

PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT NO. 1  
OF ASOTIN COUNTY, WASHINGTON  
MEETING MINUTES  
February 24, 2009

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Vice-President Don Nuxoll presiding, the Public Utility District No. 1 of Asotin County Meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m. at the PUD Office at 1500 Scenic Way.

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ROLL CALL: PRESENT      Commissioners: Judy Ridge and Don Nuxoll.

PUD Staff: General Manager Tim Simpson, Treasurer Bob Sischo and Attorney Scott Broyles.

Members of the public were present.

MINUTES OF MEETING AND VOUCHER APPROVAL:

**MOTION** by Commissioner Judy Ridge and seconded by Commissioner Don Nuxoll to approve the consent agenda giving approval of the minutes of the February 11, 2009 Regular Meeting and payment of the Transaction Vouchers covering vouchers #1264EFT through #1276EFT in the amount of \$18,310.97 and Blanket Transaction Voucher Approval Document covering vouchers #26630 through #26659, and Electronic Transaction Voucher #20090218, #20090220, #20090224, #2009022403, and #2009030401 in the amount of \$58,060.32. The question was called for on the motion. Passed 2-0

Energy Northwest

Representative Jim Oakley provided an update of activities that Energy Northwest (ENW) was engaged in. He stated that ENW is partnering with a company called Adage to help site timber waste biomass energy production plants in the Northwest. The utilization of dead trees to produce energy is considered carbon neutral. Each plant would produce between 60 and 80 megawatts of energy. Adage states that construction would create 300 short-term construction jobs and when in operation 100 permanent jobs. Mr. Oakley stated that a site would need an average of 80 truck loads a day. Commissioner Nuxoll stated that at their peak, Bennett lumber brings in over 150 trucks per day. Commissioner Nuxoll stated that ENW needs to consider Asotin County or the Port of Whitman County as a site for the plant.

Mr. Oakley stated that ENW received a presentation from a company called NuScale on small scale nuclear reactors. The reactors are similar to what has been used in aircraft carriers for many years. Each unit produces 40 megawatts of energy and are modular meaning units can be added onto each other. NuScale wants ENW to sign an agreement

to purchase in order to begin the process of sighting a plant. Mr. Oakley stated that ENW will hear another presentation in April from another firm. After the presentation ENW will embark on an investigation into whether to locate a small scale nuclear project next to the Columbia Generating Station in order to demonstrate their capability.

Mr. Oakley stated that there are other projects under way. The Radar Ridge wind project in Pacific County is the first large scale commercial project in Western Washington. Several public utility districts have agreed to take power from the project. ENW is researching a potential wind site in Prosser and is investigating a 1 megawatt landfill gas energy project in Clallam County.

### Old Business

#### Regional Storm Water Program

The manager stated that the first meeting of the Regional Stormwater Advisory Group was held on Tuesday, February 17, 2009 at the Asotin County Library. The purpose of the group is to discuss stormwater issues and develop recommendations to the Asotin and Clarkston City Councils and Asotin County Commissioners for the educational program and the utility formation. There were approximately 20 people attending representing various agencies along several interested and concerned citizens. Cheryl Sonnen, Regional Stormwater Coordinator, presented an overview of the federally mandated program. The Washington State Department of Ecology is the primary oversight agency that the regional program will work through. The meeting quickly turned discussion of the cost of the program and how to fairly distribute costs to residents, business and other agencies. The next advisory group meeting will be held at the PUD office on Tuesday, March 17, 2009 from 4:00 to 6:00 pm. Commissioner Nuxoll stated that he would be in attendance.

#### Solar Energy Project

The manager stated that, Washington State University staff Mike Nelson has tentatively schedule a site visit for Tuesday, April 14, 2009. Mr. Nelson stated that he would analyze our site for the placement of solar photovoltaic system. Mr. Nelson will also be available for the board meeting that evening to share information and answer questions.

Mr. Oakley from Energy Northwest was asked to provide information that would be helpful to the PUD in purchasing and installing the photovoltaic system. Commissioner Nuxoll stated that he wanted to be sure that we purchase the latest technology to ensure a high efficiency combined with a product that is durable. The manager stated that when the site is determined to be adequate he would work with Avista Utilities to ensure they are aware of the project and seek their participation in it.

