

**CITY OF BELLEVUE  
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES**

Thursday  
February 7, 2019  
6:30 p.m.

Conference Room 1E-113  
Bellevue City Hall  
Bellevue, Washington

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Diann Strom (Chair), Negin Khanloo, Aaron Morin, Ling Zhuang

**COUNCIL LIAISON:** Jared Nieuwenhuis (absent)

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Vanja Knezevic (Vice Chair), Anne Howe, Lisa Schreiner,

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Lucy Liu, Assistant Director – Resource Management & Customer Service; Don McQuilliams, Operations Manager; and Brian Pugliese, Smart Water Technology Infrastructure Project Manager; Laurie Hugdahl, Minutes Taker

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Strom at 6:30 p.m.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion made by Commissioner Zhuang, seconded by Commissioner Morin, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed unanimously (4-0).**

**3. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

Oral and written communications were solicited. There were none.

**4. COMMUNICATION FROM CITY COUNCIL, COMMUNITY COUNCIL, BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS**

None

**5. STAFF REPORTS**

Asst. Director Liu reported on impacts of the recent inclement weather.

**6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

1/10/19 Regular Meeting Minutes

**Motion made by Commissioner Zhuang, seconded by Commissioner Morin, to approve the 1/10/19 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously (4-0).**

**7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

- **Seattle Public Utilities' Water System Seismic Study (Alex Chen and Bill Heubach)**

Bill Heubach and Alex Chen of Seattle Public Utilities reviewed the Seattle Public Utilities' seismic program and the results of their study. The major development since 1990 has been the availability of earthquake-resistant pipe in the United States. This kind of pipe has been used in Japan, subjected to dozens of earthquakes, and has had no failures. Mr. Heubach reviewed several scenarios for potential earthquakes in our region and vulnerability assessments including:

- "Vertical" Facilities – watersheds, treatment plants, reservoirs/tanks, pump stations and gatehouses, and support facilities
- Pipelines – transmission and distribution

Short-term measures and long-term measures were reviewed as well as seismic resilience recommendations.

**Commission Questions:**

Commissioner Zhuang asked how the time estimates of the earthquakes were developed. Mr. Heubach reviewed various hypotheses for determining this. Commissioner Zhuang referred to the suggestion to isolate larger areas of pipe damage, and noted this would likely be difficult since the roads will probably be very damaged as well. Mr. Heubach replied there are different ways to deal with this type of scenario such as valves that are remotely controlled. Another way is have valves that are actuated by the shaking motion of an earthquake. Crews could also go around and manually close valves. Commissioner Zhuang asked what residents can do to prepare. Mr. Heubach commented that the current recommendation to prepare for 14 days.

Commissioner Morin asked how long it took for Seattle to do the seismic study. Mr. Heubach replied that it started off as a one-year project that lasted almost three years. Commissioner Morin asked if King County was also looked at in general in addition to just Seattle. Mr. Heubach replied that there is a lot of overlapping information and information that would be useful to Bellevue. Most of the study is available online.

Chair Strom referred to the Recommendation Summary and asked what Bellevue can do to make sure that the Eastside Reservoir and transmission lines that are so important to Bellevue get addressed. Mr. Heubach commented that they can be supportive of the projects because the costs are borne not only by SPU, but by the regional customers.

- **2019 Stormwater Management Program (Don McQuilliams) (Public Hearing)**

The public hearing was opened at 7:20 p.m. with Commissioners Strom, Morin, Zhuang, and Khanloo in attendance.

Operations Manager Don McQuilliams made the staff presentation related to the 2019 Stormwater Management Program Plan. He explained that the NPDES is an EPA mandate to operate a stormwater system. It is issued and administered by Washington State Department of Ecology. The next revision is in August of this year.

Mr. McQuilliams reviewed the BMPs (Best Management Practices) which are part of the permit. These include:

- Public Education and Outreach
- Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination Program
- Controlling Runoff
- Municipal Operations and Maintenance
- Monitoring and Assessment

Noteworthy changes included the following:

- Source Control is a new inspection requirement Ecology is adding to the Phase II permits
- Comprehensive Stormwater Planning – Ecology is asking that Permittees begin taking a long-term approach to stormwater planning
- Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination – Ecology is defining how Permittees structure the information collected to better inform future evaluation of the data

The City will modify its 2019 SWMP as appropriate once Ecology issues the permit.

#### Commission Questions:

Commissioner Morin asked if the City has considered investing in an effort to allow people to do carwash fundraisers in an environmentally responsible way. He suggested some sort of mutual agreement with car washes.

