

MINUTES
Colorado Springs Utilities Board Meeting
Wednesday, March 16, 2022

Utilities Board members present via Microsoft Teams or Blue River Conference Room:
Chair Wayne Williams, Vice Chair Mike O'Malley, Dave Donelson, Randy Helms, Bill Murray, Stephannie Fortune, Yolanda Avila, Nancy Henjum, and Tom Strand

Staff members present via Microsoft Teams or Blue River Conference Room: Aram Benyamin, Travas Deal, Lisa Barbato, Ryan Maecker, Shaun Thompson, Tara Kelley, Sarah Wilson, Jane Zook, Birgit Landin, Lisa Halcomb, Jennifer Kemp, Jason Messamer, Jessica Thiel, Tara McGowan, Rockie Wiley, Kevin Binkley, Jessica Rheinschmidt, Joe Awad, Mike Francolino, Kenneth Murry, and Andie Buhl

City of Colorado Springs staff members present via Microsoft Teams or Blue River Conference Room: Bethany Burgess and Jeff Greene

Citizens present via Microsoft Teams or Blue River Conference Room: Sam Masias

1. Call to Order

Chair Wayne Williams called the Utilities Board meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. and Ms. Andie Buhl, Utilities Board Administrator, called the roll.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Pastor Bill Gandy delivered the invocation and Chair Williams led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Consent Calendar

3a. Approval of Minutes: February 16, 2022

3b. Resolution in Support of Candidates for Re-Appointment to the Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District Board

Board Member Strand moved approval of the Consent Calendar and Board Member Helms seconded the motion. The Consent Calendar was unanimously approved.

4. Recognition

Behind the Scenes – Martin Drake Power Plant Site Progress

Mr. Aram Benyamin, Chief Executive Officer, explained how coal was used for the last time at Martin Drake Power Plant in August 2021 and since then, Springs Utilities has made great progress toward bringing on new natural gas generators. He explained how coal handling equipment has been demolished and foundations have been laid for incoming equipment.

2022 WaterReuse Award for Excellence in Outreach and Education

Ms. Lisa Barbato, System Planning & Projects Officer, explained Springs Utilities derives more than half of its water from basins outside the Arkansas River Basin and DPR (direct potable reuse) is recognized in Springs Utilities' Sustainable Water Plan (Integrated Water Resource Plan) as a possible mechanism for stretching reusable supplies.

Ms. Barbato explained how the PureWater Colorado Mobile Demonstration project began in 2019 with a grant for \$350,000 from the Colorado Water Conservation Board – and its two primary purposes for education and outreach were:

- To advance the science and regulatory framework for DPR in Colorado.
- To raise awareness and educate a broad range of stakeholders in our community and region on the safety and value of purified water.

Ms. Barbato concluded by recognizing and thanking employees who participated in this project.

5. Fort Carson Intergovernmental Support Agreement (IGSA)

Mr. Travas Deal, Chief Operations Officer, explained how Springs Utilities and Ft. Carson have agreed to an Intergovernmental Support Agreement (IGSA) to provide electric and gas system services commencing Jan. 1, 2023.

Mr. Douglas Gabram, Army Lieutenant General, and Mr. Nate Springer, Army Colonel, gave an overview of the U.S. Army's water and energy strategic plans and thanked the organization for this partnership.

Chair Williams, Board Member Fortune, Mr. Benjamin, and on behalf of Colorado Springs Mayor Mr. John Suthers, Mr. Jeff Greene, City Chief of Staff, thanked Mr. Gabram and Mr. Springer for their partnership and for joining the Utilities Board meeting.

6. Customer Comments

Mr. Sam Masias spoke in support of Mr. Benjamin and expressed appreciation of his work and leadership at Springs Utilities.

Mr. Kenneth Murry, Energy Construction Operations Maintenance Manager, expressed thanks for Mr. Benjamin and shared support of his leadership.

7. Compliance Reports

- ER:1-3 Utilities Board Expected Results Year End Performance –Scorecard
- I-4 Risk Management (Annual City Auditor Report)
- I-8 Excellence in Governance Compliance Report Asset Protection
- E-2 CEO Responsibilities

- ECA/GCA Monitoring
- Water Outlook
 - Ms. Kalsoum Abbasi, Water Planning Supervisor, discussed the Water Outlook report and explained local weather conditions as of Feb. 28, 2022. She described visual representations of U.S. Drought Monitors in Colorado from Jan. 25, 2022 to March 8, 2022 and snow water equivalent maps of the Arkansas River and Colorado River Basin on March 14, 2022.
 - Ms. Abbasi described the statewide map of current snow water equivalent percentages and explained Colorado Springs water yields from 2001 – 2021.
 - Ms. Abbasi reviewed monthly water usage for February 2022 based on population served. She discussed Springs Utilities' reservoir systems wide storage and said storage is average this time of year. Ms. Abbasi explained how Colorado Springs' system wide storage is about 186,500 acre-feet, or 72% of capacity, which is the same as the longer-term (1991-2021) average of 72% for this time of year. This equates to about 2.6 years of demand in storage.
- Supply Chain Update
 - Mr. Benyamin explained how moving forward, Supply Chain updates will be included on the Board agenda under E-2 CEO Responsibilities.
- Women in Construction Engineering
 - Mr. Benyamin introduced Ms. Lisa Barbato as the new System Planning & Projects Officer and thanked Mr. Joe Awad, Planning and Engineering General Manager, and Ms. Sarah LaBarre, Engineering Manager, for serving in interim roles. Mr. Benyamin also introduced Mr. Mike Francolino as the new Chief Customer & Corporate Services Officer.
 - Ms. Barbato recognized Women in Construction Week, and a video was shared about women in construction engineering at Springs Utilities. Ms. Tara McGowan, Engineer Supervisor, expressed appreciation for her team and working at the organization.

