

PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT NO. 1
OF ASOTIN COUNTY, WASHINGTON
MEETING MINUTES
June 9, 2020

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President Judy Ridge presiding, the Public Utility District No. 1 of Asotin County Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. The meeting was held by teleconference in accordance with the Washington State Governor’s Proclamation 20-28, dated March 24, 2020, due to the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Proclamation 20-28.4, dated May 29, 2020, extending the original and subsequent Proclamations.

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ROLL CALL: PRESENT Commissioners: Judy Ridge, Greg McCall and Don Nuxoll.

Staff: Tim Simpson and Bob Sischo.

MINUTES OF MEETING AND VOUCHER APPROVAL

MOTION by Commissioner Greg McCall and seconded by Commissioner Don Nuxoll to approve the consent agenda approving the minutes of the May 26, 2020 Regular Meeting and payment of Payroll Vouchers #2025 – #2027 and Electronic Payroll Vouchers #5557EFT – #5573EFT in the amount of \$40,012.95 and Electronic Accounts Payable Vouchers #20060501, #20060502, #20060503, #20060504, #20061820 and #20062501 and Accounts Payable Vouchers #40764 – #40821 in the amount of \$253,128.20. The question was called for on the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

COVID-19 UPDATE

The manager reported that on Friday, May 29 the Governor announced that the Stay Home, Stay Healthy Order would end as scheduled at midnight on Sunday, May 31. As a part of this announcement the Proclamation was updated to 20-25.4 changing the title to “Safe Start – Stay Healthy”. This proclamation began June 1st and stated that counties can move to the next phase with approval by the state Secretary of Health. Asotin County is eligible to apply to move to Phase 3 this week.

The manager stated that with the announcement, the Governor updated 24 proclamations extending several and adding new ones. Proclamation 20-28.4 was extended to June 17th, requiring that public meetings continue to be held remotely with remote access being provided to the public. Proclamation 20-23.4 was also extended, prohibiting the disconnection and charging of late fees to utility customers. The prohibition was extended to July 28th or until termination of the COVID-19 State of Emergency, whichever comes first. This proclamation now requires utilities to develop a COVID-19 Customer Support Program. Programs must be reviewed and posted prominently on our website by July 10th. The proclamation also makes the Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) the single point of contact.

The proclamation extension and program requirements are of great concern to PUDs and Commissions. Washington PUD Association’s (WPUDA) Executive Director George Caan stated that these provisions in the proclamation clearly overstep local control and decision making by PUD Commissions in setting rates and policies, requires the development of customer support programs under state directed guidelines, even though PUDs have already developed these programs customized for their unique communities, and adds additional responsibility for the UTC with respect to the consumer owned utilities. A strategy is underway to address the attempt to exert control over PUDs. The Manager’s Committee met Friday, June 5 to discuss the concerns. The new WPUDA Board President called a special meeting of the Board of Directors for Friday, June 12 to discuss these concerns. The Customer Support Program guidance document has since been removed from the Governor’s website.

OLD BUSINESS

There were no items presented under Old Business.

NEW BUSINESS

Write-Off of 2016 Uncollected Accounts

The manager stated that PUD policy requires Board of Commissioner approval for the write-off of uncollected customer accounts after they remain uncollected for more than three (3) years. The 2016 accounts presented for write-off were sent to the collection agency and will continue to be pursued. Customers who have been sent to collection and want to sign up for service again must pay previous account balances before receiving service. Any amounts received after approval of write off become miscellaneous income. Past due accounts that are under \$25.00 do not get sent to collections due to processing costs. The manager stated that for the year 2016 there were 75 uncollected accounts in the amount of \$6,285.83. 64 of those accounts were sent to the collection agency. The uncollected amount represents .00142 percent of our \$4.42 million in water and wastewater revenue for the year 2016.

MOTION by Commissioner Don Nuxoll and seconded by Commissioner Greg McCall to approve the write-off of the 2016 Uncollected Accounts. The question was called for on the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Operations Activity – the manager reported that Poe Asphalt will pave McCarroll Street starting Thursday, June 11. The crew replaced approximately 300 feet of 2-inch galvanized water main with 2-inch HDPE on College Court and rebuilt 3 customer service lines. The crew began the replacement of approximately 600 feet of 6-inch steel water main with 6-inch PVC on 10th Street between Fair and Bridge Streets. The main replacement project will eliminate 3 galvanized service line extensions to the east side of the street and replace 19 customer services lines. Installation of the water main was completed today. A preconstruction meeting with Knife River is scheduled for Wednesday, June 17 to discuss the 14th Street main replacement project. New backup floats are being installed on the Bridge Street Lift Station on Thursday, June 18. Calibration of the WWTP meters will be conducted tomorrow.

Developments – the manager reported that water main installation in the Dimke multi-family residential development on Dustin Loop has been completed and the water quality test was satisfactory. The new line has been tied into the water main on Dustin Loop. A punch list of items for completion will be addressed once paving has been completed on the project. Nuxoll Builders' completed installation of the sewer main and service laterals for their 6th Avenue residential development and will begin the installation of water main within the next two weeks. Dan Yonge has identified a 5-acre piece of property off of 6th Avenue near Blue Mountain Court for a new 16-lot subdivision. Smart Foods, a food service industry store, has proposed building north of Wal-Mart. Preliminary plans are under review.

Backflow Prevention Program – the manager reported that the Tokay Backflow Program installation is complete with minor training left to complete. Tokay was able to convert approximately 1500 older backflow device records. The next step is to review the database and then contact backflow testers about the availability of our online backflow report submittal process which is now operational.

2019 Audit – the manager reported that the 2019 calendar year audit is near completion. The audit is under review by the audit supervisor. There were no issues or recommendations noted prior to review.

COMMISSIONER’S REPORT

Commissioner McCall remotely joined the Washington PUD Association (WPUDA) Water Committee COVID-19 meeting on May 28th. He reported that this was the last one of these types of meetings. Discussion centered around PUDs getting back to work and dealing with Governor proclamations.

Commissioner Ridge remotely joined the Public Power Council meeting on June 4th. She reported that Energy Northwest CEO Brad Sawatzke presented updates on Energy Northwest’s portfolio of energy projects, including Columbia Generating Station and discussed resource adequacy. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently released the temperature total maximum daily load (TMDL) for the Lower Snake and Columbia Rivers, which could have significant operational and financial impacts for Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and public power. The states of Washington and Oregon have required additional conditions be added to EPA’s national discharge permits for the eight federal facilities on the Lower Snake and Mainstem Columbia Rivers. These conditions may increase compliance costs and could be impactful of other federal facilities in the federal river system. The California Independent System Operator (CAISO) is exploring several stakeholder initiatives that would impact the value that BPA and Northwest hydro receive in exchange for the energy, capacity, and flexibility associated with their generation. These changes have the potential to impact BPA’s future revenue opportunities, as well as change day-ahead markets in the West, which would impact each and every BPA power customer.

Commissioner McCall will be remotely joining a special called WPUDA Board of Directors meeting on Friday, June 12 to discuss the extension and additions to the Governor’s Proclamation 20-23.4.

Commissioner McCall will be remotely joining the WPUDA Commissioners Roundtable meeting on Wednesday, June 17.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:42 p.m.