



Meeting Minutes

Utility Advisory Committee

City Hall
601 4th Avenue E
Olympia, WA 98501

Contact: Jesse Barham
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Thursday, November 2, 2023

4:30 PM

City Hall, Room 207

1. **WORK SESSION ROLL CALL: Comprehensive Plan Update - Utilities Chapter, Wastewater Utility Goals and Policies**

Present: 6 - Chair Dennis Bloom, Vice Chair Kristin Lamson, Committee member Sherry Chilcutt, Committee member Donald Krug, Committee member Arland Schneider and Committee member Eleanor (Pat) Vernon

Absent: 2 - Committee member Dani Clark and Committee member Virginia Towne

STAFF PRESENT AT WORK SESSION

Engineering & Planning Supervisor Susan Clark
Water Resources Director Jesse Barham
Wastewater Engineer David Dunn
Waste ReSources Senior Planner Ron Jones
Administrative Specialist Jessica Ashlee
Drinking Water Utility Director Mike Vessey
Administrative Specialist Lindsay Walker

[23-0959](#) Utilities Chapter of the City of Olympia Comprehensive Plan Update

Chair Bloom called the Comprehensive Plan Work Session portion of the meeting to order.

Susan Clark and David Dunn reviewed the Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) Goals and Policies of the Utilities Chapter, Wastewater. UAC members asked some clarifying questions and discussed the draft chapter with staff. The UAC provided the following suggestions:

- Spell out the acronym TMDL as Total Maximum Daily Load. Also reference the regulatory agencies (Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Ecology) and provide more context to explain TMDL.
- Staff will review the City's land use policies regarding when plats are being developed and consider as to whether Septic Tank Effluent Pump (STEP) would be needed. Staff noted the Olympia Municipal Code (OMC) limits STEPs.

The UAC and staff also reviewed the general policies of the Comp Plan and provided the following suggestions related to financial policies:

- Include a statement explaining the City's Municipal Utility Tax (MUT). The UAC is interested in being transparent that the MUT tax is passed onto rate payers and the funds generated go into the City's general fund.
- Suggest having a sentence regarding the concept of balancing utility rates for the short-term goal of delivering utility services and the long-term goal of maintaining utility infrastructure. The word affordability was suggested but some UAC members noted the word "affordable" is subjective.

The UAC discussed the idea of writing a letter to the City Council that would be attached to their Comp Plan recommendations. The letter would provide their opinions on the MUT and other financial policies.

Staff noted the Comprehensive Plan is scheduled for the UAC's overall review at the February 2024 meeting, but that doesn't need to be the date of the final UAC review.

The UAC will discuss the Storm and Surface Water utility at the next Comp Plan Work Session on December 7.

Chair Bloom recessed the Work Session at 5:16 p.m.

The discussion was completed.

2. CALL TO ORDER - REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

Chair Bloom called the regular portion of the UAC meeting to order and read the Tribal Acknowledgement.

2.A. ROLL CALL - REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

Present: 6 - Chair Dennis Bloom, Vice Chair Kristin Lamson, Committee member Sherry Chilcutt, Committee member Donald Krug, Committee member Arland Schneider and Committee member Eleanor (Pat) Vernon

Absent: 2 - Committee member Dani Clark and Committee member Virginia Towne

2.B. STAFF PRESENT

Water Resources Director Jesse Barham
Engineering & Planning Supervisor Susan Clark
Waste ReSources Senior Planner Ron Jones
Waste ReSources Director Gary Franks
Administrative Specialist Jessica Ashlee
Drinking Water Utility Director Mike Vessey
Administrative Specialist Lindsay Walker
Climate Programs Manager Dr Pamela Braff
Environmental Habitat Planner Kym Foley

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[23-0954](#) Approval of October 5, 2023 UAC Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT - None**6. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM UAC AND STAFF**

Staff provided the following updates:

Public hearing held for the City's draft Water System Plan on Oct 30th. The final approval of the Plan is scheduled for the November 14 Council meeting.

Staff briefed Council on the 2024 budget and rates at the October 30 meeting. Staff informed the UAC of the next steps in budget process with final adoption at the December 29 Council meeting

Committee member Anderson resigned from the UAC.

The City is accepting online applications through December 15 for several vacancies for advisory committees. The UAC has one vacancy to fill (Committee member Anderson's spot).

Provided updates on grant applications for the Storm and Surface Water and Wastewater utilities.

Reminder that several UAC members will tour the Pioneer Recycling Facility in Tacoma on Monday, November 6. Staff will send out a notice of potential quorum (e-news) on November 1.

City staff is preparing for the rainy season, and king tides in late November, December, January and February.

7. BUSINESS ITEMS

[23-0958](#) Climate Mitigation and Sea Level Rise Response Update

Dr. Pamela Braff provided the briefing. The briefing also included information on the City's Energize Olympia Program and the City's newly adopted Electric Vehicle Charging

and Parking Standards. Dr. Braff provided program highlights and accomplishments of the Sea Level Rise Response Collaborative for the 2023 and 2024 project work plan.

The UAC asked questions and held a discussion with staff. UAC members thanked staff for the briefing.

The report was received.

[23-0960](#) Habitat Stewardship Program Overview

Kym Foley provided the briefing. The UAC held a discussion with staff and answered the UAC member's questions. The committee thanked staff for the briefing.

[23-0961](#) Cell Antenna Equipment/Leases on Water Tanks briefing

Susan Clark provided the briefing to UAC members. After some discussion, the UAC thanked staff for the briefing.

The discussion was completed.

[23-0962](#) Utilities - 3rd Quarter Financial Update

Staff provided the 3rd quarter financial information in a powerpoint presentation. The UAC asked some clarifying questions and thanked staff for the briefing.

The report was received.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Bloom adjourned the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

Upcoming

Next UAC Meeting:

Thursday, December 7, 2023 at 4:30 pm

Work Session:

Comp Plan Review with Storm and Surface Water utility focus

Business Items at 5:30 pm:

- Recycling Program Update
- UAC Work Plan Development for 2024-2025 and Officer Elections