

## COMMISSION WORKSHOP

Thursday, May 26, 2022  
11:00 a.m.

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

**STAFF PRESENT:** Jim Smith - General Manager, Gwyn Miller - Assistant General Manager, Brandon Johnson - Engineering Supervisor, Mark Garner - Engineering Supervisor, Brandy Myers - Accounting and Customer Services Manager, Anita Clever - Energy Services Specialist, Kevin Ricks - Renewable Energy Asset Manager, Mike DeMott - Director of Finance and Power Management, Jim Brokaw - Metershop Superintendent, April Greenlaw - Operations Support Assistant, Sharon Blodgett - Water/Wastewater Coordinator, Mike Nixon - Operations Manager, and Luann Mata - Administrative Assistant.

**GUESTS:** Brooke Johnson

### **WORKSHOP:**

The workshop with the KPUD Board of Commissioners was called to order by President Miller at 11:03 a.m. to discuss the proposed automated metering infrastructure (AMI) project and how it is a key strategy in the District in meeting the strategic plan goals. The workshop was held in the KPUD Board Room in Goldendale, WA.

The workshop framework was a presentation by all staff present and included analysis and discussion on all aspects of the proposed program. The presentation covered the infrastructure and costs of the project, as well as impacts on all areas within the PUD. It also covered process improvements, metering improvements, potential to ensure that capital investments that are being driven by load growth and legislative directives, work efficiencies that would allow employees to complete more work, safety improvements, as well the ability to work more closely and timely with customers on account opening and closing, as well as collections. Communication and reliability improvements that our customers would see were also discussed. Staff explained that this information was comprised of extensive work done by staff and with experience gained from implementing an AMI pilot project. They provided examples of the information gained from the project to date.

The board asked if a system-wide roll out of AMI meters would reduce future capital costs. The short answer is no, but it could allow us to more effectively time the capital improvements and delay upgrades if rate redesign leads to our customers choosing to reduce their bills by reshaping their electrical demand. Ultimately, there will be load growth and that load growth appears to be increasing. By utilizing this system and by implementing procedures, we should be able to delay or improve the system in a more cost effective manner.

The board asked if we are experiencing changing system load peaks during the year. We are still winter peaking, however, last year's heat wave during July was the highest peak in 2021.

The board asked if the AMI meters and system would communicate during an outage. It was demonstrated during our pilot project that the meters will provide communications for a short period of time to report that they lost power and associated communications hardware has battery back-up that provides several hours of communications. These meters also provide consistent data that can support a more even equal payment plan, eliminate rural self-reads and eliminate estimated reads. They would provide information for customer service or metershop staff to address customer questions in real time regarding usage, outages, temporary system blinks, and low voltage issues for example.

The board asked about meter and equipment failure rates. The statistics show a less than

