

CLALLAM COUNTY PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT #1

Minutes of the Joint Meeting of the PUD #1 Board of Commissioners and staff and Clallam County Board of Commissioners and staff

Carlsborg Main Office | 104 Hooker Road | Sequim, WA 98382

OCTOBER 10, 2019

Clallam County PUD Commissioners Present

Will Purser, President

Jim Waddell, Vice President

Dave Anderson, Secretary

Clallam County Present

Mark Ozias, Chair, Board of Clallam County Commissioners

Meggan Uecker, Clallam County Public Works Utility Program Manager

Bill Peach, Clallam County Commissioner (via telephone)

Rich Sill, Clallam County Administrator

Ross Tyler, Clallam County Engineer

Joe Donisi, Clallam County Assistant Engineer

Jennifer Garcelon, Clallam County Environmental Health Director

District Staff Present

Doug Nass, General Manager

John Purvis, Assistant General Manager

Simon Barnhart, General Counsel

Tom Martin, Water/Wastewater Superintendent

Sean Worthington, Finance Manager/Treasurer

Nicole Clark, Communications Manager

Teresa Lyn, Executive Assistant

Mattias Järvegren, Utility Services Coordinator

Others Present

Robert Knapp, Jamestown S'Klallam Environmental Planning Program Manager

Jocelyne Gray, Regional Engineer, WA Department of Health (Drinking Water)

Colleen McAleer, Clallam County Economic Development Corporation

Andy Brasted

Krestine Reed

Ed Bowlby

Ian Nickel

Mike Doherty

Steve DePiro

Ed Bowen

Christy Cox, Sisterland Farms

Estella Mixson

The meeting commenced at 9:00 AM. After introductions, meeting presentations began. Commissioner Bill Peach joined the meeting at 9:22 AM via phone.

BUSINESS ITEMS

Clallam County Public Works Server Projects

Clallam County Utility Program Manager Meggan Uecker presented on the County's Public Works sewer utility projects planned for 2019 through 2023. The 2019 project is a pressure main extension from Gupster Road to Gilbert Rd. The 2020 and 2021 projects include a Sekiu to Airport Road basin pipe replacement, a Sekiu basin pipe repair and replacement and cleanout replacement project, and Clallam Bay inflow/infiltration improvements and systems analysis. Depending on the outcome of previous projects, additional 2022 and 2023 Clallam Bay-Sekiu sewer system projects may include pipe repairs or replacements for the Snob Hill basin, West End basin, and Middle Point basin. PUD Water and Wastewater Superintendent Tom Martin congratulated Program Manager Uecker on receiving a loan/grant approval for the planned work and noted that PUD was awarded a loan as well for Clallam Bay and Sekiu work. Tom and Meggan both agreed to coordinate on the timing of their respective projects to limit interruption to the area's businesses and residences.

Carlsborg Water Rights

PUD WWW Superintendent Martin presented on Carlsborg water rights, specifically the progress of the drilling of a new well, which will provide a new source of water for municipal use (i.e. domestic, commercial, and industrial) within the PUD service area and the Carlsborg Urban Growth Area (UGA). The site of the well at the corner of Carlsborg Road and Old Olympic Highway was selected because of the increasing probability of good production going north and east, and the increasing cost of a transmission line going north. Drilling, which commenced September 20th is expected to be down to the 4th aquifer by October 25th and the well pump test should be complete by November 29th. The County's consultant developed a mitigation concept that is designed to reduce lessening of stream flow into the Dungeness Water Rule Area by transferring production from the existing aquifer #2 well to the new aquifer #4 well. The production capacity of the new well will be determined by the pump test in November. Superintendent Martin presented the range of possible new well production rates, and the corresponding transfers of production for mitigation and availability of new water for expanding the PUD service area. Ecology appears to be favorable to the plan and is expected to approve it, as the plan will allow expansion of the District's service area without stream flow and fish impact, and it will preserve open space by inducing growth within the UGA. Superintendent Martin said that it is key to obtain water rights, which will provide the District with flexibility in utilizing them. He advised that Ecology's granting of new water rights to the District could take up to 7 months. The water rights process includes: drilling and pump testing; reporting; redrawing of service area maps; review, comment, response cycle, and Ecology issuing a Report of Examination with water right approval, followed by an appeal period. After water right permitting is complete, the District would begin the normal LUD formation process. This could take another year to complete, and then construction can begin. Commissioner Ozias requested that, after the water rights are acquired, a new interlocal agreement be made and the District loan existing water rights for the expansion of the service area. He suggested that the District and the County begin drafting the language for an agreement in advance, in anticipation of water right approval, to possibly shorten the time for some UGA access to water.

Commissioner Anderson inquired if the District foresaw the need to mothball the existing well. Superintendent Martin indicated that the nitrate issue, rather than transfer of production to the new well, may cause the well to be mothballed. Nitrate levels have been creeping up in the existing aquifer #2 well. Commissioner Anderson asked if there was a possibility of nitrates in the new well. Superintendent Martin advised that nitrates are usually only an issue in shallower wells and that the new well, due to its depth, should not have a nitrate concern. It may have slightly high levels of manganese; however those can be filtered.

