



City Light Review Panel Meeting Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting: January 24, 2022 | 9:00 – 11:00 AM |
Meeting held via Microsoft Teams “Draft”

MEETING ATTENDANCE					
Panel Members:					
Names		Name		Name	
Anne Ayre	√	Leo Lam	√	John Putz	√
Mikel Hansen	√	Kerry Meade	√	Tim Skeel	√
Scott Haskins	√	Joel Paisner	√	Michelle Mitchell-Brannon (appointment pending)	
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	√	Chris Tantoco	√
Greg Shiring	√	Carsten Croff	√	Leigh Barreca	√
Eric McConaghy	√	Caia Caldwell	√	Angela Bertrand	
Aaron Stephan	√	Kate Clark	√	Kathryn Aisenberg	√
Tony Iaccarino	√	Brian Taubeneck	√		

Welcome and Introductions. The meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m. Leigh Barreca led a round of introductions.

Public Comment. There was no public comment.

Standing Items:

Review Agenda. Leigh reviewed the agenda.

Approval of December 13, 2021 Meeting Minutes. Minutes were approved as presented

Chair's Report. There was no Chair's report.

Communications to Panel. There was one email to the panel regarding the status of filling the Low-Income Advocacy position. Leigh responded to the email that we have found a candidate and are preparing appoint materials.

General Manager's update. Debra Smith presented.

- Skagit tribal court lawsuit.



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Relationships with tribes in a good place. City Light is putting together an interim study report that goes to FERC. The report details where we are in the research. We are preparing for a 2023 license application. Skagit county continues to push for fish passage.

Q: Is that \$67M number (related to research) new or had it already been included in budget. And how is this impacting revenue requirements and rate projections? **A:** Yes, it's in our budget. We will have a fair amount of flexibility for these investments and timing.

- Mayor's office communications
 - i. Extended moratorium on utility disconnections (until 4/15/22)

Mayor's Office reporting structure with new administration – City Light reports up to the Mayor's Office's Chief Operating Officer, Marco Lowe. Caia Caldwell staff's the COO's Office and is City Light's liaison.

- Council committee assignments. Maura Brueger presented.

There is a new Council Committee Structure. City Light is now part of the Economic Development, Technology and City Light committee. The committee is chaired by CM Nelson. CM Juarez is the vice-chair.

- Maura also reported on an agreement that will protect the upper Skagit watershed. City Light worked on this with a coalition of parties including the British Columbia government and other impacted groups.

[Mining firm drops rights to Upper Skagit watershed](#)

The Seattle Times | Thursday, January 20, 2022

"The British Columbia government has announced the surrender of mining rights at the headwater of the Skagit River, following yearslong controversy over protection of one of the region's premier salmon rivers.

Under an agreement announced by the office of the B.C. premier, Imperial Metals will return to the province of B.C. all of its mining and related rights within a more-than-14,000-acre area for a 24 million Canadian dollar (\$19.1 million) buyout."

"The agreement is intended to ensure the preservation and protection of natural and cultural resources as well as recreational opportunities within the headwaters of the Skagit River. The buyout was paid by the Canadian government and nonprofits, according to B.C.'s Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation. It also includes \$4.5 million from Washington Gov. Jay Inslee's supplemental operating budget. Legislative approval is needed before the money is available, Inslee spokesman Mike Faulk said."



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Related Article:

[Mineral tenures surrendered in ecologically sensitive Skagit River Donut Hole](#)

British Columbia Gov News | Wednesday, January 19, 2022

Road to Recovery

Kathryn Aisenberg presented. The presentation is in panel packets.

Q: Are commercial customers all non-residential customers including industrial? **A:** Yes. All commercial customers are our non-residential customers.

Q: What are your biggest challenges now? (one-time repayment plan success, outreach to targeted populations, meeting equity goals, etc.) **A:** Yes, there are challenges related to landlord/tenant issues. Robust messaging is key to our ability to implement the program.

Q: Do the Customer Care & Billing application conversion and COVID impacts fully explain the 2.5X difference in bad debt between SCL and Industry average? **A:** Both of those factors play a big role in our increased uncollectible numbers.

Q: How many of the residential customers in arrears do you anticipate will be eligible for assistance? **A:** We know that of the customers owing at least \$100 and are 30+ days overdue, 15% of these customers are current UDP customers. Our hope is that through an effective communications campaign we can increase the number of income-eligible customers benefitting from both the Utility Discount Program (lowers future bills) and our Emergency Bill Assistance Program (up to two \$500 credits to pay down debt).

Q: How many of the commercial customers in arrears do you think will have to be write-off, due to bankruptcy and/or business closed during COVID? **A:** These will likely result in larger write offs, but it will take a few years to determine the full impact of closed businesses.

Q: You mentioned that you are finalizing disconnection/reconnection policies. You also mentioned that diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is a center tenant of this process. How do you anticipate that to materialize in the policies? **A:** We are being very thoughtful of our disconnection policies and are working closely with our Race and Social Justice staff in policy design.

Customer Satisfaction Survey results

Tony Iaccarino from DHM Market Research presented. The presentation is in panel packets.

Q: How does data compare to past surveys? **A:** This study is City Light's first primary survey with DHM. We participate in secondary research surveys. These studies, e.g., JD Power, provide additional customer satisfaction data.



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Q: How are you addressing the improvement areas that were identified? **A:** We are in the process of sharing the results with staff. The first read out was with our Customer Energy Solutions and Communications divisions. We are planning to do 3 in-depth focus groups with community-based groups. After we complete this process we will establish a framework for addressing the identified action items.

Q: How does this compare to other utility results? **A:** We see similar positive results with other utilities. City Light is unique in that across all demographic groups, results were positive.

Q: What do you think of doing opt out programs such as environmental, or low income similar to California? **A:** We're going to think it about more when we give our customers options. We would need to study this more to focus in on equity among all our customers.

Strategic Planning (This topic was postponed until the February meeting)

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Next meeting: February 15, 2022.