

Minutes of  
PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT NO. 1 OF PEND OREILLE COUNTY  
June 4, 2024  
NEWPORT CONFERENCE ROOM, NEWPORT, WA AND  
VIRTUAL VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS

Present: Joseph B. Onley, President  
David W. Rick, Vice President  
Curtis J. Knapp, Secretary

Staff Present: April Owen, Acting General Manager  
Management/District Staff  
Karen Willner, Clerk of the Board

Absent: John Janney, General Manager

Others: Gretchen Koenig, Member of the Public

The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Joseph B. Onley, President.

**BOARD WORKSHOP:**

Discussion was held regarding the Seattle City Light (SCL) Fish Hatchery Open House/Tour, Premera insurance, and a customer's experience using a generator during yesterday's outage.

Commissioner Onley commended Chris Jones, District Director of Operations, and his crew for their quick response in getting the power restored. Mr. Jones reported power was restored to all customers yesterday afternoon. The Communication Network System (CNS) telecommunications technicians are working on getting broken fiber collars replaced.

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:**

The minutes from the May 21, 2024 meeting, today's agenda, and the vouchers were reviewed.

As of this date, June 4, 2024, the Board, upon motion by Commissioner Knapp and seconded by Commissioner Rick approved the following:

- The agenda for June 4, 2024 meeting, and the minutes of the May 21, 2024 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. 9381 through 9414 in the total amount of \$50,871.55; ACH payments in the total amount of \$62,662.70; Wire transfers in the total amount of \$529,237.77; and ACH payroll transactions in the total amount of \$270,984.68 for the payroll ending May 15, 2024.

The motion passed unanimously.

**SAFETY SPOTLIGHT:**

Suzie Wrbelis, District Director of Human Resources, reported Adam Wiltse, District Safety Manager, is working with the Safety Management Group on District safety gap assessments.

**CUSTOMER SPOTLIGHT:**

Shannon Johnston, District Communications & Utility Services Coordinator, shared a Cusick School District Career Day slideshow. She thanked Bryant Kramer, District Director of Power Production; Ben Huntley, District Serviceman; and Suzie Wrbelis, District Director of Human Resources for providing a job demonstration at the Cusick High School and for arranging the event. She thanked Patrick Barley, District Lead Telecommunications Technician; Riley Bauer, District Telecommunications Technician; and Brad Scott, District Telecommunications Technician, for providing a job demonstration at the Cusick Elementary School.

Mr. Kramer provided an overview of the skilled trades demonstration and commended Mr. Huntley for giving the demonstration and talking with the students.

Ms. Johnston provided an overview of the CNS portion of the Cusick Elementary School Career Day.

Commissioner Onley thanked Ms. Johnston and Mr. Kramer for providing a presentation and information.

#### 4/10 WORK SCHEDULE DISCUSSION:

Ms. Wrbelis reviewed the proposed 4/10 work schedule and the public process. She reported ads were placed in the Newport Miner and Selkirk Sun, fliers were posted at the District, and information was posted on Facebook, on our website, on customer bills, and in the Customer Connect newsletter. We received six comments (both negative and positive) that included a request for a reduction in their utility bill and outage coverage concerns. Discussion was held regarding a proposed 30-minute versus 60-minute lunch time (the District will remain open during lunch) and following up with public members who had specific questions and/or concerns.

Ms. Wrbelis reported staff will provide its final recommendation with consideration of all public comments to the Board for their approval at the June 18 meeting.

#### UNIT OVERSPEEDS LOOKING FORWARD:

Mr. Kramer reported he was asked to be a presenter on hydro power and dams at the Northwest Hydroelectric Association (NWhA) Conference.

Mr. Kramer shared a presentation and provided an overview of Box Canyon's unit 4 overspeed event, and the steps the District took in stopping the unit. He expressed his gratitude for our crews for their quick actions and response. He reviewed the actions that occurred following the event, the root cause analysis results, the mechanical and electrical inspections process, and recommendations given to the District.

Commissioner Onley thanked Mr. Kramer for his presentation and information and congratulated him on being asked to be a presenter.

Mr. Kramer attended a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Albeni Falls Dam Public Meeting on May 31 at the Camas Wellness Center in Usk and provided an overview. He reported Albeni staff discovered a base metal defect on their spillway gates that they will need to mitigate. Albeni will modify its operations to leave the gates either fully out or fully in the flow during spilling. The USACE plan is to fill Lake Pend Oreille and hold the upper range of Lake Pend Oreille one foot above the normal level by July 7. We don't expect a lot of change at Box Canyon Dam but we will need to look at the steel used in our gates to determine if any there are any issues. Discussion was held. Commissioner Onley thanked Mr. Kramer for attending that meeting and providing the information.

