager reported that local governments are required to have an agent to receive tort claims. He reported that April Owen, District Director, Audit, Finance & Power Supply was previously appointed and he thanked her for her service. He reported Amber Gifford, District Communications, Contracts & Conservation Manager is now being appointed. He explained damage claims and the process for handling such claims. He noted the action item below addresses our process. A motion was made by Commissioner Larson and seconded by Commissioner Onley to adopt the resolution. The motion passed unanimously.
- Damage Claim Policy. Mr. Whitney reported our process has been to follow state law and this policy formalizes this process. The policy gives information to the claimant on how to file a claim with the District. The damage claim form will start with Ms. Gifford, then it will go to him for an initial review. It will then be initially investigated by the department manager and then the Risk Committee will review and if over \$25,000 will provide its recommendation to the Board. A motion was made by Commissioner Onley and seconded by Commissioner Larson to approve the new policy. The motion passed unanimously. Commissioner Knapp noted his appreciation of staff for bringing this policy and other policies before the Board.

Commissioner Larson reported the February WPUDA meetings were previously scheduled to be held in-person but are now virtual and asked who would be covering the meetings. Commissioner Knapp will be there for all three days. Commissioner Larson will cover the meetings on February 17. Commissioner Onley will attend the meetings on February 16 and 17 and not the 18.

Commissioner Knapp announced a 90-minute executive session on pending and/or potential litigation to begin at 10:25 a.m. with Tyler Whitney, General Counsel and Colin Willenbrock, General Manager present. If the executive session needs to be extended, he will rejoin this open session to publicly announce an extension. Following the executive session he and/or the Board will rejoin the open session to take any action or to adjourn the meeting. No action will be taken during the executive session. The next meeting is on February 15, being held virtually via Microsoft Teams.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – PENDING AND/OR POTENTIAL LITIGATION:

A 90-minute executive session on pending and/or potential litigation commenced at 10:25 a.m. The following were in attendance: Board of Commissioners; Colin Willenbrock, General Manager; and Tyler Whitney, General Counsel & Assistant General Manager. The executive session adjourned at 11:45 a.m. The Board returned to open session. No final action was taken.

Commissioner Knapp reported the next meeting is February 15, via Microsoft Teams.

There being no further discussion to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 11:46 a.m.

President

ATTEST:

Secretary

General Counsel
Approved as to Form