

Administration:

- Members Present: Laura Markley, Chris Thompson, Ross Gilliland, Tom Grant
- SPU Staff Present: Dave Hilmoe, Julie Burman, Karen Reed, Rich Gustav, Sheryl Shapiro, Liz Fikejs, Sue Morrison

Meeting called to order at 4:05PM

Chris Thompson will be chairing the meeting in Alice Lanczos' absence.

AGENDA TOPICS:**Seattle Times article (9/13) on water rates****Chris Thompson**

Chris explained that member Tom Grant had been contacted about six weeks ago by a Seattle Times reporter who wanted to know what the committee role had been. Tom responded by saying the committee role had been to provide feedback on how to best communicate to customers about the rate increase. Tom also said that the committee was disappointed that there were not policy issues to review with the 2012-2014 water rate proposal. He indicated that the direct quote in the Seattle Times article is fairly accurate. However, the article referred to committee as "among other skeptics" with which Tom was surprised. It was felt that the article did a reasonably good job in describing Tom's view of why a rate increase is needed. Ross Gilliland was surprised that the article was so balanced – no conclusions from the article or takeaways. Ross agreed that the committee should not have been characterized as skeptics. Chris Thompson wasn't surprised by the content of the article, but felt it wasn't the best way to convey that rates were going up. Chris felt the rate increase is needed, but in the future the committee could add value if involved in the process sooner.

Karen Reed, SPU Communications, explained that her staff worked very hard and provided lots of information and time to the reporter. A large amount of time was spent taking the reporter out to major SPU projects. Karen had just returned from a Council meeting and said nothing had been raised in relation to the article. Karen also appreciated Tom's willingness to talk to the reporter. She also said SPU is interested in making sure the most accurate information goes out to the rate payers. Karen stressed that SPU communications is here to help the committee make sure that the information they provide is accurate. SPU communications can be called at any time to help with an interview. Staff carries a media pager and will respond at anytime. Karen will provide cards (which the crews also carry) with contact information.

Two things struck Julie when reading the article. First that conservation was front and center, and second, the sub-heading of "opposition emerging". The opposition sub-heading led some other SPU staff to believe that the Advisory Committee was opposing the rate increase.

September Cedar Watershed Field Trip**WSAC Members who attended**

A debriefing of the September 27th watershed tour took place. Members who attended were impressed by the watershed operation and beauty and found it inspiring. Tom Grant said he is a big fan of public utilities, and every time he goes back to the watershed he becomes an even bigger fan. Ralph Naess made the tour both informative and interesting. One member commented that some citizens don't know about the watershed tour or the purpose of a watershed. Suggestions for making citizens aware of the tour

were made. Suggestions included using the Seattle channel, or television platforms such as NW back roads.

Morse Lake Pump Station Update

Dave Hilmoe

The Morse Lake pump station discussion goes back to 1992. There is a need to have water access below a certain elevation, which is risk mitigation. Two options have been under review: 1) Construct piped pump station, or 2) Upgrade the existing floating pumps. There is a third party review consisting of heads of other utilities. Ray Hoffman made the decision to go with floating pumps, and that SPU would own them rather than rent. This may not be in place until 2016-2017.

Water Conservation Program Emphasis (2013-2018) WSAC review and recommendation

**Julie Burman
Chris Thompson**

This discussion will go into the 2013-2018 Water Conservation Plan.
Chris Thompson summarized the top 5 values around water conservation, as developed by WSAC.

- 1) Developing good habits and maintaining conservation capabilities for when we don't have enough water. Can meet changing conditions associated with climate change.
- 2) Keep bills low for low income customers
- 3) Being good stewards of the resource / environment
- 4) Preserving stream flow for fish and other wildlife
- 5) Aligning with other City County, State conservation /sustainability activities and initiatives

Ray Hoffman was briefed about the WSAC top five values and this information was incorporated into the Operating Board meeting discussion for the Water Use Efficiency requirement. Saving Water Partnership utilities will include the same objectives in their water system plans.

The objective of keeping bills low for low income customers did not resonate with wholesale customers. SPU will continue with its program for low income customers that includes free toilets. The next step is to talk about programs give the objectives we have developed. Julie provided a spreadsheet with three conservation program options and the wholesale customer technical forum preferred option. Programs are not vastly different – they are nuanced. Program 1 is similar to what SPU is doing now. Programs 2 and 3 are new options with education. The department of Health allows SPU to set their own metrics. Julie asked that as the committee reviews the document that they indicate what would be helpful. Liz Fikejs asked who SPU should reach out to. For example, SPU's highest water users, and perhaps the lesser water users be focused on. Choices for communication are more community events, school support, and customer education. Laura Markley felt school and customer information is an invaluable tool because they are our next customers. Chris Thompson felt the effort should be as broad as SPU can get in reaching other groups. Laura added advice to eliminate double standards so that when curtailment is imposed it includes businesses as well. Tom Grant said the review looks balanced and complimented SPU on its review.

Recruitment

Sheryl Shapiro

Sheryl thanked members new and old for their time served on the committee. A brief update of what's coming up: We have members that have given a lot of time. The City has 62 boards and commissions. WSAC is not a board or commission but Sheryl is looking at their structures. The term for CAC's is two years. There are challenges in bringing in diversity for the 12 seats. There are six members, whose terms will come to a close at the end of February, 2012. Members with terms expiring could become part of the candidate pool if they choose to re-apply. SPU has been working on an initiative of building diversity. Sheryl is bringing that lens to the committee as far as recruiting members. Sheryl will begin a big push for recruiting in October and will bring in diversity for the panel. Commercial and industrial representation is

needed for the committee. Chris Thompson offered the committee's help to Sheryl in support of recruitment (i.e. writing documents, personal contact, etc...)

WSAC Business

**Chris Thompson,
Acting Chair**

October meeting will cover demand forecast.

The committee was asked to come to the October meeting with ideas and things to be looking at for the 2012 draft work plan.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:00PM