#### ACTION ITEMS:

- Bid Award – Surplus Property Fleet Asset #900, a 2007 Ford Explorer. A motion was made by Commissioner Rick and seconded by Commissioner Knapp to award the bid to the highest bidder as presented. The motion passed unanimously.
- Approval of Resolution No. 1485 – Appointing District Agent and Revised Damage Claim Policy. Sarah Holderman, District Director of Customer Services, reported we are updating the District’s Agent from Amber Gifford, District Customer Service and Contracts Manager, to her. Discussion was held. A motion was made by Commissioner Knapp and seconded by Commissioner Rick to appoint Sarah Holderman as the District’s Agent and to approve the revised policy. The motion passed unanimously.
- Approval of Box Canyon View Point Lease Amendment. Ms. Holderman reported we have a lease with the Port and this amendment is to extend the lease for 10 years. A motion was made by Commissioner Rick and seconded by Commissioner Knapp to authorize the general manager to execute the lease amendment in substantially the same form as presented. The motion passed unanimously.
- Approval of Washington Families Clean Energy Credits Grant Contract. Ms. Holderman reported this is a grant agreement with the Washington State Department of Commerce to provide bill credits to our low-income customers. It will be administered through a third party and will allow us to provide funds to our qualified low-income customers. The grant total amount is approximately \$375,000 and it will provide a one-time \$200 fund amount to qualified customers. The grant funds need to be spent by September 15, 2024. Discussion was held. A motion was made by Commissioner Knapp and seconded by Commissioner Rick to authorize the general manager to execute the contract in substantially the same form as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Following a short recess, the meeting resumed.

BUSINESS FROM THE PUBLIC/OPEN COMMENT PERIOD:

Commissioner Onley asked if there was any business or comments from the public.

Gretchen Koenig, member of the public, complimented the crews for quickly restoring power yesterday. She commended them for doing a great job. Commissioner Onley thanked Ms. Koenig for attending and providing questions/comments.

He reported he was able to use his generator and thanked Mr. Jones and the crews for their quick response to yesterday’s outage.

COMMISSION REPORT:

The Board of Commissioners attended a SCL Fish Hatchery Open House/Tour on May 29 in Usk.

Commissioner Knapp attended a New Health Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on May 21 and reported it was well attended. He noted an email from John Janney, District General Manager, regarding a Net Zero Carbon and copper shortage news article. He had breakfast with Kevin Conway, former employee, last week in Newport.

Commissioner Rick attended a Tri-County Economic Development District (TEDD) meeting on May 22 in Colville and provided an overview. Discussion was held. He attended the Army Corps of Engineers Albeni Falls Dam meeting on May 31 in Cusick and provided an overview. He commended Mr. Kramer for also attending this meeting and for providing information.

Commissioner Onley attended a Washington Public Utility Districts Association (WPUDA) Strategic Planning Committee meeting on May 22 in Olympia and provided an overview.

COMMISSION BUSINESS:

Commissioner Rick will attend an Ione Town Council meeting tomorrow in Ione, a TEDD meeting on June 12 in Colville, a Pend Oreille County Representatives Workshop on June 12 in Newport, a North Pend Oreille Chamber meeting on June 13 in Metaline Falls, a Metaline Falls Town Council meeting on June 14 in Metaline Falls, and the Board meeting on June 18 in Newport.

Commissioner Knapp will participate in a WPUA Budget Committee call tomorrow, will tentatively attend the Pend Oreille County Representatives Workshop on June 12 in Newport, and will attend the Board meeting on June 18 in Newport.

Commissioner Onley will attend a Greater Newport Area Chamber of Commerce meeting tomorrow in Newport and he commended Jason Totland, Chamber Board President for his service. He will attend the Pend Oreille County Representatives Workshop on June 12 in Newport, and the Board meeting on June 18 in Newport.

Commissioner Onley asked if there was any further business for the good of the order. Commissioner Rick thanked Bob Pebles, District Information Technology Manager/CIP Senior Manager, and his team for helping him with a computer issue yesterday and he thanked Mr. Jones and his crew for their work on the power restoration yesterday.

Commissioner Onley reported the next meeting will be held on June 18 at 8:30 a.m., in Newport and via Microsoft Teams.

There being no further discussion to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 10:22 a.m.

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President

ATTEST:

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Secretary

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General Counsel  
Approved as to Form