



# Meeting Minutes - Final

## Utility Advisory Committee

City Hall  
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Olympia, WA 98501

Contact: Jesse Barham  
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Thursday, August 3, 2023

4:30 PM

City Hall, Room 207

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1. **WORK SESSION: Comprehensive Plan Update - Utilities Chapter**  
**(4:30 - 5:15 pm)**

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

UAC member roll call for the Comprehensive Plan Work Session:

Present: Chair Bloom, Vice Chair Lamson, Committee member Krug, Committee member Vernon, Committee member Schneider and Committee member Chilcutt

Absent: Committee member Towne, Committee member Anderson and Committee member Clark

Staff roll call for Work Session: Susan Clark, Jesse Barham, Fran Love, David Dunn, Ron Jones, Mike Vessey and Lindsay Walker.

The UAC and staff reviewed the Comp Plan Utilities Chapter Goals and Policies. The UAC provided the following:

- Since the work session time is limited to 45 minutes, UAC members will provide Susan Clark with editing suggestions via email.
- Add information on how the increases to the municipal utility tax, which funds the general fund, impacts the utilities' ability to raise revenue needed to meet utility goals. Suggested adding this to Goal 2 which is about fees and rates. The UAC feels this is important to note for equity purposes.
- Add more information on the potential to expand the Utility Assistance Programs. Also mention both programs, Helping Neighbors and Lifeline Rates.
- Staff will email to the UAC the City's new Climate and Equity framework documents.

The UAC will discuss the Drinking Water utility at the next Comp Plan Work Session on September 7th.

Chair Bloom adjourned the Work Session at 5:27 pm.

[23-0675](#) Utilities Chapter of the City of Olympia Comprehensive Plan Update

**Discussed and developed the draft Utilities Chapter goals and policies for further review and recommendation by the full Utility Advisory Committee.**

**BREAK**

**2. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Bloom called the regular UAC meeting to order.

**3.A ROLL CALL**

**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:** 3 - Committee member JP Anderson, Committee member Dani Clark and Committee member Virginia Towne

**3.B. STAFF PRESENT**

Water Resources Director/Staff Liaison Jesse Barham  
Drinking Water Utility Director Mike Vessey  
Waste ReSources Director Gary Franks  
Planning and Engineering Supervisor Susan Clark  
Stormwater Engineer Fran Love  
Wastewater Engineer David Dunn  
Administrative Specialist Lindsay Walker

**4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The agenda was approved.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

[23-0619](#) Approval of June 1, 2023 UAC Meeting Minutes

The minutes were approved.

**6. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Helmuth Endler provided comments on the business item for the Wastewater Tiered Rates. He doesn't feel it's right to charge customers the sewer rate based on water consumption. He noted that this is especially difficult for customers on a fixed income. Staff explained that customers would need to install an irrigation meter to track irrigation water use separately.

**7. ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM UAC AND STAFF**

Chair Bloom and Committee member Krug attended a utility tour on July 11. City staff provided a tour of a sewer lift station and also discussed sea level rise tide gates and gauges. The UAC is interested in a tour of the recycle facility in Tacoma. Mr. Franks will work on planning the tour in the fall.

Utility staff is participating in the update of the regional Hazard Mitigation Plan, including Olympia's "annex" to the regional plan. Having this plan finalized makes the City eligible for FEMA funding for a drinking water project (seismic valves on the McAllister transmission main). The Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC) has a survey available on their website to provide feedback for the Hazard Mitigation Plan. The survey will close the end of August.

Staff is working with the UAC Chair and Vice Chair to draft a letter of support for a GFC discount to build affordable housing. This item came before the UAC in June. Staff is asking the UAC to finalize the letter in September.

The Sept/Oct Five Things will have an article about the UAC's review of the 2024 utility rates and the Comp plan. The side panel will announce the City's advisory committee recruitment and how to apply.

Staff asked for ideas for the Five Thing utility insert.

Staff emailed the UAC answers to follow up questions regarding delinquency and shut offs. The handout was also distributed during the meeting.

Staff received comments from the State Department of Health on the City's Water System Plan (WSP). Comments are minor in nature. Staff will come back to the UAC in September with the WSP for their recommendation before Council approval can occur.

## 8. BUSINESS ITEMS

### [23-0620](#) 2024-2029 Preliminary Capital Facilities Plan

Staff provided the briefing.

Vice Chair Lamson requested any questions that the Olympia Planning Commission poses to utilities staff on the CFP, including staff's responses.

The UAC asked some clarifying questions and had a discussion with staff. The UAC thanked staff for the briefing.

**Information only. No action requested.**

### [23-0621](#) Potential for Wastewater Irrigation Rate Discount

Mr. Barham provided the briefing.

**Information only. No action requested.**

### [23-0622](#) Preliminary 2024 Utility Operating Budget Drivers and Trends

Mr. Barham, Mr. Franks and Mr. Vessey provided the briefing.

The City is a few weeks behind on the 2024 budget process. This potentially poses an issue with the timing of the September UAC meeting. We may need to have a special UAC in mid/late September or present the entire budget in October.

**Information only. No action requested.**

[23-0623](#) Utilities - 2nd Quarter Financial Update

**Information only. No action requested.**

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Bloom adjourned the meeting at 7:43 pm.

### **UPCOMING**

**Next UAC meeting - September 7, 2023**

**Business Items:**

- 2024 Utility Operating Budgets, Rates, CFP and GFCs**
- Water System Plan Recommendation**