



APPROVED 2/9/22

MINUTES  
City of Tacoma  
Public Utility Special Board Meeting  
January 26, 2022  
3:00 p.m.

Chair Patterson called the Public Utility Board meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

**Present:** Mark Patterson, Chrissy Cooley, Carlos Watson, Holland Cohen

The meeting was quorate.

A moment of silence was held in remembrance of Woody Jones, Board Member from 2009 – 2019. Board Members and staff made comments about Mr. Jones' dedication, service, kindness, mentorship, class, humility, and his great and lasting impact on TPU, its employees, and the public.

**Minutes of the Previous Meetings**

Ms. Cooley moved that the minutes of the previous meetings be adopted; seconded by Mr. Watson. Voice vote was taken and carried. The minutes were declared adopted.

**Comments by the Public**

Ms. Cooley moved to suspend the rules of Public Utility Board Government Process Eight (GP8) to allow all public comment for all topics, whether on or off the agenda, at one time; seconded by Mr. Watson. Voice vote was taken and carried.

Mr. Kit Burns made comments expressing sorrow for the passing of Woody Jones and made positive remarks about his service to TPU and the community.

**Regular Agenda**

C-1 Resolution U-11302 – Authorize execution of a letter of agreement as negotiated with the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen regarding the addition of June 19 “Juneteenth” as a paid holiday for Tacoma Rail employees beginning in calendar year 2022.

Ms. Cooley moved to adopt the resolution; seconded by Mr. Watson.

Dylan Carlson, Sr. Labor Relations Mgr, summarized resolutions U-11302, U-11303, and U-11304. “Juneteenth” has become a central topic of discussion at the national, state and local levels as many communities have begun to recognize the significance of this historical event within the greater context of American history. President Abraham

Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, which was designed to liberate more than three million enslaved African people in the Confederate states. It was not, however, until northern soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas, on June 19, 1865, more than two years after the proclamation, that the state's residents finally learned that slavery had been abolished. June 19<sup>th</sup> has been celebrated to commemorate the abolishment of slavery and the contributions of African Americans to society and is now known as "Juneteenth" and celebrated all across the nation. In April, 2021, the Washington State Legislature passed legislation marking Juneteenth as a paid legal holiday for state employees and on May 13, 2021, Governor Inslee signed House Bill 1016 into law with the first state holiday to be observed in June of 2022, and the federal government acted a month later, passing a bill in both houses to designate Juneteenth as a national holiday for federal employees.

Voice vote was taken and carried. The resolution was adopted.

C-2 Resolution U-11303 – Authorize execution of a letter of agreement as negotiated with the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail, and Transportation Workers – Transportation Division (SMART – TD) Conductors, regarding the addition of June 19 "Juneteenth" as a paid holiday for Tacoma Rail employees beginning in calendar year 2022.

Ms. Cooley moved to adopt the resolution; seconded by Mr. Watson.

Voice vote was taken and carried. The resolution was adopted.

C-3 Resolution U-11304 – Authorize execution of a letter of agreement as negotiated with the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail, and Transportation Workers – Transportation Division (SMART-TD) Yardmasters, regarding the addition of June 19 "Juneteenth" as a paid holiday for Tacoma Rail employees beginning in calendar year 2022.

Ms. Cooley moved to adopt the resolution; seconded by Mr. Watson.

Voice vote was taken and carried. The resolution was adopted.

C-4 Motion 22-03 – Approve final settlement of the claim of Alfred C. Davis v. City of Tacoma in the amount of \$166,900.

Ms. Cooley moved to approve the motion; seconded by Mr. Watson.

Tom Morrill, Chief Deputy City Attorney, summarized the motion. This motion would approve final settlement of the claim for bodily injury in the total amount of \$166,900, which arose from a motor vehicle accident involving a City employee operating a City vehicle. This motion will go forward to City Council for final approval.

Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was approved.

C-5 Motion 22-04 – Approve final settlement of the claim number W-093-21 of Lonnese Taylor in the amount of \$49,528.30.

Ms. Cooley moved to approve the motion; seconded by Mr. Watson.

Tom Morrill, Chief Deputy City Attorney, summarized the motion. This motion would approve final settlement from an incident from February 2021 of a leaking gasket on the side of a water main facing the property which caused water intrusion into the lower level of a single family residence resulting in water damage to the claimant's property. This motion will go forward to City Council for final approval.

Voice vote was taken and carried. The motion was approved.

## **D. Reports of the Director**

### Covid

Director Flowers reported that the emergency management team and HR are reviewing quarantine guidelines that have been recently adjusted to correspond with updated guidelines. There are no other operational protocol changes. Staff also continues to monitor case count and is working to articulate the path forward post moratorium. The primary purpose is to assist customers to achieve access to relief dollars for which they qualify. TPU will be sending out communications to customers with outstanding balances.

In response to a Board inquiry at the last meeting concerning payment trends, Mike Hill, Assistant Customer Services Manager, shared information on payment channel usage in 2021. In comparing 2021 channel usage with five year pre-Covid numbers, there is a 15 percent overall decline of monthly transactions since the disconnect moratorium was enacted in March of 2020. Payment channels heavily relied on to assist customers in reconnecting services had the largest decline in usage. The TPU MyAccount website is the only payment channel with increased customer traffic during this time.

### TPU Academy Update

Christian Paige, Education Outreach Manager, provided an update on the program. The program strategy is education for grades K through 5; building relationships in grades 6 through 8; providing experiences for grades 9 through 12, all leading up to viewing TPU as a career option post-secondary education. Mr. Paige then spoke to challenges presented by Covid and how they were mitigated. Outreach efforts were then summarized; these include TPU Academy, Girl Scouts conference, teacher workshops, SEED internship program, Tacoma Public Schools career and technical education and Math Engineering Science Achievement (MESA). Looking to the future, Mr. Page plans to create additional pathways for underrepresented communities; develop more opportunities for subject matter experts to interact with students; and listening to community needs with the intention of creating responsive programming. Board Members made positive remarks about the program and Mr. Paige's management of it.

### Tacoma Power Long-Range Financial Plan

Bill Berry, Power Section Manager, began by reviewing the electric rate and financial policy, which outlines objectives and policies when setting rates including financial targets and the rate stabilization fund usage. Mr. Berry provided an overview of graphical representations of past actual and protected rate increases, base case financial metric projections, and comparative system rates. He then reviewed 2019's critical water year

and how the rate stabilization fund was utilized to bolster 2019 debt service coverage. Mr. Berry also reviewed 2021 financing transactions that saved \$27M to \$30M between 2015 and 2021 by using Wells Fargo agreement to pay capital expenditures as they occur. Graphical representations of debt structure, projected rates, debt management, debt service spikes, debt defeasance, rate stabilization fund usage, and debt service with future bonds were reviewed. This is the first presentation laying the groundwork for this year's budget and rates meetings and presentations.

**E. Comments by the Board**

Chair Patterson mentioned than executive session to discuss the performance of a public employee per RCW 42.30.110(1)(g) was scheduled, but will be postponed.

**F. Adjournment**

There being no further business or comments, the Public Utility Board meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m. until February 9, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.

Approved:



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Mark Patterson, Chair



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Carlos Watson, Secretary