

Portland Utility Board

September 21, 2017, 11am – 1pm
Pettygrove Room, Portland Building
Meeting # 32 Minutes

Attendees:

PUB Members:

Allan Warman
Ana Brophy, ex officio
Colleen Johnson
Dan Peterson
Micah Meskel
Mike Weedall
Robert Martineau
Ted Labbe
Scott Robinson
Hilda Stevens

Absent:

* Meredith Connolly
* Van Le, ex officio
* Alice Brawley-Chesworth, ex officio
* Lee Moore

*Notice of absence provided prior to meeting

Staff:

Mike Stuhr (Director, Portland Water Bureau)
Gabe Solmer (Deputy Director, Water)
Jonas Biery (Business Services Manager, BES)
Cecelia Huynh (Director of Finance and Support Services, Portland Water Bureau)
Liam Frost (Management Analyst, Portland Water Bureau)
Todd Lofgren (Senior Policy Advisor, Commissioner Fish)
Edward Campbell (Group Manager Resource Protection, Portland Water Bureau)

Shannon Fairchild (Financial Analyst, City Budget Office)
Melissa Merrell (Principal Analyst, City Budget Office)

Public:

Carol Cushman (League of Women Voters)

I. Call to Order, Introduction of Any Audience Members

II. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

The board approved the revised minutes from [July 11, 2017](#) to address a correction Rob raised at the last meeting. The board also approved the minutes from [September 5, 2017](#) as amended with changes from Rob and Colleen. The board delayed approving the [August 24, 2017](#) minutes until Hilda arrived. The board later revisited the minutes and approved them on a voice vote as amended with Colleen's changes. Two members who had not attended the meeting abstained from the vote.

III. Disclosure of Communications

IV. Eagle Creek Fire Update

Director Stuhr and Edward Campbell from the Water Bureau gave an update of the fire in the Columbia Gorge. The fire has grown to 48,000 acres and was 48% contained. It is still an active fire despite recent rains. Most recent growth concerns are on the east side of the fire perimeter.

There have been two points of intrusion into the Bull Run Management Area; but no intrusion into the Watershed drainage area. The fire management teams are now focused on patrolling to make sure fire isn't spreading, knocking down trees on fire, and clearing out fallen brush. There has been no measurable ash fall at headworks despite what was seen in town. The bureau has returned to normal operations at southern area of the watershed; the northern areas are still closed.

Director Stuhr told the board that one of the challenges during the fire was ensuring the communications of the bureau matched what the forest service was saying. There were between 40 and 50 people involved in managing fire. Colleen asked if there were risks now to the water supply from landslides. Edward responded that since the fires didn't burn within the watershed, there wasn't an increased risk. The natural topography of the watershed and the location of the fires means there shouldn't be an increased risk since the fire hasn't topped the ridge.

Mike W. asked about the expectations given the forecast for drier weather in the next few days. Edward responded that one advantage of clearer weather is that fire managers may get aerial shots of the burn area, but it remains an active fire and it may spread around the East Creek area.

Allan asked if there was concern that precipitation may bring the ash into the watershed. Edward replied that the watershed is always sensitive to the first flush events after a long time without rain. The bureau watches these events closely and monitors for resulting turbidity. So far, the bureau hasn't seen increased turbidity.

Micah expressed an interested in the commissioning and decommissioning of fire lines and he would contact Edward directly.

Allan asked if fire retardant has been used and Edward said not in the watershed. Retardant was used to protect a tower in another area. Edward has had a chance to look at the gorge and there is still a lot of canopy left. Director Stuhr added that this was a unique area that retains

moisture and burned differently than people may have assumed given the visible smoke. Dan asked if there was any news about when I-84 would be opened. Edward responded that there remain serious safety issues and the Forest Service and other fire managers will make that call when it's safe.

V. **BES Strategic Plan Update**, Deputy Director Dawn Uchiyama, BES

Dawn talked with the board about the [responses](#) to the questions and suggestions they submitted in August and thanked the group for their thoughtful questions and input. She then told them about the timeline. The final draft report was currently being worked on by editors. She expected to be able to circulate it to the board by October 9th and would asked them to review or provide feedback by October 23. Colleen thanked Dawn for her thoughtful consideration of the boards comments and her work on the project.

Mike W. asked how the bureau ended programs, saying it was something he had struggled with in his career. He noted that he didn't expect an answer but would like a discussion about culling programs. Dawn offered an antidotal experience of shutting down the downspout disconnect program. Ted also added that the bureau ended the Gray to Green Program as a stand-alone project but incorporated program aspects into the work of the bureau. Some things change, but other things get embedded.

Rob commented that he felt this was a good start and appreciated the framework.

