

UTILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES
September 6, 2023

Call to Order

Meeting called to order 5:30 pm.

Members Present: Andy Maron, Ted Jones, Charlie Averill, Svend Brandt-Erichsen, Sheina Hughes, Martin Pastucha, Wanda Schulze (via Zoom)

Also Present: Chris Wierzbicki (Public Works Director); Jon Quitslund (Council liaison), Susan Hughes (former UAC member, present as member of the public)

Disclosure of Conflict of Interest: Wanda Schulze disclosed that she will be a participant in the Ferncliff extension. No action related to the Ferncliff extension is currently pending before the Committee.

Introduction of New Member

Wanda Schulze provided a summary of her background, including her experience with Seattle City Light. The other members of the committee introduced themselves for Wanda's benefit.

Power Line Undergrounding

The UAC engaged in an informational discussion on undergrounding of power lines as a means of improving reliability of electric service on the Island.

The Committee has previously discussed City franchise negotiations with Puget Sound Energy (PSE). A work group of UAC members and Climate Change Advisory Committee (CCAC) members developed a set of recommendations to be addressed with PSE in the context of the franchise negotiations – possibly in the form of a MOA or partnership agreement.

Based on discussions of these recommendations at franchise meetings, partnership topics are not likely to be included in the franchise agreement. However, PSE has indicated willingness to discuss an MOA approach.

One of the topics highlighted by the UAC/CCAC work group recommendations is reliability of service, particularly for the south end of Bainbridge Island. One of the recommendations was a request that PSE develop a long-term plan for undergrounding the distribution system on the Island.

Two issues were discussed related to undergrounding: the need for more granular data that would indicate what areas of the Island may benefit from undergrounding, and a general discussion of alternatives for paying the cost of undergrounding.

PSE has indicated a willingness to share data on service interruptions. This information, once obtained, could identify areas that would benefit. The challenge remains determining how to pay for such projects, with each alternative has its challenges.

There also was discussion of whether reliability of electrical service could be addressed in revisions to the City's Comprehensive Plan. As the UAC participates in that update process, this will be a potential topic to consider.

Susan Hughes provided the UAC with an update on what the Wing Point community has learned in investigating the possible undergrounding of approximately 2/3 of a mile of distribution line in its area. She has been leading work on this issue for the Wing Point community association. PSE has provided them with some data and has identified some funding alternatives, including the potential availability of a subsidy to reduce the cost of undergrounding to the affected PSE customers.

Action Items

Chris Wierzbicki was asked to distribute the documents previously generated related to a possible PSE partnership agreement, as well as the Utility portion of the Comprehensive Plan to the UAC members. (Documents were distributed on September 8).

A progress report on PSE franchise discussions is anticipated for next month's UAC meeting.

Public Works Update

Water Tank Replacement Project

- 100 percent design plans have been completed for the new tank.
- Will go to bid with two alternative designs: composite or hydropillar (all steel).
- There will be a separate bid package for off-site components.
- Hoping to be able make award by November.

Well Rehab Projects

- The Taylor well was successfully rehabbed last year.
- Rehab of Sands 1 & 2 is nearing completion.
- Head of the Bay – Public Works is starting contracting.

Treatment Plant: Capacity upgrades and UV system replacement expected to go to bid in the spring of 2024. Some parts expected to have a long lead time.

Outfall Replacement: Also going out to bid shortly, with Council approval sought in September.

Ferncliff Water Main: Awaiting Dept. of Health plan review, then expected to go out for bid for next spring. It will be funded through a rate surcharge.

Solid Waste

There was a brief informational discussion of solid waste collection services on the Island. Service levels on Bainbridge Island are tied to the Kitsap County Solid Waste Management Plan. A resolution will be put before the City Council regarding entering into negotiations with Bainbridge Disposal concerning solid waste services on the Island.

Groundwater Management Plan

Melanie Keenan of the Groundwater ETAC joined UIC for an update on the development of the Bainbridge Island Groundwater Management Plan.

- The City hired a hydrogeologist on staff to take the lead in development of the Plan
- That employee left after working on initial stages of the Plan
- The City has retained a consultant to complete work on the Plan
- Phase I (existing conditions) is completed
- Phase II (Analysis phase) is ongoing. Aspect built a groundwater model that is being used to support the analysis. The consultants are working with this model.

The Council has had a study session on results to date. Concern was expressed about trying to derive recommendations for actions before the analysis phase is completed. Decisions also remain to be made regarding timing and context of community engagement.

Several areas that may warrant additional consideration:

- Revisiting existing “early warning levels” for City wells
- Potential impacts on stream recharge
- South end analysis – potential impacts on City water supply if called to serve demand from the south end of the Island
- Potential for seawater intrusion

No action items for UAC from this discussion.

Anticipated Topics for Next Month

- PSE Franchise
- Water System Business Plan
- Timing and Sequence for Comprehensive Plan Update

Meeting Adjourned

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The top signature is a cursive name that appears to be 'Chris Anderson'. The bottom signature is a more stylized, flowing cursive signature, possibly 'Z. Z.', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.