



Commissioner Nick Fish
City of Portland

May 29, 2015

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Commissioner Fish introduces ordinance to create the Portland Utility Board

Contact: Jim Blackwood, Sr. Policy Director
(503) 823-3598

Portland City Commissioner Nick Fish today filed an ordinance to establish the Portland Utility Board (PUB). The PUB will strengthen public oversight of the Portland Water Bureau (PWB) and Bureau of Environmental Services (BES).

The ordinance contains key recommendations presented to Council by the Utility Oversight Blue Ribbon Commission (BRC) chaired by former U.S. Attorney Dwight Holton. The eleven-member BRC was charged by Mayor Hales and Commissioner Fish with identifying potential public oversight and accountability reforms for PWB and BES.

The BRC submitted its final report to Council at a work session held in December 2014. The report recommended the formation of a year-round community oversight body, with dedicated professional staff under its direction, to be actively involved in upstream deliberations on utility bureau budgets, capital spending, policies, and programs.

The new PUB will replace the existing Public Utility Review Board (PURB) and the individual utility Budget Advisory Committees (BAC), and will report directly to the City Council.

“Today we are following through on a commitment to bring forward the BRC’s recommendations to improve public oversight of our public utilities,” said Commissioner Fish. “In concert with a unique partnership with the Citizens’ Utility Board of Oregon, the PUB will bring a new level of accountability and transparency to our utilities.”

Under the proposed Ordinance, nine new board members will be appointed by the Mayor this summer. The goal is to have the PUB up and running for the next utility budget cycle.

The proposed Ordinance will be considered by Portland City Council on June 3, 2015 at 10:00 AM.

###