

Public Utility District No. 1 of Klickitat County  
**Board of Commissioners Meeting**  
**Tuesday, February 27, 2024**  
**2:00pm**

**CALL TO ORDER:** President Randy L. Knowles called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. as advertised.

**PRESENT:** Randy L. Knowles - President, Dan G. Gunkel - Vice-President and Douglas B. Miller - Secretary

**STAFF PRESENT:** Jim Smith - General Manager, Gwyn Miller - Assistant General Manager, Sharon Blodgett - Water/Wastewater Coordinator, Brandon Johnson - Engineering Manager, Brandon Walter - Water/Wastewater Superintendent, Brandy Myers - Customer and Accounting Services Manager, April Greenlaw - Operations Administrative Assistant, Kevin Ricks - Renewable Energy Assets Manager, Mike DeMott - Director of Finance and Power Management, Cara Smith - Accounting Clerk and Luann Mata - Executive Assistant

**VIA-TELECONFERENCE:** Anita Clever - Energy Services Specialist, Chris Evans - IT Manager, Sarah Honkala - Accountant, Seth Jones - Buyer, and Courtney Collins - Engineering Support Assistant.

**GUESTS:** None

**PLEDGE:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those present.

**MINUTES:** **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Miller to approve the February 13, 2024 meeting minutes as corrected. Motion carried.

**CLAIMS & PAYROLL:** Presented by Cara Smith. Vouchers were audited and certified by the auditing officer as required by RCW 42.24.080, and all expense reimbursement claims presented were certified as required by RCW 42.24.090 and were recorded on a listing made available to the Board this 27<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2024.

**MOTION** was made by Commissioner Miller to approve accounts payable vouchers and payroll in the amounts as listed:

- Accounts Payable Voucher Nos. 218687 through 218794 in the total amount of \$1,006,555.46; Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) transaction Nos. 569 through 575 and Wire and Automated Clearing House (ACH) Nos. 8801924 through 8801930 in the total amount of \$1,826,307.13 for the period ending February 27, 2024; and
- Payroll ACH Direct Deposit Payroll transactions 213521 through 213607 in the total amount of \$249,879.98 for the payroll period ending February 11, 2024.

Motion carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** None

**REPORTS:**

**Water-Wastewater Report** - Sharon Blodgett and Brandon Walter presented the department report for January. Staff reviewed the Glenwood Water Rights lease along with the new customer process for obtaining a new connection. Commissioner Knowles asked staff to have customers sign an acknowledgment that we attach to

their account demonstrating they have received information regarding the Yakama Nation water right lease.

We have been awarded an Emergency Management System (EMS) security grant to install security cameras in the wastewater treatment plant facilities. We will be submitting additional grant funding applications in the near future as well.

Luann Mata has begun to reach out to the water and wastewater communities to schedule our annual customer meetings during April and May.

Rod Kiser has announced his retirement date. We have posted a position for a Water/Wastewater trainee.

**Operations Report** - April Greenlaw presented the January report. We experienced 58,816 outage hours for the month of January. We believe we are seeing the reliability benefits of our maintenance and tree trimming programs as we expected more damage from snow unloading than we experienced. Most of the damage was isolated to broken or damaged cross arms. April provided storm photos emphasizing how the rights of way clearing efforts significantly reduced outage impacts and made line patrols quicker. In the March Ruralite you will see articles on our rights of way efforts and the resulting outage impacts. There are two potential FEMA claims for this weather event. We will provide an update when a determination is made.

The White Salmon crew has been installing gateways and routers and assisting the meter shop with the 3S meter exchanges. Rick Slawson and Dale Stelter removed 371 trees this month.

**Engineering Report** - Brandon Johnson and Mark Garner presented the January report. Brandon discussed substation loading and low voltage issues during the cold snap. The Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) system is providing data that is confirming our long-range plan growth projections and helping us identify areas that we had not considered. Our three phase upgrades and proposed substation upgrade projects are also being confirmed as the right projects by this data.