Commissioner Ozias thanked Superintendent Martin and County Hydrologist Carol Creasey for working so diligently within their constraints, and with thoughtfulness and creativity, to advance the Carlsborg Water Rights project.

Small Water Systems

Clallam County Commissioner Bill Peach called in to participate in a discussion about small water systems, specifically Bullman Beach's. He inquired if the District could advise the owners of small water systems without taking those systems over. Superintendent Martin said there was no precedent or resources available for advising small water system owners; however the District has offered advice where water system owners ask the District to consider taking over their system. Typically, the District advises owners that improvements need to be made to bring it up to District standards, which involves a cost. Commissioner Ozias asked if the District would be interested in working more broadly with other organizations to provide outreach and education to Group B water system owners, as the County has to take them over if they fail. Clallam County's Utility Program Manager Uecker advised that she has Group A water systems rated by lack of capacity, and all other water systems classified by health. She advised that most small water systems are no longer being effectively managed, and there is concern over how to assist the owners of water systems. Jocelyne Gray, Regional Engineer of the WA Department of Health (Drinking Water) advised that her department is willing and able to assist with training, can offer technical assistance, and can identify resources at the State in partnership with other organizations to help owners of small water systems without acquiring them.

GM Nass said that the District recently got involved in Bullman Beach and advised that some residents were not receptive. He advised that the District would like to help, however it has limited resources. Commissioner Ozias said that right now the County is identified as the purveyor of last resort however the County doesn't have a water department to address these issues. He advised that grant funding is available for system consolidations and the County, along with assistance from Department of Health, hopes to bring these small and aging water systems up to PUD standards.

Commissioner Ozias said he envisions having the County and an internal County team put together a road map to develop a process for addressing the issue and next steps. Jennifer Garcelon, Clallam County Environmental Health Director, advised that she could develop a work team so the District would not have to drive the project. The project would identify the owners/managers who are currently running the water systems; what information, training, or education they may be lacking; and how best to connect them to resources that can provide them with information, technical assistance, and/or training.

Commissioner Purser pointed out that there would be a cost associated with this and inquired how this cost would be passed along to the system owners. Commissioner Ozias advised that there is some grant money available. He stated that as water is our most limited resource, the County Commissioners were working to better understand County water resources and issues. He advised that Clallam County will be improving the mapping of all their wells. Commissioner Peach thanked all and agreed with this approach.

The meeting recessed at 10:14 AM for a short break and recommenced at 10:21 AM.

Climate Change Conversation

Clallam County Commissioner Ozias presented on efforts the County is making to address climate change and to reduce the effects it may have upon the County. Possible effects are: sea level change, storm surge, flooding, drought, wild fires, invasive species, and ocean acidification. He advised that the County is being more formal and intentional about addressing climate change; for instance, it is researching what kinds of policies and projects on a local level it would like the District and other potential partners to be involved in, and engaging with the public to identify these. Commissioner Ozias shared that the County is becoming more flexible and creative with actions such as: installing solar water heaters; hiring a Resource Conservation Manager; developing a facility emissions inventory and baseline to measure reduction efforts against; videoconferencing, that has reduced driving by nearly 700 miles; the deployment and utilization of technology and energy-efficient systems to conserve resources; adding electric vehicles to the County fleet; investing in the Olympic Discovery Trail in order to encourage worker commute by bicycle; flexible work schedules, encouraging employee carpooling and use of public transit; transitioning to paperless systems; instituting a strong recycling program; the offering of public classes in septic waste management; and support of food banks and food providers that compost and reduce solid food waste, which is one of the most significant methane emissions. Commissioner Ozias said that every single one of these incremental gains add up over time.

Commissioner Ozias reported that the County's most recent Shoreline Master Program (SMP) insures that individuals and organizations building along shorelines and waterways have all the information they require in order to adhere to the buffer, setback, and construction requirements designed to mitigate damage to the shoreline/critical zones and to any construction due to sea level change, storm surges, or flooding. He also advised that one of the most significant concerns the County has in regards to climate change are wildfires due to both drought and the higher number of homeowners that now live within the urban forest boundary. Accordingly, the County has implemented building requirement changes for construction within commercial forestry areas specifically to mitigate wildfire damage.

Commissioner Ozias reiterated that the most significant impact climate change could have on the County is decreased water supply. To address this issue, he advised that the County is one of several stakeholders involved in creating a Dungeness River off-channel reservoir that will capture and store storm water for irrigation needs and mitigate flooding in Sequim. The County is also involved in a project to remove a levee that will facilitate restoration of 100 acres of floodplain along the lower Dungeness River, thus mitigating potential damage from storm surge events.

He reported that the County Commissioners are participating in “Jefferson Dinners.” These are community-engagement events designed to encourage people with diverse views to come together in a structured discussion session to have civil discourse about climate change. The Commissioners will soon come together to discuss what they have learned at these events. Commissioner Ozias stated that the Jefferson Dinners are a way to encourage younger citizens to work with adults in a more meaningful way. He stated that the Commissioners wish to advance this group by involving other organizations and citizens.