### Re-keying of PUD Facilities

The manager stated that as directed, additional price quotes were sought on the rekeying of doors and replacement of locks at PUD facilities. Approximately 20 doors and 70 locks will be re-cylindrical and re-keyed. The purpose of the project is to enhance security and provide for better key controls. Each key will be stamped and a key distribution log will be kept. In addition to the price quote from George's Lock and Key, four other companies were contacted and quotes were received from two of those firms, A-1 Lock and Key from Lewiston and Palouse Locksmith Service from Pullman. The manager stated that after reviewing each price quote he believes that George's Lock and Key provided the best overall value and met the intent of the security reasons behind rekeying and changing locks at PUD facilities. He requested authorization to hire George's Lock and Key to perform the services of rekeying and changing of locks at PUD facilities. George's price quote was in the amount of \$4,317.12.

**MOTION** by Judy Ridge, seconded by Don Nuxoll to authorize the General Manager to hire George's Lock and Key to rekey and change locks at PUD facilities. The question was called for on the motion. Passed 2-0.

### NEW BUSINESS

#### Consultant Selection – Sewer System Condition Assessment and Feasibility Study

The manager stated that in January a Request for Proposal (RFP) was sent to consulting engineer firms for a condition assessment and feasibility study of the County sewer system. Firms who received the RFP were ones who responded to a Request for Qualifications in May 2008. The assessment and study are being conducted to provide information and determine if the PUD will assume the County's sewer system.

The manager stated that he and Joel Ristau, Asotin County Public Works Director met on Friday, February 13, 2009 to review each of the six proposals submitted and select the top two proposals. The top proposals selected were from CH2M Hill from Boise, Idaho and Keller Associates from Meridian, Idaho. The merits of each of the top two proposals were discussed and based upon the analysis completed on each firm, Keller Associates was chosen the top pick. The manager recommended selecting Keller Associates to conduct the Condition Assessment and Feasibility Study of the Asotin County sewer system and requested authorization to negotiate a contract for their consulting services.

**MOTION** by Judy Ridge, seconded by Don Nuxoll to select Keller Associates to conduct the Asotin County Sewer System Condition Assessment and Feasibility Study and authorize the General Manager to negotiate a contract for consulting services. The question was called for on the motion. Passed 2-0.

New Phone System Price Quotes

The manager stated that quotes were requested and received on the purchase of a new phone system. The 2009 budget provides \$15,000 for the purchase and replacement of the current phone system. Monies to pay for the system will come from the designated Equipment Replacement Fund.

The manager stated that the new system will be Voice Over Internet Protocol or VOiP and will provide voice mail capability to staff. The system will switch from three lines dialing in to two with the third line available for outgoing calls. The new system will allow us to setup system to record after hour emergency calls and have them sent directly to the pager. This will eliminate the \$700 to \$800 we pay annually for answering service. In addition, the plan is to utilize a T1 line provided by XO Communications allowing us to move hosting of our website and email services to XO resulting in an approximate annual savings of \$2,400 to \$3,600. The manager stated that cumulative savings will provide a payoff of the new phone system in approximately 3 years.

The manager stated that quotes were received from three vendors for a new phone system and labor to make it operational. ITC Systems and Fishers System provided the best value for our dollars based upon their equipment, service and prices. Fisher's quote was \$10,395.12 and ITC Systems quote was \$9,175.13. The manager recommended purchasing a new phone system from ITC Systems.

**MOTION** by Judy Ridge, seconded by Don Nuxoll to authorize the manager to purchase a new phone system from ITC Systems and hire them to complete the installation. The question was called for on the motion. Passed 2-0.

Regional Aquifer Committee – Citizen Participation

The manager stated that an advertisement was placed in the Lewiston Morning Tribune the week of February 16, 2009 requesting citizen participation in a new Valley Aquifer Committee. Citizens from the PUD, City of Lewiston, Lewiston Orchards Irrigation District and other interested water utilities were asked to contact their respective manager if they were interested in participating. The manager stated that he received a call from a customer, Mary Williams, 1118 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue requesting information about the aquifer committee. After discussing the purpose of the committee, Mrs. Williams expressed interest in serving on the committee as a citizen representative. The manager recommended her for the committee.