Dawn said the plan was currently with a technical writer and she hoped that PUB could help the bureau tell the story and would ask, if the PUB supported the plan, for a statement of support.

VI. **Board Discussion: FY 2016-17 Annual Report and FY2017-2018 Work Plan**

The board began a discussion of its FY2016-17 [Annual Report](#) and current year work plan. Melissa reminded the board that by City ordinance, they need to file an annual report covering July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017. She created a first draft using last year's report as a template. The last component of the annual report is a work plan for the current year. Melissa provided the board with a [draft master calendar](#). Purple items are open policy items. One of the conflicts she heard from both the board and the bureaus this year was not having enough time. Her hope is that the board will identify high priority items early so they can be included in future agenda items.

Colleen asked some style questions and reasons for shading on the board experiences graphic. Micah asked about the need for the section on the blue-ribbon commission. Ted asked if the audience was the Council and suggested some changes to make it more accessible to community members. Those suggestions included a summary at the front that hits on the major topics that the board addressed. Rob noted that most of the exciting things recently would be outside the scope of this report but the board agreed it would be good to include that as a standard. Scott commented that the draft did a fine job of capturing the board's work last year but suggested organizing next year's work around key messages/themes that the board will be considering in FY2017-18. It would send a clearer signal of how the board will spend FY 2017-18. He suggested regulatory compliance, strategic planning, capital planning, resiliency and emergency preparedness, public and community engagement, equity program implementation, operational efficiency, interbureau coordination, and Micah added green infrastructure.

Colleen asked how members felt about the section on the recommendations of the blue-ribbon and Dan added that the thought it was good to keep and added context to the creation of the board.

Colleen asked for clarification on the timeline and Melissa responded that the reports should be submitted to Council by the end of September but she imagined the Council would be forgiving if they knew the board was actively working on it. Todd confirmed there were no legislative consequences to it being late.

Melissa then reviewed the draft master calendar she created, highlighting dates that deviated from the traditional first Tuesday meeting date. She also pointed out the [bureau coordination memo](#) that documents an outline that she, the bureaus, and the commissioner's staff have created for the upcoming budget cycle. She asked member to review and let her know if they felt anything was missing.

Melissa then turned to the [Suggested Topics list](#) and Open Policy Worksheet and asked member what topics they would like to consider over the next year. Equity isn't currently on the list. Mike added that the ongoing low-income work wasn't yet include on a list. Colleen also noted that the strategic plans for both bureaus were currently included in the Master Calendar. She thought that the Rate Making topic was more instructional than policy and wondered if that could be provided outside of meeting time. She recommended BES/PBOT coordination, the slough, and crystal springs should be in a high priority category. Micah added that the Council would soon be designating Salmon in the City Day and more time for that work at Crystal Springs would be good. Ted agreed and both suggested another tour of the area next fall when migration is happening. Ted said the tour of crystal springs would help the wider board understand the work and how it's not always green versus gray, but can be an integration of the two. Micah suggested that it would be best next fall when migration is happening. The board also mentioned interbureau work related to trees and how to manage them in the right of way. Ted suggested that the bureaus could work to coordinate topics and Colleen thought maybe meetings could be structured around themes so there was more cohesiveness. Micah added an update on BES and the City's work with Superfund would be good as part of the regulatory topics.

Hilda arrived and the board revisited its early conversation about voting for minutes. Rob raised the question of what if people die or resign and the board can't reconstitute a quorum of members who had attended meetings. How does the board approve those minutes? Melissa responded that there was no accepted board rule that absent members were required to abstain from voting on the minutes of meetings they had missed but to date, but by practice, members had done so. Several members weighed in on the pros and cons. Melissa suggested it could be an item to be considered as part of the board procedures to be considered October 19. The board approved the minutes with two members abstaining.

VII. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Ted commented that having public comment at the end of meeting makes it hard to engage with the board; recommended an option to make comment at beginning or end or both. Hilda thought there might be room to have public comment after each topic. Colleen expressed

concerns about the impact on the agenda and was in favor of comment at the beginning but not two public comment times. Mike liked the idea of comment at the beginning of meetings and thought it would be good to talk about at the next meeting. Carol suggested the board could give people the option of when they would give testimony depending on topic or point of the comment. Rob reminded the board they do open the floor for public comment before voting. The topic will be considered as part of the October 19 meeting.

VIII. **Discuss next Meeting Agenda**

October 10, 2017

Intro session: 3pm Budget 101 training/refresher

Meeting 4pm

Fire Update (as needed)

BES Strategic Plan Update

BMP Reviews and Board Discussion

Multnomah County Drainage District

Ted announced gray water workshops and a tour of residential home projects on September 29 from 3pm -7pm.

The meeting adjourned at 12:30 PM