

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR
MEETING OF THE COMMISSION**

September 12, 2023

1. Call to Order | Pledge of Allegiance

The regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of Public Utility District No. 1 of Whatcom County was called to order at 8:15 a.m. by Commissioner Atul Deshmane. Said meeting was open to the public and notice thereof had been given as required by law. Those present included: Commissioner Atul Deshmane, Commissioner Christine Grant; Commissioner Jaime Arnett and Legal Counsel Jon Sitkin. Staff: Chris Heimgartner, General Manager; Assistant General Manager Brian Walters; Andrew Entrikin, Broadband Program Manager; Ann Grimm, Executive Assistant; Annette Smith, Director of Finance; Rebecca Schlotterback, Manager of Contracts and Regulatory Compliance; Aaron Peterson, IT/SCADA Technician; Mike Macomber, IT/SCADA Technician; Traci Irvine, Accountant I; Garrett Love-Smith, Project Manager; and Kurt Wank, Director of Utility Operations.

Public attending:

Rick Maricle, Citizen

Dave Olson, Citizen

Jack Wellman, Puget Sound Energy

Brian Heinrich, Puget Sound Energy

2. Approval of Agenda

Sitkin requested an item be added to New Business: Approve Property Access License Agreement.

ACTION: Commissioner Grant made the motion to APPROVE THE AGENDA OF SEPTEMBER 12, 2023 AS AMENDED. Commissioner Arnett second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

3. Approval of Consent Agenda

- a) Approval of Meeting Minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 8, 2023;
- b) Approval of Meeting Minutes of the Special Meeting of August 17, 2023;
- c) Approval of Meeting Minutes of the Regular Meeting of August 22, 2023;
- d) Approval of the Claims of September 12, 2023:

VENDOR NAME	AMOUNT
AMERICAN WATER WORKS	400.00
ARG INDUSTRIAL	1,443.51
AT&T MOBILITY	1,798.03
BELLINGHAM HERALD	810.00
BUD CLARY FORD HYUNDAI	47,768.21
CARLSON STEEL WORKS, INC	375.03
CHMELIK SITKIN & DAVIS	14,675.94
CIVICPLUS LLC	4,688.00
CONSOR NORTH AMERICA, INC.	144,217.53
CORNERSTONE MANAGEMENT, INC.	2,193.00
CRABTREE, DEVIN	82.07
EDGE ANALYTICAL LABORATORIES	24.00
EXACT SCIENTIFIC SERVICES INC.	27.00
FASTENAL	81.73
FCS GROUP	4,826.25
FERNDALE ACE HARDWARE	174.01
FERNDALE CITY OF	245.68
GRAYBAR ELECTRIC COMPANY, INC	278.94
HACKER, RONALD G	492.68
HARDWARE SALES, INC	93.15
HEALTH PROMOTIONS NORTHWEST	150.00
JOHN DEERE FINANCIAL	18.34
K ENGINEERS, INC.	72.50
KCDA PURCHASING COOPERATIVE	52.89
LYNDEN TRIBUNE	82.00
MILLS ELECTRIC	16,839.45
MOTOR TRUCKS, INC	146.58
NORTH COAST ELECTRIC COMPANY	891.91
NORTHWEST CASCADE, INC.	128.50
NORTHWEST FIBER DBA ZIPLY FIBER	1,423.23
NP INFORMATION SYSTEMS (3-D CORP)	269.82
P&P EXCAVATING, LLC	1,867.92
PITNEY BOWES	151.32
PLATT ELECTRIC SUPPLY CO	32.86
PORTAL WAY FARM & GARDEN	98.53
PUD #1 OF WHATCOM COUNTY	403.16
PUGET SOUND ENERGY, INC	8,303.70
REGENCE BLUE SHIELD	47,862.89
REISNER DISTRIBUTION, INC	1,900.12

DRAFT

RICOH USA	210.25
SSC - SANITARY SERVICE COMPANY	620.44
STAR RENTALS	1,705.78
STORMWIND LLC	4,500.00
TEAMSTER LOCAL #231	616.00
ULINE, INC.	131.88
UNITED WAY OF WHATCOM COUNTY	742.00
UTILITIES UNDERGROUND LOCATION	29.67
VALVOLINE	129.42
VANDER GRIEND LUMBER	37.11
WASHINGTON ALARM, INC.	141.75
WASHINGTON DENTAL SERVICE	2,941.95
WASHINGTON TEAMSTERS WELFARE	13,273.40
WESTERN SOLAR	34,185.96
WHATCOM FARMERS CO-OP	33.71
WHATCOM JANITORIAL	1,430.00
GRAND TOTAL	\$366,119.80

ACTION: Commissioner Grant made the motion to APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA OF SEPTEMBER 12, 2023. Commissioner Arnett second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Public Comment – None.