Commissioner Ozias closed by thanking everyone for the work they do. He suggested that citizens concerned about climate change voice their concerns during public comments, noting that a citizen Climate Advisory Group that voiced their concerns and provided guidance to the County resulted in some of the County’s carbon reduction strategies.

Reducing the District’s Climate Footprint

John Purvis, PUD Assistant General Manager, presented on the District’s continuing and current efforts to reduce its carbon footprint, including its community solar and electric vehicle charging station project. The presentation highlighted: Clallam’s current source percentages of fuel and how they compare to the state and nation; the District’s estimated CO2 output per year in comparison to the state and the nation; and District’s ongoing and upcoming initiatives to reduce its carbon footprint and mitigate climate change, including: innovative energy conservation; support of renewable distributed generation; AMI; building and leveraging an integrated smart grid to lower cost and minimize utility-controllable carbon emissions; and the creation of electric charging stations to support WSDOT’s Highway 101 EV highway corridor project.

Commissioner Ozias asked if we could do more solar projects on the Peninsula. Assistant Manager Purvis advised that he thought there would be more opportunities, but those would depend on state funding.

Commissioner Purser talked about Energy Northwest’s involvement in the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Transportation Alliance (EVITA), which plans to build a number of electric vehicle charging stations along Highway 101 approximately 40-60 miles apart.

Superintendent Martin inquired if the storm water runoff from County lands to be stored in the proposed Dungeness River off-channel reservoir and later released for aquifer recharge was going to be used to mitigate for new growth development or just for stream flow restoration for fish. He would like to get a place at the table at the reservoir planning meetings. Commissioner Ozias advised that the details have not been fully fleshed out and that he would include the District on the committee and at the next working meeting. He additionally stated that he would inform the District of relevant future funding opportunities.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ian Nickles suggested that greenhouse gas reduction should count as mitigation when the District applies for the Carlsborg water rights, as a reminder that the majority of our water comes from the Olympic snowpack. Commissioner Ozias advised that the City of Port Angeles was working on a Climate Change Plan and he suggested that anyone interested should reach out to Mayor Sissy Bruch to participate in their greenhouse gas meeting. Mr. Nickles also thanked the District and County for the joint meeting. He stated that democracy worked best when all could participate and provided these inclusive suggestions: wheelchair access, accessible doors (not so heavy), and a better audio system.

Ed Bowen stated that he was supportive of today's joint meeting, especially in a public forum and including public engagement. He asked that the District look into its easement rights in the area of the Elwha Park Recreational Campsites. He provided a copy of the plat to Assistant GM Purvis.

An attendee inquired if the District had considered offering incentives to customers for installing energy-storage batteries. Assistant GM Purvis responded that that would be up to the Board of Commissioners to pursue, however he advised that interested customers could start with Mattias Järvegren, the District's Utilities Coordinator to discuss any technical aspects. Commissioner Purser advised that currently, due to the cost of batteries, most customers prefer to use the utility as a battery. Regarding incentives; he said that the District currently offers incentives to solar customers and that the rest of the District's non-solar customers are bearing some of the cost. Assistant GM Purvis pointed out that reducing peak usage would benefit everyone and that the combination of a fully developed AMI system and battery storage may have that effect but we can't know that until AMI is more widely deployed throughout the District. Commissioner Purser agreed that having a fully developed AMI system in a significant portion of the County is important.

An attendee inquired what the County is doing to enforce codes to build houses that will help reduce greenhouse gases. Commissioner Ozias responded that the County is having conversations about this issue. The County has adopted some construction industry efficiencies. Many of them are cost prohibitive however, and he would like to achieve those gains while also achieving the affordable housing that is needed.

An attendee inquired if there were any plans for implementing gray water systems in County building codes. Jennifer Garcelon, Clallam County Environmental Health Director replied that there are no plans at this time.

Christy Cox of Sisterland Farms asked how is the County going to help the lower ends of the community that are disproportionately being affected by climate change? Commissioner Ozias responded that the County is trying to provide education to citizens when there is a regulatory burden for them to fulfill. For instance, the County provides public classes that teach people how to inspect their own septic systems, so they do not have to pay other people to do it. Ms. Cox said she would like to see more action on the food waste program.

Mike Doherty said he was happy to hear about the planned charging station loop around the Olympic Peninsula as there were so many long-term gains to be had, and he thanked Commissioner Purser for the information he provided on EVITA's efforts to build the loop. He suggested including Grays Harbor, Wilder Auto, Tribal casinos, and Mason 3 as charging station locations. Regarding the planned reservoir and levee removal, Mr. Doherty advised that the County understand fully the real cost of these projects before signing on to them. He also advised that the County adopt/use Hinkley software in order to standardize communications. He stated that what happened with PG&E and the California wildfires could happen here, due to reduced water supply, drought, and substandard roads. He noted that NASA has funded a study to identify where liabilities might exist that could be useful, and he suggested the burial of more power lines. Mr. Doherty also complimented Assistant GM Purvis' informative slideshow.

Commissioner Purser closed the joint meeting and stated that we are living in interesting times and he hoped that public input would rise to the occasion.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 12:06 PM.

ATTEST:

President

Vice President

Secretary

October 10, 2019