Chair Williams explained that compliance reports are on the agenda by exception and asked if there were any questions. There were none.

Ms. Jessica Rheinschmidt, Information Technology Manager, provided a follow-up to Board Member Henjum's question about updates to a risk management document. Ms. Rheinschmidt said Springs Utilities has a timeline to update that document by the end of the year.

Board Member Henjum congratulated Ms. Barbato on her new role and acknowledged Ms. Cindy Newsome, Public Affairs General Manager, and Mr. Earl Wilkinson III, Chief Water, Compliance & Innovation Officer, for their service at Springs Utilities.

8. Items Called Off Consent Calendar

None

9. Irrigation Efficiency Cost-Sharing Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA)

Ms. Barbato explained how the Colorado River Basin is experiencing the driest 22-year period in historical record and the organization recognizes the need to take proactive steps to reduce Colorado River water use. She listed collaborative efforts and benefits of the intergovernmental agreement (IGA) and defined key terms. Ms. Barbato and Mr. Pat Wells, Water Resources and Demand Management General Manager, expanded on the key terms, specifically the multi-season alfalfa pilot study, and explained contribution amounts.

Ms. Barbato concluded with next steps, which is to place this item on Consent at the March 22, 2022 City Council meeting.

10. Utilities Reliability Program (URP) Update

Mr. Benyamin explained what the Utilities Reliability Program (URP) is and recognized Ms. Jessica Thiel, Economic Development, Senior, for her work on the project.

Mr. Awad described the URP and its objectives, which are:

- Proactively and holistically replace aging infrastructure
- Add fiber optics
- Improve reliability
- Integrate plans for future growth and increased utility usage
- Enhance safety and health issues

Mr. Awad explained the project selection/prioritization criteria and overall benefits. He described a URP potential project heat map of where scheduled City and Springs Utilities projects are overlapping, and where overhead electric and cast-iron pipes are overlapping. He then explained the various projects of the URP and their corresponding scopes and schedules. Mr. Awad concluded with next steps for the URP.

Ms. Masias welcomed Ms. Barbato and expressed concerns about the plan(s) to upgrade and/or replace overhead poles on a regular basis throughout the city.

Mr. Awad explained the pole inspection process and thanked Mr. Rockie Wiley, Project Manager I, and Mr. Kevin Binkley, Project Supervisor, for assisting with and guiding the URP tour for Board Members on March 15, 2022.

Mr. Benjamin explained how the URP is one way to clean up all four utilities – including underground – but the organization is also looking at different categories of funding for undergrounding.

11. Board Member Updates

Chair Williams asked if Board Members would like to provide updates before Executive Session instead of after.

Board Member Henjum provided updates from the 2022 APPA (American Public Power Association) Legislative Rally.

Board Member Strand also thanked Mr. Wilkinson III and Ms. Newsome for their service to both the City and the organization and expressed gratitude to work with them.

12. CEO Performance Executive Session

Ms. Bethany Burgess, Office of the City Attorney, Utilities Division Chief, read the following language to enter Executive Session:

In accordance with City Charter, Article III, § 3-60(d) and its incorporated Colorado Open Meetings Law, C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(f), and Utilities Board Bylaw Rule 10(c)(6), the Utilities Board, in Open Session, is to determine whether it will hold an electronic Closed Executive Session on a personnel matter. The matter to be discussed is the 2021 year-end performance review of the Chief Executive Officer.

The Chair of the Utilities Board shall poll the Utilities Board members, and, upon the consent of two-thirds of the members present, may conduct an electronic Closed Executive Session. Each Utilities Board member participating in the electronic Closed Executive Session shall affirmatively state for the record that no other member of the public not authorized to participate in the electronic Closed Executive Session is present or able to hear the matters discussed as part of the electronic Closed Executive Session.

If consent to the electronic Closed Executive Session is not given, the item may be discussed in Open Session or withdrawn from consideration.

Ms. Burgess polled the Utilities Board and voted unanimously to enter Executive Session.

The Utilities Board took a break at 2:56 p.m. and entered Executive Session at 3:10 p.m.

The Utilities Board took a break at 4:45 p.m. and reconvened at 4:40 p.m.

The Utilities Board took a break at 6:50 p.m. and reconvened at 6:55 p.m.

The Utilities Board ended Executive Session at 7:18 p.m.

13. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:21 p.m.