5. General Manager’s Report

- Aldergrove Water Association – both the State Departments of Ecology and Health have concerns about Aldergrove’s lack of water situation. A community meeting regarding drought response is planned for October;
- Attending City of Bellingham/Cascadia presentation on Bellingham’s waterfront on Wednesday.
- Will attend the event coordinated by the Whatcom Watersheds Information Network on the adjudication process to water rights holders.

6. Old Business

a) Broadband Program Update

- Heimgartner said there are several financing methods for the District’s fiber initiatives: Grants or Local Utility Districts (LUD), bonds, bank loans, etc. These methods could fund through construction, and is reimbursed by the LUD, or it funds the LUD itself with property assessments. The District will continue to search for grants.
- Entrikin updated on the status of WA Broadband Office: Point Robert’s project - the scope of work and contract are being finalized; Whatcom County is finalizing their agreement to contribute matching funds.
- Entrikin presented a Local Utility District (LUD) marketing plan to bring fiber to un- and under-served areas.

b) Adjudication Update

- Ecology has announced adjudication filing will begin April 24, 2024.
- Sitkin will be meeting with tribal and ecology staff to discuss topics such late filing issues.
- Additional outreach on the adjudication process is in the planning process.

7. New Business

a) Work Session: Commissioner Input for Draft 2024 Budget

Smith stated the draft 2024 budget document will be presented to the Commission at the October 24, 2023 meeting. Commissioners can provide input on their priorities today, or as the budget is developed, to Heimgartner and/or Smith. The Commission provided initial budget topics and decided a special meeting should be planned to discuss Strategic Plan priorities (Date TBD).

ACTION: No action taken or requested of, information only.

b) Approve Property Access License Agreement

Sitkin explained that an *access license agreement* was needed to gain access to a Grandview parcel located near the Grandview Water System. If approved, the agreement will grant Whatcom PUD, its consultants, engineers, and others to access, inspect and/or evaluate the property for potential purchase.

ACTION: Commissioner Grant made the motion to APPROVE THE PROPERTY ACCESS LICENSE AGREEMENT PENDING FURTHER LEGAL REVIEW. Commissioner Arnett second the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

8. Operations Report

- Walters reported on the following projects:
 - Plant 2 East Pond Cleaning project is now complete.

- Rooftop Solar Project is pending completion after inspections and walk-through with the contractor.
- Ferndale Substation is now at the commissioning phase. The last delay is for an on-site testing controls firm to complete full-function testing.
- Paul Siegmund, Manager of Automation and Technology, recently secured two Washington State grants for cybersecurity. The grant extends over three years in the amount of \$168,000, which will help offset costs for the District.

9. Commissioner Reports

Deshmane:

- Attended the Public Power Council meetings in-person last week;
- Will attend the Washington Public Utility Districts Association (WPUA) committee meetings this week in Richland;
- Also attending the WPUA Water Workshop the following week, in-person. He asked to attend/claim per diem the Clallam PUD Commission meeting on Monday September 25.

Arnett:

- Would like to hold a Board Retreat and suggested scheduling late in the year or early 2024.
- Will attend the WPUA Committee Meetings this week via Zoom.

Grant:

- Has had several meetings with Heimgartner regarding geo-thermal energy.

10. Public Comment

Dave Olson followed up on Commissioner Arnett's question regarding the Bakerview Water Association.

11. Executive Session

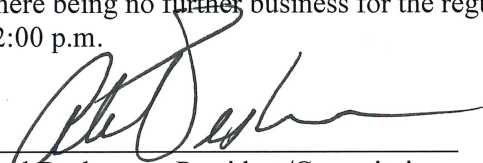
Commission President Deshmane requested an Executive Session pursuant to RCW 42.30.110(1)(i): Potential Litigation; and RCW 42.30.110(1)(g): To review the qualifications and/or performance of a public employee. Estimated time for Executive Session was two hours. The Commission President indicated no action was anticipated to be taken after the adjournment of Executive Session. After a short recess, the Commission adjourned to Executive Session at 10:00 a.m.

Executive Session Adjourn

There being no further business for Executive Session, the Commission rejoined the Regular Commission Meeting at 11:59 a.m.

12. Adjourn

There being no further business for the regular meeting, Deshmane adjourned the regular meeting at 12:00 p.m.



 Atul Deshmane, President/Commissioner



 Christine Grant, Vice President/Commissioner



 Jaime Arnett, Secretary/Commissioner

Commission Clerk Note:

Video recordings of the Whatcom PUD Commission Meetings are available online at the following link on the PUD's Website: <https://www.pudwhatcom.org/the-commission/2023-agendas-packets-meeting-minutes-recordings/>