



APPROVED 10/23/24

MINUTES
City of Tacoma
Public Utility Board Study Session
October 9, 2024
3:00 p.m.

Chair O'Loughlin 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: John O'Loughlin, William Bridges, Elly Claus-McGahan, Anita Gallagher

Excused: Carlos Watson

Guiding Principle One (GP1, Diversity Equity, Inclusion, Belonging) Update

Alex Yoon, Deputy Director for Administration, walked through graphical illustrations of Pierce County and TPU benchmarks by gender and race/ethnicity. In summary for gender, there is a two percent increase in female employees from 2019 to 2024 for TPU total workforce. TPU is 18 percent below the Pierce County benchmark for female. There is a 19 percent increase in female leadership from 2019 to 2024, which is three percent below the Pierce County benchmark. The TPU internship program is aligned with the Pierce County benchmark. In summary for race/ethnicity, there is a four percent increase in race/ethnicity diversification from 2019 to 2024 for the TPU workforce. There is a four percent increase in race/ethnicity diversification between 2019 to 2024 for TPU leadership. TPU is 17 percent below the Pierce County benchmark in race/ethnicity diversity. TPU's internship program exceeded the Pierce County benchmark. Ms. Yoon then reviewed statistics for TPU workforce retention and turnover by gender, race, and ethnicity. Val Sowell, Water's Workforce Program Development Manager, then detailed Water's exit interviewed program. TPU's retention rate is currently at it's highest at 95 percent; the retention rate for both female and male are very similar. The retention rate is lowest among American Indian/Alaskan Native, and Asian at 89 percent. TPU turnover has improved from 14 percent in 2019 to 11 percent in 2024. The turnover rate for the BIPOC workforce has been above the average TPU rate with Asian and Hispanic employees having the highest turnover rate in 2024. TPU is conducting a second round of Culturally Responsive Organization and Racial Equity survey. Water is working on data automation of exit interviews. The TPU strategic plan will include an initiative to develop TPU internal processes around the handling of microaggressions and bullying in the workplace. There will also be a strategic initiative on succession planning in 2025. Deputy Director for Customer Experience and External Affairs, LaTasha Wortham, then provided an overview of diverse community engagement and TPU's equity access to programs and services,

including transcreation of TPU literature. Kacee Woods, Equity in Contracting (EIC) and Workforce Program Manager, detailed graphical representations of EIC utilization and outcomes. The disparity study recommendations were then shared. EIC program recommendations for TPU include proactively collaborating with the EIC program on inclusive procurement and increasing engagement with community and external stakeholders through subcontractor outreach events. A roadmap for the disparity study recommendations is being planned.

Budget and Rates Review

Board Members reviewed budget and rates policy questions for each of the three operating divisions and shared general thoughts about the budget and rates preparation process.

Executive Session

Chair O'Loughlin moved to convene an executive session at 5:33 p.m. for up to 30 minutes to discuss pending litigation [RCW 42.30.110(1)(i)]; seconded by Mr. Bridges. Voice vote taken and carried. Engel Lee, Chief Deputy City Attorney, was present. The executive session was adjourned at 5:46 p.m.

Adjournment

The study session was adjourned at 5:46 p.m.

Approved:



John O'Loughlin
Chair



Elly Claus-McGahan
Secretary