



APPROVED 5/8/24

MINUTES
City of Tacoma
Public Utility Board Study Session
April 24, 2024
3:00 p.m.

Chair Watson called the Public Utility Board study session to order at 3:00 p.m. in the third-floor conference room (LT1) of the Public Utilities Administration Building.

Present: Carlos Watson, Anita Gallagher, John O’Loughlin, William Bridges

Excused: Elly Claus-McGahan

Water Regulations Update

Kim DeFolo, Principal Engineer, reported that the final EPA PFAS rule was announced on April 10. It regulates six PFAS compounds, including PFOS and PFOA with compliance required by 2029. In 2023, the lab analyzed 28 samples for 29 different PFAS chemicals for Tacoma Water. The Green River and North Fork Wells (in watershed) continue to have no detections for the regulated PFAS chemicals. In town, the deep aquifer wells also have no defects. The South Tacoma wells had detections for one or more PFAS chemicals. Aside from wells taken out of service in 2018, all other representative well samples were below state action levels. Several key wells had samples just above new EPA limits. Ms. DeFolo also reported that the EPA lead and copper rule revisions requirement to prepare an inventory of service line materials by October 16, 2024. It requires water systems to identify the material of both the utility-owned and customer-owned sides of the water meter for all less than two-inch service lines installed before 1987. A records review is underway, but there are unknowns. There is no evidence, recorded or anecdotal, of lead pipe ever being used for water lines in service except for the lead goosenecks that have been replaced. In lieu of verifying every service line, the DOH allows a statistical validation procedure to demonstrate a minimum 95 percent level of statistical confidence that all lines are non-lead.

Tacoma Power: Cowlitz Trout Hatchery Remodel

Matt Bleich, Power Natural Services Manager, and Maryanne Zukowski, Sr. Engineering Project Manager, reviewed the information in this presentation. An overview of the Cowlitz fishery program and how hatcheries work was provided. The 35-year FERC license obligation is to restore native fish runs and provide harvest opportunity. The current hatchery facility is unable to meet obligations due to aging and failing infrastructure which is past its useful life. It was built in the late 1960’s and not designed to meet current needs. The trout hatchery program phases, planning, design, timeline, and estimated costs were detailed. The anticipated program estimate is \$47.7M with a 2032 program end date.

TPU Shared Services Budget Overview

Alex Yoon, Deputy Director for Administration, made opening remarks, and provided an overview of the agenda. Ebony Peebles, Business Manager, reviewed the budget and rates timeline. Ms. Peebles then provided an overview of the services provided, the current biennium budget, how costs are shared, accomplishments, planned initiatives, challenges, and opportunities for Customer Experience and External Affairs, and the Management Services Office. Michelle Rhubright, Sr. Business Services Mgr, covered these same areas for Facilities, Fleet, and Utility Technology Services.

Residential Utility Assistance Programs Update

Francine Artis, Interim Customer Services Manager, provided background on the Bill Credit Assistance Plan (BCAP). BCAP is a program designed to help reduce the energy burden for income-eligible households. Accounts enrolled in the program are automatically provided a credit for each utility service billed directly through TPU; additional credits are achievable with full, on-time payments. Mr. Artis provided an overview of BCAP marketing, community outreach, auto-enrollment plans, and goals. Ms. Artis then detailed graphical illustrations (households served and budget) for January 2023 through March 2024. Staff will continue its work to identify opportunities for auto-enrollment. Staff will use available data to identify customers for direct marketing opportunities. Extensive marketing of the program for eligible households will continue. Lastly, staff is developing a survey for customers enrolled in BCAP.

General Board Comments/Discussion and Director's Reports

The Board discussed contents and signatories of a letter to the Council and Charter Review Commission providing feedback on certain proposals from the Charter Review Committee relating to TPU.

The Director and Board Members commented on meetings that took place since the last Board meeting, including the Council meeting wherein the Director was reconfirmed by the Council, Council Member Scott's onboarding meeting, meeting with the Mayor, City Manager's Office, and Water's presentation at GPFC.

Adjournment

The study session was adjourned at 5:43 p.m.

Approved:



Carlos Watson, Chair



William Bridges