Commissioner Zhuang asked why rain gardens aren't part of this plan. Mr. McQuilliams commented that bioretention swales and ponds are part of the City's plans where feasible. This has been embedded in the code as a first priority to try to implement low impact development before doing anything else. Commissioner Zhuang expressed concern that there is not more incentive for private rain gardens at a residential level. Mr. McQuilliams agreed that right now there is no incentive, but noted that it has been talked about. Commissioner Zhuang asked if there's a program similar to how PSE does prefer vendor recommendations that would provide an interested homeowner with a qualified vendor.

Commissioner Khanloo asked how renters can be made more aware about the environmental impacts of car washing. She suggested providing information to property owners or real estate professionals during the contract signing process. Mr. McQuilliams agreed that this was a good idea, but noted that the most effective educational efforts seem to be done through the schools. He noted that some information has been sent in the past in utility bills. Commissioner Morin commented that many renters may not ever see the utility bills and may have been missed with this communication method.

Public comments were solicited. There were none. The public hearing was closed at 7:48 p.m.

- **Smart Water Meters Update (Brian Pugliese, Smart Water Technology Infrastructure Project Manager)**

Smart Water Technology Infrastructure Project Manager Pugliese gave an overview of the technology and gave an update on the new WaterSmart Portal, Customer Communications, and Next Steps. The project will change out all non-communicating meters with new smart meters (40,000 water meters by the end of 2020). He discussed the benefits of AMI to customers and to the City including early leak detection and greater meter accuracy. He stressed efforts the City is making to ensure data security and privacy. The WaterSmart Portal will provide a cloud-based portal service for customers which will provide information to customers about their usage and will connect to the City's current payment system (My

Utility Bill). Other more customer-friendly payment systems will be explored in the future. Customers can access the portal through a variety of forms. The City is currently in contract negotiations with WaterSmart. The plan is for the portal will be connected to the new AMI system and available for customers to use by the end of the year. Mr. Pugliese reviewed the multiple aspects of the customer communication program which focuses on providing appropriate information ahead of time as needed and using all the available tools such as print, email, social media, and face-to-face interactions. Where it makes sense there will also be translation of the materials into other languages.

#### Commissioner Questions:

Commissioner Khanloo asked how citizens who don't use computers can get information related to their smart meter, such as notifications of suspected leaks. Mr. Pugliese said staff is working with customer service personnel on new procedures for these circumstances. In addition, the City will be collecting data from customers about their preferred communication method.

Commissioner Zhuang asked if Itron and WaterSmart have a history of partnering in these types of solutions. Mr. Pugliese explained these are two separate companies, but they have worked together in the past with other municipalities and are familiar with each other.

Mr. Pugliese also described a pilot test of the AMI system. The City soon will be in the process of recruiting customers who might want to participate in the pilot. Commissioners Strom, Khanloo and Zhuang expressed an interest in participating in the pilot program.

### **9. ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**

David Plummer, 14415 NE 14<sup>th</sup> Place, Bellevue, WA 98007, commented that Mr. Pugliese indicated the system has a net benefit of \$2.3 million. Mr. Plummer assumes this number came from Martin Chaw's memo, but it is not clear where this number came from. He noted that the life cycle cost of the system has not been made clear and should be investigated further. He is working on an estimate of the life cycle cost which he thinks will be around \$30 million in 2018 dollars. Finally, he said he is still waiting to see information about a possible opt-out policy for people who do not want to participate. He thinks Utilities needs to make this an option.

### **10. REVIEW OF ESC CALENDAR/COUNCIL CALENDAR;**

Asst. Director Liu discussed upcoming meeting agenda items for the ESC and City Council. Environmental Outreach and Volunteer opportunities in March were highlighted.

Commissioner Morin asked about the opt-out option referred to by Mr. Plummer. Mr. Pugliese commented that in this state and many other places there is no opt-out option for water meters. Staff is having discussions about how to work with the very small number of people who have an objection to the technology.

Commissioner Morin referred to Mr. Plummer's comments and asked for confirmation that, in the timeline of things, regardless of the numbers that come up, Council has already made the decision to move forward with AMI. Asst. Director Liu agreed that the Council has already approved the decision to move forward with the project. She explained that the \$2.3 million figure was taken from the feasibility study which was a thorough study conducted before the project was approved.

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion made by Commissioner Morin, seconded by Commissioner Khanloo, to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 p.m. Motion passed unanimously (4-0).**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.