



Minutes
Strategic Planning Committee
Jan. 11, 2024

Committee members present in the Rosemont Conference Room or online:

Committee Chair Brian Risley, Dave Donelson, Michelle Talarico, Mike O'Malley and David Leinweber

Utilities Board members present in the Rosemont Conference Room or online:

Nancy Henjum

Staff members present in the Rosemont Conference Room or online:

Travas Deal, Lisa Barbato, Somer Mese, Abby Ortega, Renee Adams, Mark Shea, Bethany Schoemer and Tristan Gearhart

City of Colorado Springs staff members present in the Rosemont Conference Room or online: Renee Congdon and David Beckett

Call to Order

Committee Chair Risley called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

Review Minutes

The minutes from the Nov. 8, 2023, Strategic Planning Committee meeting were reviewed and approved for posting.

Compliance Reports

• **I-6 Infrastructure**

Ms. Abby Ortega, Infrastructure and Resources Planning General Manager, provided an overview of the 1-6 Infrastructure compliance report. Ms. Ortega explained Colorado Springs Utilities uses a reasonable planning period to meet obligations to serve customers for current and future requirements. The planning horizons are typically 20 years or longer. Springs Utilities maintains an organization-wide, long range infrastructure plan that considers the annual impact to a typical customer bill, maintains strong financial metrics, and sequences infrastructure projects to the extent operationally and financially practicable. This compliance report will go to the Utilities Board meeting on Jan. 17, 2024, for approval.

Committee Chair Brian Risley asked a question regarding how Springs Utilities interfaces with agencies outside of the City of Colorado Springs. Ms. Ortega explained staff from Springs Utilities were part of the stakeholder process for El Paso County's Master Plan. Committee Members discussed planning outside of city limits. Mr. Travas Deal, Chief

Executive Officer, emphasized Springs Utilities is invested in the completion of AnnexCOS to have a formalized plan moving forward.

- **C-2 Utilities Board Annual Evaluation**

Ms. Bethany Schoemer, Strategic Planning and Governance Specialist, reviewed the C-2 Utilities Board Annual Evaluation. Ms. Schoemer explained the annual evaluation is a commitment and practice outlined in the Governance Policy Manual. There was a discussion among committee members regarding the discontinuation of the C-2 evaluation. Board Member Henjum stated her support of self-evaluations but emphasized the Utilities Board Annual Evaluation should not be done in a public setting if they are seeking an effective and honest conversation.

Governance Manual Revisions

Ms. Schoemer discussed the changes to the Excellence in Governance Policy Manual, and explained the changes are mostly clean-up, rather than substantive changes to policy. Ms. Schoemer gave a brief overview of the Governance Manual timeline, including the 2015 governance study and implementation of the Excellence in Governance Manual in 2018.

Ms. Renee Congdon, City Attorney's Office – Utilities Division Chief, summarized the changes including correcting inconsistencies with City Code and in language throughout the document. She explained, one of the larger changes is incorporating the I-14 into other policies in the Governance Manual and eliminating the stand-alone policy. Lastly, Ms. Congdon gave an overview of a change that will provide clarity for the roles of Utilities Board Members who attend committees they are not a member of, as well as clarity regarding City staff and invited guests. Ms. Congdon explained the notice given at the beginning of committee meetings to not accept public comment is not consistent with the policy in the Governance Manual. She stated staff will change the committee agenda once the board approves the changes to the Governance Manual. Committee Chair Risley approved of the change and the committee agreed.

Ms. Congdon suggested an additional revision to the Governance Manual to eliminate the ability for committees to meet in closed Executive Session because they cannot vote themselves in. Additionally, she reasoned that if the information is of high importance, then it should go to the Utilities Board and not be discussed in committee. The committee members agreed with Ms. Congdon's statement. Springs Utilities staff will make this change before the Governance Policy Manual goes to the Utilities Board meeting in February.

Watershed Policy: North Slope Recreation Area

Mr. Mark Shea, Watershed Planning Supervisor gave an overview of watershed policy including how Springs Utilities manages watersheds, why the organization does management and the planning process for the North Slope Watershed and Recreation Area. Mr. Shea discussed the history of watershed protection and access beginning in 1913 to 2012 and gave an overview of watershed recreational use decisions from City

Council and Springs Utilities. The concerns of Springs Utilities include security needs, operational requirements, resource protection and sustainability of uses and management.

Mr. Shea discussed the core policy considerations of Springs Utilities staff are (1) strengthen security and infrastructure protection (2) accommodate public access and recreation uses that are financially and environmentally sustainable and consistent with Springs Utilities' core business and operations and (3) ensure that available resources for existing or approved activities are sufficient for the sustainable management of North Slope Recreation Area. Mr. Shea discussed the planning process including the timeframe with Springs Utilities internal technical team, the procurement process, the core interagency team, and external stakeholders.

Committee Member Leinweber shared a handout for the Coalition for Outdoor Access.

Detailed Work Plan Review

Ms. Lisa Barbato, Chief System Planning and Projects Officer, reviewed the committee's 2024 Detailed Work Plan. Board Member Henjum requested a joint Finance and Strategic Planning Committee meeting. The May Strategic Planning Committee was selected as a potential time for the meeting. The purpose of the joint meeting is to have a conversation about how Springs Utilities' budget is aligning with the organization's Strategic Plan, leading into the budget discussion that will occur in June.

Plan for future meeting: Thursday, Feb. 15, 2024

The committee discussed the next meeting in February.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 5:31 p.m.