

Public Utility District No. 1 of Klickitat County  
**Board of Commissioners Meeting**  
**Tuesday, August 22, 2023**  
**2:00pm**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Vice President Dan Gunkel called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. as advertised.

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

**STAFF PRESENT:** Jim Smith - General Manager, Gwyn Miller - Assistant GM, Brandon Walter - WWW Superintendent, Isabelle Carroll - Accounting Clerk, Sharon Blodgett - WWW Coordinator, Mike DeMott - Director of Finance and Power Management, Kevin Ricks - Renewable Energy Assets Manager, Mike Nixon - Operations Manager, Mark Garner - Engineering Supervisor, Brandon Johnson - Engineering Manager, and Luann Mata - Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board.

Via teleconference:

Andrew Jaekel - Buyer, Sohn Kartes - Materials Manager, Patrick Carroll - IT Consultant, Cynthia Bruce - Accountant, Alex Casimiro - LFG Support Assistant, Courtney Collins - Engineering Support Assistant, Sarah Honkala - Accounting Clerk, Chris Evans - Network Administrator.

**GUESTS:** Andrew Beckner, Richard Drake, Melody Drake, Dan Hathaway, Ron Ihrig, and Larry Hocter.

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

**MINUTES: MOTION** was made by Commissioner Doug Miller to approve the August 8, 2023 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

**CLAIMS & PAYROLL:** Presented by Isabelle Carroll. 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 22<sup>nd</sup> day of August, 2023.

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

- Accounts Payable Voucher Nos. 217046 through 217160 in the total amount of \$902,200.98; Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) transaction Nos. 501 through 503 and Wire and Automated Clearing House (ACH) Nos. 8801833 through 8801839 in the total amount of \$1,466,573.70 for the period ending August 22, 2023; and
- Payroll ACH Direct Deposit Payroll transactions 212400 through 212495 in the total amount of \$261,120.81 for the payroll period ending August 13, 2023.

Motion carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**Andrew Beckner** addressed the Commissioners with his concerns with the new Clean Energy Transformation Act (CETA) program implementation. He is worried about the cost of electricity going up. As a small farmer, it will be difficult to make ends meet with the rise of electricity costs.

**Richard Drake** addressed the Commissioners. He voiced his concerns about several items related to our Advanced Metering infrastructure (AMI) project as well as CETA regulations. His AMI concerns focused around health issues potentially linked to AMI meters, cyber security risks, and his opinion that there should have been more public notice regarding AMI. He also focused on rate design and CETA requirements. He advised the board to delay AMI meter installation to give customers more time to learn and decide if receiving one is a correct fit for them. Mr. Drake also stated that he believes that all of the PUDs in Washington State should band together and fight CETA. As KPUD's customers will be unable to afford the astronomical change in the price of power bills.

**Dan Hathaway** asked the board to consider a request to transfer a water service as Water Wastewater staff cannot grant his request as it does not meet policy. He owns a lot in Glenwood, which he is selling to an adjoining neighbor. The lot has a water and a wastewater service connection. The new owner has no use for the water or sewer service connections with his current property plans. Mr. Hathaway has four other town lots that do not have water connections. His request is to move the current connection to one of these four other lots. The importance of this request is that currently Glenwood does not have any available water connections. He feels that as he has maintained paying the base fees for these connections, he should be able to transfer these services. Commissioner Gunkel asked that he schedule time to review his request with Jim Smith to evaluate his situation and review policy. Commissioner Gunkel asked Jim to provide the board with options to consider.

## **REPORTS:**

**Water-Wastewater Update** - Sharon Blodgett and Brandon Walter presented the report.

We requested quotes for the concrete pad for the emergency generator in Wishram. We also utilized one of the college students for field investigation of water service line material for every water connection within the Wishram water system.

We completed the Water Right Assessment for Glenwood and submitted the application to increase approved connections to the Department of Health (DOH).

The Roosevelt water system was hit by a lightning strike again. The strike affected the SCADA reporting system. Meter Shop completed repairs and system is running normal again. Commissioner Gunkel asked Jim Smith to review the lightning strike issues and work with staff to research installing hardware to limit damage from lightning strikes at our water and wastewater systems.

WWW Staff will be talking to the County public works department regarding the Dallesport Waste Water system budget after Klickitat County Fair is complete.

**Operations Update** - Mike Nixon reviewed the operations report for July.

Reliability is holding steady. Crews spent the end of July repairing equipment and installing 12 replacement poles due to damage from the Newell Road fire. Staff trimmed 14 miles of line last month in the Trout Lake area; 10 miles of the 14 was transmission overbuild. Mike thinks they will complete 150 miles by year-end. Dale and the tree crew removed 282 dead trees last month. Fire suppression equipment was discussed.

**Engineering Update** - Brandon Johnson and Mark Garner presented the July update.

AMI Project update- Phillip McMillan is working with Landis+Gyr representatives to complete site surveys for router and gateway installations. We detected a factory meter programming issue last week. Brandon is working with L+G to provide technicians to reprogram the affected meters on site. There will be an update for the command center program on August 31. We are contracting with Allegiant to do our

mass roll out. The soft roll out will be 50 to 100 meters installed on September 11 to verify that the communication is working correctly. It was also determined that since the communication infrastructure is more robust in the central county, that is where Allegiant will begin the deployment process.

We have Power Engineer's looking at the Trout Lake substation site survey. Transformer bid opening is middle of September.

Staking Engineers are working on the Dallesport underground project. We are doing well with executing our capital plan. Next month we will do a 2.5-mile pole replacement project near Cleveland Substation. We are currently recruiting for a System Engineer.

The White Salmon crew will be in Goldendale doing transmission work. Staking engineers opened 42 work orders this month. Phillip developed a new field mapping application. Sturgeon will be back on the property on September 5<sup>th</sup> to begin the Dot Road Project.

**COMMISSIONER RANDY KNOWLES** - Commissioner Knowles stated that there are limited ways that people are able to opt out, and there is push back regarding the opt-out fees. To some degree, he understands how people can have questions or concerns. He asked the commissioners if changing the \$200 dollar application fee to be refundable if they do not qualify for the program would clear up some of the stigma around the application. Jim Smith stated that he supports the \$200.00 fee, as it was developed to recover costs as staff was directed to.

Commissioner Gunkel stated it would be good for the board to revisit the application process to evaluate if the fee is appropriate.

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

**COMMISSIONER DOUGLAS MILLER** - Commissioner Miller thought that customers who came up to the fair booth were mostly supportive towards our AMI meters.

**ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER** -

- Gwyn Miller extended her thanks to everyone who worked at the Klickitat County Fair booth.

**GENERAL MANAGER** -

- Jim Smith attended the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Wildfire Advisory Committee meeting. DNR reported that there is a 53% increase in fire starts in 2023 over the same time-period in 2022.

**AGENDA ITEMS:**

- A. **RESOLUTION 1841- REIMBURSEMENT FROM PROCEEDS OF TAX-EXEMPT OBLIGATIONS** - **MOTION** was made by Commissioner Doug Miller to adopt Resolution 1841 Reimbursement from proceeds of tax-exempt obligations' as presented. Motion carried.
- B. **CARBON FREE POWER SOURCE, SMALL MODULAR NUCLEAR REACTOR INVESTIGATION** - Kevin Ricks and Mike DeMott reviewed project status.

Energy Northwest hosted a virtual meeting with utilities on 8/16. Discussions have taken place with Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) regarding their resource planning process. The request is that BPA accelerate their resource planning forecasts that are currently underway to better fit with the post 2028 contract process.

