



Meeting Minutes

Utility Advisory Committee

City Hall
601 4th Avenue E
Olympia, WA 98501
Contact: Eric Christensen
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Thursday, August 12, 2021

5:30 PM

Online via Zoom

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Stephenson called the meeting to order.

1.A ROLL CALL

Present: 7 - Chair Cullen Stephenson, Vice Chair Dennis Bloom, Committee member Donald Krug, Committee member Eleanor (Pat) Vernon, Committee member Roger Wilson, Committee member Dani Clark and Committee member Jason Selwitz

Absent: 2 - Committee member Kristin Lamson and Committee member Arland Schneider

1.B. STAFF PRESENT

Water Resources Director and UAC Staff Liaison Eric Christensen
Waste ReSource Director Gary Franks
Engineering and Planning Supervisor Susan Clark
Wastewater Project Engineer II Diane Utter
Storm and Surface Water Project Engineer II Steve Thompson
Drinking Water Project Engineer II Aurora Isabel

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[21-0780](#) Approval of June 3, 2021 UAC Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved.

4. PUBLIC COMMENT - None

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM UAC AND STAFF (5:40 - 6:00 pm)

Mr. Christensen provided the following updates:

Welcomed Jason Selwitz, newest member of the UAC, appointed by Council on July 13

to replace Michael Bradley.

Unfortunately, due to the delta variant, the City has gone back to all meetings being virtual via Zoom. Staff will send out a link to a survey where the UAC members can anonymously vote on your preference (in person vs. virtual meetings) once we're allowed to go back to in person meetings. In person meetings will need to be a unanimous decision. Unfortunately, the City is not set up technologically to support hybrid meetings with a combination of in person and virtual attendance.

Stipend payments for advisory committee members are being processed and will be sent soon.

UAC member Lamson submitted questions around social justice and equity and how staff is incorporating that into the UAC's business items. Staff provided a response that we are working on it.

Committee member Vernon requested the UAC acknowledge we are on unceded Squaxin tribal land. Staff checked and the City supports this but would like to use consistent language. Staff will get the language to the UAC once it's received. The UAC does not need a formal motion, but it would be appropriate to get the Committee's consensus on the language.

Committee member Krug requested information on the implications of the Governor's recent drought declaration. The City sent out a statement in an E-news on July 20. The drought declaration statement from Olympia noted that we are fortunate to have an ample water supply that is produced from deep underground aquifers, not surface waters. We monitor water production and groundwater levels regularly and are within normal ranges for each.

On Tuesday, August 10, City Council approved a resolution supporting an Estuary as the Preferred Alternative for Capitol Lake long-term management. The Capitol Lake-Deschutes Estuary (CLDE) draft environmental impact statement (EIS) is currently out for comment until Aug 29.

Dr. Pamela Braff, the City's Climate Coordinator, will provide an update to the UAC in September regarding the City's climate mitigation efforts. At that time she may be asking the UAC what role they want to play. Whatever role that is will need to be approved by the City Council.

Due to the pandemic, Drinking Water and Wastewater revenues are down and we continue to monitor them. Commercial water use and wastewater discharge is significantly diminished due to business and office closures. More than 20K employees would typically travel to Olympia for employment daily. That is not happening now. We have implemented cost saving measures and fortunately we are in the black in all of the utilities which is unusual for Drinking Water at this time of year.

UAC requested staff do public outreach regarding the role of the UAC. We did this in the June Water Resources E-News and we will be placing a message in the "Timely Topics" section of customer's utility bill.

We continue to manage the public health emergency. The delta variant has led to new or renewed protocols for mask wearing at the City. We have had numerous employee exposures and a few positive cases since we last met, but operations have not been impacted.

City of Olympia Waste ReSources was recently awarded 2021 program of the year by Resource Recycling Inc for our efforts to reduce contamination in the recycle stream.

6. BUSINESS ITEMS

[21-0781](#) 2022-2027 Preliminary Capital Facilities Plan

Ms. Clark, Ms. Utter, Ms. Isabel and Mr. Thompson provided a briefing the 2022-2027 CFP as it relates to Drinking Water, Wastewater and Storm and Surface Water utilities. UAC members asked some clarifying questions. Committee member Wilson requested a visual timeline for each utilities' projects for pre-design and construction through 2027. Staff indicated they could provide this information to the UAC.

Vice Chair Bloom moved, seconded by Committee member Krug, to recommend and support the 2022-2027 Preliminary Capital Facilities Plan and send a letter to the Olympia Planning Commission. The motion passed unanimously.

[21-0782](#) Water System Plan Update Project Briefing

Ms. Clark provided the UAC with the briefing. Staff will come back to the UAC to do the public outreach that is required by the Washington State Department of Health. After answering clarifying questions and a discussion, the UAC thanked staff for the briefing.

The information was provided.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Stephenson adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.