Allegiant has completed their contract. They were on the property for 5 months and exchanged around 11,000 meters. So far, we worked with customers to repair 17 meter bases for safety concerns. Customers did not experience any long-term outages due to these repairs. The metershop and crews have approximately 1,800 meters to replace. They will focus on the west end meters and will transition to the Alderdale area prior to the beginning of the irrigation season. We have sent out meter exchange letters for customer refusals of AMI meters. 30 days after this letter, we will begin exchanges.

Commissioner Miller requested clarification on an outage event. Brandon confirmed there were three separate events. At this time, we do not believe they are related, however, the transmission outage is still under review.

Staking engineers are working on planned maintenance projects and on cutout upgrades. Justin Beierle is working with Klickitat Valley Health on new upgrades to support their hydrogen cell project installation and on the MA Collins bird related issues.

Our DNR wildfire identification camera project is moving forward. Under this program, the cameras are donated and the software is also donated for the first two years. There is interest by The Dalles EMS to gain access to this infrastructure as well as our local EMS. There is an opportunity to share future costs and site locations with this collaboration. The cameras do have panning capability and use AI to identify smoke and notify EMS of potential wildfire starts.

**COMMISSIONER RANDY KNOWLES** - Commissioner Knowles did not have a report.

**COMMISSIONER DAN GUNKEL** - Commissioner Gunkel did not have a report.

**COMMISSIONER DOUGLAS MILLER** - Commissioner Miller discussed the last Klickitat County Economic Development Association meeting held last Thursday.

**ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER** - Gwyn Miller acknowledged the promotion of Chris Evans to IT Manager. She recognized his years of effort and growth.

**GENERAL MANAGER** - The complete report can be found at: [http://www.klickitatpud.com/topicalMenu/commissioners/GM\\_Reports.aspx](http://www.klickitatpud.com/topicalMenu/commissioners/GM_Reports.aspx) In addition to the written report, Jim Smith presented the following information:

Annual Conservation Meetings - We attended two Conservation meetings sponsored by USDA. Anita Clever provided information on conservation opportunities available for 2024, Justin Beierle discussed local projects and Jim Smith discussed changes in the electric markets and the resulting impacts this is having on rates.

MA Collins Bird Related Outage Evaluations - Justin Beierle reviewed his findings and recommendations on reducing the impacts of the huge increase in bird populations and the related outages experienced in 2023. The proposed solution is to install poles mid-span on specific spans in the areas we know birds were congregating. The intent is to focus on the areas that have the highest likelihood to reduce outages and system blinks. The proposal was discussed at length. Commissioners agreed that this is a good step and that it should help reduce, but won't totally eliminate, the impacts of the birds. They directed staff to implement the proposal and report back on outages and the extent to which the birds return this year.

Lastly, Jim reviewed regional utility rate increases.

**AGENDA ITEMS:**

- A. PRE-QUALIFICATION OF PROFESSIONAL SERVICES - **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Gunkel to accept the addition of the firms presented and agree to add them to the Professional Services Roster for the 2024 period. Motion carried.
- B. PRE-QUALIFICATION OF CONTRACTORS - **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Gunkel to accept the addition of the contractors presented and agree to add them to the designated Works Rosters, as referenced, for the 2024 period. Motion carried.
- C. RESOLUTION 1848 RESCINDING CREDIT CARD AUTHORITY - **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Gunkel to adopt Resolution 1848. Which rescinds credit card authority issued to Sohn Kartes under resolution 1833. Motion carried.
- D. WASHINGTON PUD ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIP NOMINATION SELECTION - **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Miller to nominate Jewlia Siglin as Klickitat PUD's 2024 WPUA Scholarship nominee. Motion carried.
- E. RESOLUTION 1849 APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATE FOR GENERAL MANAGER - **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Gunkel to adopt Resolution 1849 which rescinds all previous resolutions regarding the delegation of the General Manager's duties during his absence or incapacitation, authorizes the Assistant General Manager as the alternate in the absence or incapacity of the General Manager, and also authorizes the Director of Power and Finance as the alternate in the absence or incapacity of the General Manager and the Assistant General Manager. Motion carried.
- F. EXECUTIVE SESSION PER RCW 42.30.110 (1)(b) TO CONSIDER ACQUISITION OF REAL-ESTATE - President Knowles called for an Executive Session at 3:15p.m. per RCW 42.30.110 (1)(b) noting that the session

