

Administration:

- Members Present: Alice Lanczos, Laura Firth Markley, Chris Thompson, Ross Gilliland, Tom Grant, Valerie Cholvin
- SPU Staff Present: Dave Hilmoe, Julie Burman, Susan Stoltzfus, Sue Morrison

Meeting called to order at 4:05PM.

March 16, 2011 meeting notes accepted as written

AGENDA TOPICS:**Update on Drinking Water Quality Report****Laura Firth Markley,
WSAC Member**

Laura and Alice Lanczos met with Karen Reed, Susan Stoltzfus, and Jason Argo of SPU Communications regarding the Drinking Water Quality Report. Laura reported that Jason has asked for feedback on the report text from ParkerLePla; also available is a poster format for the report. Laura noted that the overall size has been reduced which cut thousands of dollars out of the budget. She agreed with the decision to print in 4-color rather than 3-color given the low incremental cost and increased readability. Layout is in draft, and is very close to final, but text changes can be accommodated. Jason needs comments on content by close of business Friday. WSAC members can email proposed revisions to Laura by noon on Friday. She will compile and provide to Jason.

**WSAC feedback on draft customer communication planning
Regarding water rates****Susan Stoltzfus,
SPU Communications**

Dave Hilmoe noted that as SPU considers a water rate proposal, clearly communicating with customers is vital. He reiterated that WSAC is not being asked to provide recommendations on a rate proposal -- as there have not been policy issues for review. Rather, Susan Stoltzfus said that SPU is hoping WSAC will review draft communication plans and messages (term used for key statements). Susan presented a DRAFT set of messages about the SPU water system investments and the value of water (see presentation Water Rates Messaging, 4/20).

Tom Grant expressed the opinion that the messaging needs to stress financial reasons for the rate increase **not the value of water.**

Other suggestions made by the committee:

- Tom suggested the showing the percent of things that are driving the rate increase.
- Ross Gilliland suggested pointing out that there is no profit for water to SPU.
- Chris Thompson suggested highlighting the cuts SPU has already made.
- Laura Markley suggested messaging be done at the point fish are entering into the locks. Waterfest is a way of promoting summer programs. There are opportunities for messaging and including a tasting panel event. Also could use Bite of Seattle for messaging and tasting.

Susan will debrief with the SPU Communications group tomorrow on WSAC's initial comments. Susan will also provide the presentation electronically so Tom can distribute it to WSAC; he will compile WSAC comments and transmit to Susan. Susan thanked the committee for their time and effort on behalf of utility customers.

WSAC Roundtable

WSAC Members

Laura shared the highlights of the annual CAC meeting including Ray Hoffman's presentation, and a presentation provided by Susan Saffery, SPU's Legislative Liaison. Nancy Ahern reviewed SPU projects that involve collaboration between more than one line of business, or more than one City department. Alice added that she felt WSAC's big win was Imazapyr which was a City legislative issue, and likes the idea of getting involved earlier in the State legislative process with Susan Saffery - which would be in the Fall. Julie noted that there were two WSAC members at the annual meeting and asked if timing is an issue for next year's meeting.

Alice summarized the email comments from members regarding participation in rate communication. Patrick felt he did not want to rubberstamp anything. Frank feels an obligation to give input where needed. Chris felt that members are not here to scrutinize the work of the finance division. He felt it was important that the committee provide input on policy issues. Tom felt as a committee, feedback should be provided on messaging. He is comfortable helping come up with messaging ideas as long as it doesn't give the message that the committee participated in crafting the rate increase proposal. Tom would like to compile committee comments and provide a draft to SPU communications.

Dave Hilmoie followed up on Ray's suggestion about involving WSAC earlier in long-term financial projections and how that might impact retail water rates. This will involve bringing members up to speed with issues of budget and financial health, debt service, O&M, and CIP.

WSAC Business

**Alice Lanczos,
Chair
Julie Burman,
SPU Policy Liaison**

Julie reviewed topics for the May agenda. There will be a status report and possibly more work on the rate communication effort. Other topics include the Water System Plan with focus on assumptions to be included in the next water demand forecast and the drivers (reasons) for water conservation if SPU does not need a new source of supply beyond the year 2060.

Meeting adjourned at 6:00PM.