



## City Light Review Panel Meeting Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting: June 17, 2021 | 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM |  
Meeting held via Microsoft Teams “Final”

MEETING ATTENDANCE					
Panel Members:					
Names		Name		Name	
Scott Haskins	√	John Putz	√	Mikel Hansen	√
Sara Patton	√	Anne Ayre	√		
Staff and Others:					
Debra Smith	√	Jen Chan	√	Karen Reed (Consultant /RP Facilitator)	√
Kirsty Grainger	√	Mike Haynes	√	Craig Smith	√
Jim Baggs		DaVonna Johnson		Michelle Vargo	√
Kalyana Kakani		Emeka Anyanwu	√	Maura Brueger	√
Julie Moore	√	Chris Ruffini	√	David Logsdon	√
Greg Shiring		Carsten Croff		Leigh Barreca	√
Eric McConaghy	√	Toby Thaler	√	Angela Bertrand	√
Tim Skeel (Panel appointment pending)	√	Chris Tantoco	√	Uzma Siddiqi	√
				Don Von Dollen (guest)	√

**Welcome\Introductions.** The meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m.

All attendees introduced themselves.

**Public Comment.** There was no public comment.

### Standing Items:

**Review Agenda.** Karen Reed reviewed the agenda.

**Approval of May 12, 2021 Meeting Minutes.** Minutes were approved as submitted.

**Chair’s Report.** No report.

**Communications to Panel** Leigh Barreca shared that there were no communiques to the Panel.

**Panel Member Recruitment.** Maura Brueger reported that City Light staff are quickly assembling a pool of candidates to forward to the Mayor’s office and Council for all Review Panel vacancies. We currently have candidates for the following appointed positions: Economist, Energy Efficiency, Residential and Suburban Franchise Cities. Leigh is working with our Low-Income advocacy partners to identify a Low-Income position candidate.



## City Light Review Panel Meeting Meeting Minutes

Will hold off until fall for Panel chair/co-chair elections to allow time for all new members to join.

### **General Manager's update.**

Debra Smith presented.

- Strategic Plan - Yesterday SCL had its first presentation of Strategic Plan to the City Council Transportation and Utilities Committee. Staff are scheduled to return to the Committee on July 7<sup>th</sup>. At this meeting we would like members of the Review Panel to present their views on the Strategic Plan. The first presentation went well. The Committee expressed a lot of appreciation for the change to the rate trajectory and the SCL business strategies resonated with Committee members. Kirsty shared that our credit ratings are being affirmed. S&P was impressed with how SCL addressed Covid and how the utility is working on addressing declining load.
- Budget – The budget process is wrapping up. This year SCL incorporated the Race and Social Justice (RSJ) into its budget strategy. Staff are also looking at vacant positions ("pockets"). An increased vacancy rate was used to address budget concerns during COVID. Now SCL is looking at reallocating these vacancies to fill emerging business needs. The feedback from the budget office was very favorable. We aligned our budget and change requests with the business strategies that are in the Strategic Plan.
- Skagit Relicense – SCL is awaiting the approval of its Skagit Study Plan by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Debra feels they have made a lot of progress with license participants and are much more aligned. SCL put together a letter than most participants signed, which was very positive, however FERC interpreted this a second study plan proposal and re-opened a comment period.
- Upcoming presentation - Ben Kujala from the Northwest Power and Conservation Council will give a presentation to SCL staff and interested Review Panel members on the Council's 8<sup>th</sup> plan. This plan provides guidance on which resources can help ensure a reliable and economical regional power system over the next 20 years.
- Staffing changes – Our Environmental Officer, Tom DeBoer, has left SCL. His wife got a job opportunity in London and they have moved. Given the fact that we will have a new Mayor in 2022, and we are in the midst of a very public relicensing situation, we wanted to hold off on hiring a new Environmental Officer. We have used this opportunity to create some other executive position changes. Mike Haynes is now the SCL Assistant General Manager. His role encompasses oversight of our environmental efforts. We will evaluate his new role in Q1 2022 and make changes as needed. Michelle Vargo is our new Chief Operating Officer.

**Q:** How long do you expect these staffing changes to last? **A:** We are going to get through the Mayoral election and get to a good place with Skagit then we can reevaluate.

### **2022 – 2026 Strategic Plan.**

New PIA – Kirsty provided an overview of the PIA that was added to the Strategic Plan.



## City Light Review Panel Meeting Meeting Minutes

Council Committee update – Between now and July 7<sup>th</sup>, Maura will be gathering Council Committee questions in preparation for the second Transportation and Utilities Committee meeting. At the July 7 meeting, the Committee would like Review Panel members so to speak about the Strategic Plan and the comments raised in the Panel's letter.

### Grid Modernization presentation

Emeka Anyanwu, David Logsdon, and Uzma Siddiqi presented. Presentation materials are in Panel member packets.

**Q:** The team's passion is obvious. One suggestion is to incorporate this work into your organizational dashboards. How is this integrated with real time monitoring? **A:** This is not a well-trod path around what are good success metrics. We welcome input from community members – what should we be measuring and why.

**Q:** This seems underwhelming to have this big project and have the big outcome be upgrading some switches. I thought it would have more interesting stuff like microgrids. There was a lot of buildup, and I am not seeing the benefit to the community. **A:** The grid mod plan is a piece of the work we are doing. One proposal we submitted to the Clean Energy Fund is battery storage for solar charging at bus stops. We are trying to bring the concept of microgrid to our customers.

**Q:** This is a subset of the last question. What are some direct impacts on residents and businesses in the community that they will actually see? **A:** Improved reliability, improved resiliency plus an opportunity to see what new technology looks like. Outages would have shorter duration because our operations staff can find the fault faster. On the resiliency front, when a problem occurs, the ability to come back faster.

**Q:** Is there room in your presentation to encapsulate the financial impact on the community from the outages? I can see how this plan benefits City Light, but it is not clear how it will impact the community. Separately, what needs are the community self-identifying and how does your plan align with those needs? **A:** We are just at the start of the outreach for the Duwamish Test Bed project. This outreach will be important input to the project as we move forward.

**C:** If the purpose of the Duwamish project is to reduce outages, it would be good to see historical outages in this area compared to the rest of the City. Do not develop solutions without identifying the problem.

**Q:** There are two areas I am interested in learning more about. Microgrids as resiliency strategy – where would you put them city-wide? And batteries – seeing more explicitly how that can help with peaking hours. **A:** There is another project working with the Washington State ferries to put a battery at Coleman dock. We have the energy capacity to power one or two ferries. We would like to save the system the energy for the second ferry and use the battery.

**Q:** One last thing is for the targeted area—instead of residential customers charging vehicles at their homes, could you use Rec Centers or public spaces to charge EVs? **A:** One of the projects we are working



## City Light Review Panel Meeting Meeting Minutes

on is putting chargers on power poles. This is a great opportunity to use our right of way to increase charging infrastructure.

### **SCL Reports**

#### Q1 Financials

Kirsty presented. Highlights are in the review panel packet. Thus far in 2021, the financials are at or better than planned.

Executive Dashboard - Angela Bertrand presented the new SCL Executive Dashboard.

- Earlier this year, we completely re-did the executive team performance metrics. They launched in February and we are taking a very iterative approach, so they change each month.
- The report is organized by our organizational values.
- These are put together with the executive team in mind as an audience. We will share with you quarterly and know that the intent is to support the execs and respond to their feedback.
- Eventually this will be connected to our We Power dashboard initiative – one of the strategic plan priorities – we are working towards creating specialized automated reports for each director.

**Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 10:57 AM

**Next meeting:** September 22, 2021.