

**FINAL Minutes**  
**Seattle Water Supply System Operating Board**  
**June 3, 2021**  
**1:00 PM to 3:00 PM**  
**WEBEX Teleconference**

**Board Members**

Ron Speer, Alt/Matt Everett  
 Diane Pottinger, Chair  
 Shane Young  
 Ron Little, 7<sup>th</sup> Member  
 Mami Hara  
 Alex Chen, V. Chair  
 Paula Laschober

**Utility Representatives**

Boyd Benson  
 Pete Eberle  
 Steve Leniszewski  
 Al Nelson  
 Suzi O'Byrne  
 Terry Olson  
 Patrick Sorenson  
 Eli Zehner, Alt

**SPU Attendees**

Jennifer Arthur  
 James Amspacher  
 Regina Carpenter  
 Kathy Curry  
 Paul Faulds, Alt  
 Elizabeth Garcia  
 Terri Gregg  
 Paul Hanna  
 Martha Neuman  
 Maura Patterson  
 Susan Saffery  
 Gisela Sanabria  
 Todd Snider

**Other Attendees**

Lynne Danielson  
 Patty Hale  
 Charlotte Haines  
 Pam Maloney  
 Steve Pfaff  
 Kathleen Quong-Vermeire  
 Ron Ricker  
 Robert Russell  
 Ron Straka

**1. Welcome, Introductions and Announcements**

Diane Pottinger, Operating Board (OB) Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Kathy Curry, Wholesale Water Contracts Manager, confirmed Board Member attendance, noting that Ron Speer, Large Utility Category Board Alternate, would be acting as Board Member in Matt Everett's absence (Matt Everett joined meeting later).

**2. Agenda/Minutes**

- a) The **May 6, 2021** minutes were **approved 6-0**.
- b) The **June 3, 2021** agenda was **approved 6-0**.

**3. Old Business****a) 2022-2027 Capital Improvement Plan**

Diane Pottinger, Operating Board Chair, shared a report out on the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) review process that included four CIP workshops with Seattle Public Utilities (SPU) staff. The group shared appreciation for the new process and thanks to SPU staff for the presentations. Following the report out, the Chair asked the Operating Board to vote on whether the annual review process is complete and if they would like to use the same process next year. There was unanimous approval to use the same process as next year and that the process for 2021 is complete.

**4. New Business****a) SPU Apprenticeship Program**

Todd Snider, SPU Apprenticeship Program Manager, and Gisela Sanabria, SPU Water Operations Transmission Section Manager, shared information on SPU's Apprenticeship Program. The group discussed questions on the program and shared interest in follow-up discussions with SPU on future coordination with Operating Board members.

There was a question about the frequency of the apprenticeship program, and if there was any cross-training between Water and Drainage/Wastewater program areas. SPU relayed that the 2-year programs have staggered annual starts for each program area, with an apprenticeship class starting every year. Staff further explained that, at present, there is no cross-training between Water and Drainage/Wastewater, but that this idea will be looked at for future trainings.

There was also a question about recruitment difficulty, and SPU shared that there have been many applicants (over 600 received) but recruiting a diverse cohort that reflects the community is an ongoing challenge (race and particularly gender). That said, this year's incoming class is the most diverse SPU has ever had.

Lastly, there was a question about the SPU's Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) and gender (woman in the building and construction trades) training for apprentices. SPU shared that most of the training is the same as that received by all SPU employees, and that the combination of the two trainings engendered good conversations.

Finally, the topic closed with a robust discussion about exploring the idea of a regional workforce development program, such as the one in the San Francisco Bay area. The group discussed the efficiencies that could be gained by expanding the number of apprentices in SPU's program and allowing Operating Board members to utilize the recruitment opportunity. Northshore, Olympic View, Highline, and Woodinville all expressed interest in a future conversation with SPU about this potential opportunity. It was also mentioned that we could leverage additional federal/economic development dollars to assist in expanding the program.

**b) Seattle Water Rights**

Elizabeth Garcia, SPU Water Resources Hydrologist, provided an overview of Seattle's 15 Water Rights and the differing status, age, and volume of water associated with them. Elizabeth started by sharing relevant definitions and went on to describe SPU's active tracking and maintenance efforts, and the status of Seattle's various water rights, claims and pending water rights applications.

There was a question about the status of the Snoqualmie Aquifer water rights application. The East King County Regional Water Association is a co-applicant with SPU on this application.

There was also discussion about the N. Fork Tolt water right and historic considerations related to use of Lake Washington for water supply. SPU shared that the N. Fork Tolt water right is part of Seattle's long-range regional water supply planning, which includes analysis of multiple future supply options. The Chair recommended a future agenda topic to discuss the different purveyor water rights, their histories, and how we best leverage our collective water rights for long-term water supply.

**c) Seattle Water Advocacy**

Susan Saffery, SPU Government Relations Director, provided an overview of Seattle's water related proposals and advocacy efforts at the state and federal levels, with a focus on the federal COVID funding available to utilities, the federal low-income assistance funding and movement on federal infrastructure authorization and well as state action on climate change legislation and grants. There was a suggestion by the Chair to partner with the Operating Board around these advocacy efforts to leverage our regional voice for increased infrastructure funding (particularly for grants), as well as the need to be organized with shovel-ready projects to receive funding. SPU staff agreed and added that we can further leverage our voices through the Water Supply Forum with Tacoma and Everett, in addition to direct collaboration between operating board members and SPU.

SPU noted the previous regional effort to seek funds for seismic upgrade projects from both OB member organizations and from Water Supply Forum partners. SPU relayed the Forum effort was put on hold due to the pandemic, but that it is moving forward again, so, SPU will be reaching out for possible project updates from OB members in the coming months. In the meantime, conversations with the Washington federal delegation, national organizations and other interested utilities (particularly on the West Coast) are ongoing.

**5. Executive Summaries and Other Business**

- **Contract Review Updates** – Mami Hara thanked everyone for their participation in the financial overview workshop and reminded of the upcoming financial workshop scheduled for June 10<sup>th</sup> that will provide more detail on O&M.
- **Water Consumption from Watersheds vs. Rate Studies** – Alex Chen went over Att. 5a.
- **Water Supply and Lake Youngs Algae Updates** – Paul Faulds presented information on Att. 5b and 5c.
- **Water Topics in the News** - Alex Chen mentioned a recent Investigative Article in USA Today about water storage and water quality and briefly described SPU’s approach towards water storage facilities, summarizing that we are in very good shape.
- **CIP Project Updates** – Alex provided updates on the Tolt Valve 15 and Lake Forest Park Reservoir projects.
- **Other Updates** – Kathy Curry mentioned that she would be providing an OB meeting preference survey to Designated Utility Representatives in the coming week to aid in understanding preferences for continued remote, online meetings or in-person meetings in the future.


**6. Future Meetings**

Kathy provided reminders for the following upcoming meetings:

- June 2021
  - Contract Workshop #4: June 10, 1 to 3 pm
  - Contract Workshop #5: June 29, 2 to 4 pm
- July 2021
  - Monthly OB Meeting: July 1
  - Contract Workshop #6: July 29, 2 to 4 pm
- August 2021
  - Monthly OB Meeting: August 5
- September 2021
  - Monthly OB Meeting: September 2 – field trip or regular meeting?

**7. Board meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m.**

Approved by:

  
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Chair, Diane Pottinger  
Seattle Water Supply System Operating Board

  
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Date