**MOTION** by Judy Ridge, seconded by Don Nuxoll to appoint Mary Williams as a PUD citizen representative on the proposed Valley Aquifer Committee. The question was called for on the motion. Passed 2-0.

### MANAGER'S REPORT

Vineland Cemetery Irrigation Project – The manager stated that he spoke with Steve Rynearson, President of the Vineland Cemetery Association. Mr. Rynearson stated that they have received a \$25,000 donation from Dick Bennett and several thousand dollars in memoriam to Cliff Wasem and his wife. He stated that additional donations will also be secured. He also stated that there will be enough money to complete installation of the irrigation lines and possibly enough to replace some turf. The manager stated that he hoped they would complete the project before this summer.

Highland Avenue Project – PUD staff have relocated or rebuilt all existing services on Highland Avenue. The County has requested two new services near Highland Elementary and the Boys and Girls Club for landscaping purposes.

Mapping System Consultant Review – the manager contacted the engineering and consulting firm of Murray, Smith and Associates (MSA) requesting their assistance in conducting an audit of our mapping system and to provide us a determination on what it would take to get the mapping system up to date and provide an outline on what it would take to transition into a Graphical Interface System (GIS). MSA provided work on our hydraulic modeling software and recently help translate the digital mapping “flyover” pictures to be compatible with our current AutoCad map system. The manager stated that work identified by MSA would need to go out as a request for proposal prior to hiring a firm to complete the work. The MSA visit is scheduled for Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>.

The manager stated that he has spoken with County Public Works Director, Joel Ristau about a proposed Lewiston-Clarkston GIS system. The concept is under development and additional information about this system will be provided at a later date.

Website Update – the manager stated that he is working with Advantage Advertising to update the PUD website. The updated site will have the new PUD logo design and will be developed to be more user-friendly. The recent addition of online billing capabilities and the new logo has prompted the need for an update. With the new system, PUD staff will still be able to update content as needed. The manager stated that letterhead, envelopes and business cards with the new PUD logo have been ordered.

### COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:

Commissioner Ridge attended the Washington PUD Association in Olympia on February 18 – 20. She stated that commissioner per diem and monthly salaries were a primary topic of discussion. She stated that it is the State Auditor's Office's opinion that commissioners cannot take per diem and salary increases mid-term even though the state legislature has passed legislation and the governor has signed the increases into law.

Contract lobbyist Bill Clarke noted that past guidance from the Auditor's Office allowed commissioners to receive per diem increases. However, the Auditor's Office recently changed its guidelines, which no longer address the specific issue. Clarke also noted that a 1985 memo from the Attorney General's office that supports sitting commissioners receiving per diem increases is "still on the books."

This position has confused many public utility district's and the board of directors for Washington PUD Association stated that they will take this issue further, first going to the State Auditor, Brian Sonntag and then to an AG for an opinion. The 1985 AG opinion states that as long as PUD has passed a resolution allowing for future increases in per diem and monthly salaries as provided by the Revised Code of Washington that they are in compliance with the state constitution and the law. The manager and Counsel, Scott Broyles stated that a resolution was passed by the Asotin PUD board in 1998 which provides for future commissioner salary and per diem increases in compliance with the 1985 AG opinion.

Commissioner Ridge stated that the Washington State Revolving Fund will be receiving \$36 million as part of the federal government stimulus package. The funding will be used to provide grants and loans for water infrastructure improvements. She stated that Steve Wright, current Bonneville Power Administration administrator is up for reappointment. The PUD Association has developed a set of criteria and a short list of potential candidates in case Mr. Wright is not reappointed by the Obama administration. Commissioner Ridge stated that it was determined by a court case involving Seattle Public Utilities that fire hydrants are the responsibility of the city and county and customers could not be charge for the cost of maintaining the hydrants.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm.