

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

Thursday  
May 24, 2012  
6:30 p.m.

Conference Room 1E-112  
Bellevue City Hall  
Bellevue, Washington

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Commissioners Cowan, Mach, Morin, Weller

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Commissioners Swenson, Wang, Chair Helland

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Wes Jorgenson, Mike Jackman, Lucy Liu, Pam Maloney, Bob Brooks, Joe Harbour, Tony Marcum

**MINUTES TAKER:** Laurie Hugdahl

**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Mach at 6:30 p.m.

**2. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS:**

None.

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

**4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

May 3, 2012 Regular Meeting Minutes

**Motion made by Commissioner Weller, seconded by Commissioner Cowan, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion passed unanimously (4-0).**

**5. FOLLOW UP QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

Mr. Jorgenson referred to pages 16 and 17 in the packet, which were in response to Commissioner Mach's request for more details about the questions on the 2012 Citizen Budget Survey. Commissioner Morin asked if residents are called on their land line for this survey. Mr. Jorgenson was not sure. Commissioner Morin wondered if any thought had been given to using people's cell phones since fewer and fewer houses have land lines. Mr. Jorgenson explained that the number the City has is the number people have indicated as the best to reach them. The hope is that if people are not using their land lines then the number on record is their cell phone. Mr. Jorgenson offered to try to find out more about this.

**6.**

## REPORTS & SUMMARIES

### a. ESC Calendar/Council Calendar

Mr. Jorgenson explained that nothing has been added, but the dates for the CIP tour and the Solid Waste Contract Review have been swapped. The CIP tour is now scheduled for July, and the Solid Waste Contract Review is now scheduled for August. He noted that Chair Helland had indicated some concerns about swapping the dates. The Commission can discuss and finalize this at the June meeting when more commissioners are present.

Most of the items on the Council calendar are Consent Agenda items related to professional services, primarily for capital programs. There will also be presentations regarding King County Solid Waste and CWA at upcoming Council meetings.

### b. Budget Proposals

Lucy Liu continued the review of the 2013-2014 Budget Proposals, picking up from where staff left off on May 3. Staff hopes to complete the presentation of all the proposals so the Commission can make a recommendation by June 7. There are 46 proposals in total: 44 Operating proposals and 2 Reserves proposals. Because of the number of proposals, staff will only be focusing on those that have service level or program level changes being proposed. Staff will take questions or comments on any of the other proposals as well. Ms. Liu further explained that the proposals have been grouped into functional areas to be more manageable for discussion and review.

There are a number of proposals where the staffing levels have been “trued up” based on experience over the last budget cycle. Items that show a slight shift in the FTE/LTE count with no change in the service levels are proposals where staff has trued up the staffing levels. Overall there is a net reduction of 4.0 positions.

Staff has tried to be very thoughtful in identifying areas for reduction by focusing on areas where it would have the least impact on customers and service delivery. Areas were also looked at that were achieving beyond targets. The areas where “adds” are proposed are mainly to address aging infrastructure and growth.

Commissioner Mach asked for clarification about the reduction in FTEs. Ms. Liu explained that if you look at the total package of proposals, there is a total reduction of four people. The areas where staffing is truly being reduced are proposals that are identified as having a service level change. Commissioner Mach asked if these reductions were due to retirement and not backfilling. Ms. Liu explained that two are vacant positions, but some may involve layoffs. Commissioner Mach asked about using staff for in-house design as a way to retain staff and save money. Mr. Jorgenson noted that staff is looking into this.

Commissioner Weller asked if engineers are shared between divisions. Mr. Jorgenson stated that the engineering design staff work in all three areas of water,

sewer, and drainage. Ms. Maloney added that Utilities Planning tries to cross train technical staff as much as possible across the utility disciplines.

#### Operating Proposals: Engineering (Development Services)

Utility Costs only:

- 110.01NA: Development Services Information Delivery
- 110.02NA: Policy Development, Code Amendments and Consulting Services
- 110.03NA: Development Services – Review Services
- 110.04NA: Development Services – Inspection Services

Mr. Jorgenson listed the items in this category and explained that there are no service level changes in any of the four proposals.

Commissioner Cowan asked if Inspection Services has been cut back due to lack of development. Mr. Jorgenson said it has not been cut back primarily because no inspectors were added during the boom. There is a core level of inspection that is maintained. This allows for flexibility within Utilities because inspectors do both CIP and development review. When development is down (like now), inspectors are moved into the CIP program. When development is high, the inspectors move into development review and backfill the CIP using consultants. This is done because development review requires experience in all three disciplines since development projects require water, sewer, and drainage. It is very hard to train new inspectors or consultants to do all three. There are currently three inspectors in development services, and this is a level that staff wants to maintain.

#### Operating Proposals: Engineers (Systems Analysis)

- 140.09NA: Utility Comprehensive Planning
- 140.11NA: Utility Asset Management Program
- 140.12NA Utility System Analysis

Pam Maloney briefly listed these items and explained that there are no service level changes proposed. There were no further comments or questions.

#### Engineering (Construction)

- 130.07DA: R-181 East Link Overall (new)

Mr. Jorgenson explained that this is a citywide proposal related to the East Link corridor. There is a \$7.7 million contribution in 2014 from Utilities. This reflects the depreciated value of water, sewer, and storm lines in the facilities that East Link is going to have to relocate.

Commissioner Mach asked for confirmation that this will not be a City of Bellevue project; the City will just be paying for it. Mr. Jorgenson confirmed this. Commissioner Mach asked if the City would still provide an inspector for the

project. Mr. Jorgenson stated that the City will inspect the project; Sound Transit will be treated as a developer in this regard.

- 130.21NA: R-181 East Link MOU Commitments (old)

#### Operations and Maintenance (Water)

- 140.13NA: Water Mains and Service Lines Repair Program
- 140.14NA: Drinking Water Distribution System Preventative Maintenance Program
- 140.15NA: Water Pump Station, Reservoir and PRV Maintenance Program
- 140.16NA: Meter Repair and Replacement Program
- 140.17NA: Water Service Installation and Upgrade Program

Joe Harbour reviewed these five proposals and stated that there are no service level changes being proposed. Mr. Harbour explained that all of the O&M proposals work together to provide a safe reliable supply of drinking water. In addition, when people want a service upgrade or a new service, it is provided in the Water Service Installation and Upgrade Program.

Commissioner Morin referred to item 140.13NA – Water Main and Service Line Repair, and stated that it looks like there is an increase of one FTE. Mr. Harbour explained that this represents a truing of actual existing FTEs.

Commissioner Cowan asked if the FTEs being discussed are represented by unions. Mr. Harbour replied that the vast majority of the field staff is represented by the Teamsters. He added that the City has a very collaborative, good relationship with the union. The union's role is to represent the employees in the bargaining process. As part of the contract, the union does not set service levels or establish work programs; that is all part of the management rights. The union represents the staff in grievances, working conditions, or those kinds of things. There is language in the contract to allow for temps for short-term seasonal and peak work loads. Commissioner Morin asked how long the contract is with the union. Mr. Harbour said it goes to the end of 2014. It is a 3-year contract that was extended two years. Commissioner Cowan inquired about the number of temporary employees. Mr. Harbour explained that the cost for temporary employees in these five proposals is about \$60,000 and is mostly in preventative maintenance, seasonal, and summer-type work.

Commissioner Mach noted that item 140.16NA shows a 110% increase, but the FTEs are remaining the same. Mr. Harbour explained that this increase in the budget reflects the inventory cost to buy the meters. The FTEs remained the same because it will be the same amount of field work. The increased cost is the result of having a better idea, than last time, of where the money is being spent relative to the proposals.

Commissioner Mach referred to item 140.17NA where the budget went down. Mr. Harbour explained that fewer water service installations are being done due to the economy. This change reflects the actuals.

#### Operations and Maintenance (Sewer)

- 140.18NA: Sewer Mains, Laterals and Manhole Repair Program
- 140.19NA: Sewer Condition Assessment Program
- 140.20NA: Sewer Mainline Preventative Maintenance Program
- 140.21NA: Sewer Pump Station Maintenance, Operations and Repair Program

There are no service level changes proposed. Any FTE changes on these proposals represent a truing up of actual employees.

Commissioner Cowan asked where the money comes from when there is water damage like on West Lake Sammamish Parkway. Mr. Jorgenson replied that the repair of the damages generally comes out of insurance. The actual replacement of the waterline comes out of the CIP. Restoration of roadway and hillside is potentially covered by insurance. For the West Lake Sammamish Parkway project, the City has filed a FEMA application for reimbursement and is waiting for a determination. Generally, the City's self-insurance pays for a big chunk, and the City incurs some direct costs for the immediate response. Mr. Harbour remarked that West Lake Sammamish was an extreme situation.

Commissioner Weller asked if staff tracks other jurisdictions that might have similar systems or materials for problems the City of Bellevue might incur. Mr. Harbour replied that the City has a lot of experience with its own pumps and materials. Staff does monitor benchmarking. Commissioner Weller stated that he is involved in a situation in Everett and hopes Bellevue never has to deal with a similar situation. He wondered if there were any comparable details that could be helpful for Bellevue. Mr. Harbour said Utilities definitely wants to network and stay in contact with other utilities and what their experience is. One of the biggest areas that Utilities monitors is upcoming regulations.

Commissioner Morin referred to item 140.19NA – Sewer Condition Assessment – CCTV, and asked if staff is planning to assess the same number of feet in 2013-14. Mr. Harbour affirmed that staff is still planning to assess 10% of the system. Commissioner Morin wondered about costs of increasing the number of feet assessed. Mr. Harbour explained that staff generally finds more problems when they assess more, but it doesn't mean those problems are necessarily repaired in the timeframe that they are assessed. He commented that three FTEs were added to the Sewer Main Lateral Manhole Repair Program in 2009 and a dedicated crew is doing over 100 repairs a year. Commissioner Morin wondered if Utilities is adequately funding the budget so that there isn't such a backlog. Mr. Jorgenson explained that one of the primary focuses for Utilities is in preventing claims. If a pipe has a defect it doesn't necessarily translate into a problem and doesn't necessarily need to be repaired right away. He summarized that claims for sewer have been relatively flat.

### Operations and Maintenance (Storm)

Tony Marcum commented that the Repair and Installation Program, Condition Assessment Program, Preventative Maintenance Program, and the Street Maintenance – Programs have only minor adjustments and no service level changes.

- South Bellevue Annexation (Utilities Costs Only)

The Eastgate Annexation areas will be coming into the City as of June 1. This is a large area with over 500 new drainage structures, approximately 70,000 feet of pipe, and some water quality and detention facilities. The City's strategy will be to attempt to absorb the maintenance and repair of the Storm and Surface Water System for the Eastgate Annexation area for the long term. In the short term Utilities is asking for additional resources upfront to develop maps and an asset inventory of the storm system in the Eastgate Annexation Area. The service level increase would fund a vehicle, provide a two-year LTE and some limited contract services for the increased service area. The cost of these is fully funded by rate revenue generated by the area. No ongoing FTE requested.

Commissioner Cowan asked if the City has an idea about the condition of the structures that will be annexed. Mr. Marcum said the City has some similar areas in terms of age for the sake of comparison. The City is requesting maintenance records from King County. In the past, the City has received very little information about the assets in annexed areas. Mr. Jorgenson reiterated that eventually these costs will roll into Utilities' other programs. Staff is trying to absorb ongoing costs without adding FTEs due to the economy.

Mr. Jorgenson commented that there are certain storm CIP programs that have increased by 5% to reflect the amount of infrastructure that is being added to the system with the South Bellevue Annexation.

### Operations and Maintenance (Water Quality)

- 140.26PA: Water Quality Regulatory Compliance and Monitoring Programs

There is a significant level of cost in 2014. The new NPDES permit is currently scheduled to take effect August 1, 2013 and will require additional resources in 2014 to prepare to implement the new permit and the new Ecology Stormwater Manual. This provides for an additional \$140,000 for new requirements under the updated NPDES Permit. There are some significant service level changes being proposed to the new permit, but staff will not know the true impacts until this process is further along.

Commissioner Cowan asked if the increased expenses are due to the upcoming monitoring requirements. Mr. Jorgenson said Utilities is hoping there is a regional monitoring program that the City will contribute to. There is \$90,000 budgeted to

pay into such a regional effort. The rest of the increase is for a consultant to help do a gap analysis from the old permit to the new permit.

#### Operations and Maintenance (Other)

- 140.25NA: Utilities Telemetry and Security Systems (Water and Sewer)
- 140.28DA: Utilities Department Emergency Preparedness
- 140.44NA: Utility Locates Program
- 140.52NA: Customer and Field Services Support

Mr. Harbour briefly reviewed these items and noted that there are no service level changes being proposed.

Commissioner Weller asked if Maximo is fully implemented now. Mr. Marcum stated that Utilities is at a full implementation of their targeted level now, but this could be expanded in the future. He noted that just last year the Fire Department's Facilities Division also came on board with Maximo. He anticipates that there will be more departments using this system in the future.

Commissioner Mach referred to Customer and Field Services Support and asked if the City coordinates work with PSE and other work crews. Mr. Harbour said that Utilities' staff knows where city crews are working and can work with Right-of-Way Use to understand where others have permits to work in the streets. If somebody calls Utilities, staff can work with customers to track down who is doing what. Regarding coordinating with other utilities about what is going on in the streets, the City looks for opportunities to coordinate with other utilities. This enables Utilities to take advantage of synergy, economies of scale, and save money.

Mr. Marcum added that the Transportation department has the franchise agreements with other utilities that are in Bellevue. There is a monthly meeting staff attends that includes all the different franchises and many city departments to discuss upcoming work and project coordination. Commissioner Mach asked if the people who attend the meetings communicate the information to the frontline people so they know what is going on when people call in about issues. Mr. Jorgenson explained that staff has a good mechanism for finding out what is going on if necessary. It generally starts with Right-of-Way because everyone is issued right-of-way use permits. Mr. Harbour added that the trucks are usually identified with logos to let people know who is working there.

Commissioner Mach asked if Utilities gives residents advance notice when they know they will be working in a neighborhood. Mr. Harbour said they do when possible. For example, for water main flushing a letter is sent out in advance. When there is reactive work it is not possible to notify in advance, but notification is done on site when necessary. Most preventative maintenance is short-duration and doesn't affect homeowners. Mr. Jorgenson said that with capital projects they notify the property owners in advance of the project. Prior to construction a letter is sent out to all property owners along the route. He feels that staff does a fairly good job notifying customers that workers will be in the neighborhood and what

work will be done. Commissioner Mach asked if PSE and other utilities are required to give advance notice. Mr. Jorgenson was not sure and did not know if this could even be required. He offered to ask Right-of-Way about any requirements related to that.

Commissioner Morin referred to a personnel increase of almost 4% and inquired if wages go up based on the collective bargaining agreement every year. Mr. Harbour explained that wages for the next two years are at 90% of CPI. Commissioner Morin asked if the increases have anything to do with customer service performance. He referred to some results that showed a decrease in customer satisfaction. Mr. Harbour explained that union staff, under the contract, have different job classifications and they have a step system. Some of the step increases are based on merit and some are based on longevity. Commissioner Morin asked if staff has an idea what drives the change in customer satisfaction results on proposal 140.52. Mr. Harbour explained that the customer satisfaction that Commissioner Morin was referring to is part of the overall citywide phone survey. Mr. Jorgenson noted that the decrease in 2012 he is referring to is because the 2012 survey hasn't been done yet. The number listed is just the target level.

Commissioner Cowan referred to the Utilities' Telemetry and Security System. He asked if the City is still maintaining the antiquated system. Mr. Harbour explained that within minor capital \$50,000 has been identified in 2012 and \$50,000 has been identified in 2013 to begin replacing some of the equipment in there. Upgrades to other equipment, such as the computer, need to be done prior to removal of the blue panels. This is something that staff wants to address. Commissioner Weller asked about the maintenance cost of maintaining those. Mr. Harbour explained that the availability of parts is the real issue, even more so than the cost.

Commissioner Cowan then asked what the security system on reservoirs and pump stations consists of. Mr. Harbour explained that there are cameras at the sites with the ability to track, archive, and monitor what happens at sites. Commissioner Cowan pointed to the decrease in costs for that and asked if staff is comfortable with the level of security for those systems. Mr. Harbour explained that staff is comfortable because the system was ramped up after 911 and is monitored 24 hours a day.

#### Streets Maintenance (Utility Costs Only)

##### Old Proposals:

- 130.28NA: Traffic Control Devices Maintenance and Repair
- 130.37NA: Walkway Safety, Maintenance and Repair
- 130.22NA: Roadway Maintenance and Repair

Tony Marcum explained that Street Maintenance is funded by the Transportation which is part of the General Fund and it is managed out of Utilities. The three above proposals have been combined into one (below).

New Proposal:

- 130.22NA: Transportation System Maintenance (Utility Costs Only)

Conservation Programs and Customer Service

- 140.30NA: Solid Waste, Waste Prevention and Recycling
- 140.31DA: Storm And surface Water Pollution Prevention
- 140.32NA: Water Systems and Conservation
- 140.45DA: Utility Water Meter Reading
- 140.33PA: Utilities Customer Service/Billing

Lucy Liu explained that several of these proposals are being recommended for service level reductions.

140.30NA: Solid Waste, Waste Prevention and Recycling – This This proposal provides for management of the solid waste contract. It includes efforts that will be needed for development and procurement of a new collection contract as the current contract is set to expire in 2014. This proposal also funds the continuation of successful waste prevention and recycling programs. Staff is proposing a service level reduction of 0.6 FTE to bring service levels in line with available funding. The areas proposed for reduction will be primarily with the management of the contract and support for in-house recycling and special events recycling.

140.31DA: Storm and Surface Water Pollution Prevention – This proposal provides public education and outreach that is required by the NPDES permit. It also provides the education required under the State’s Water Pollution Control Law and well as the Federal Clean Water Act. Staff is proposing reduction of this program by 0.4 FTEw2. This is due primarily to realignment of programs and service levels in recognition of needed budget reductions.

140.32NA: Water Systems and Conservation – This is the local conservation program. The service level reduction of 1.4 FTEs represents the City looking to Cascade Water Alliance for delivery of most water conservation programs locally and a reduced emphasis on general water conservation due to the achievement of the City’s 2013 Water Conservation Goal. Even with the reduction, this program still comply with the State’s Water Efficiency Rule and the City’s adopted Water Conservation Goal. It leverages resources available through Cascade Water Alliance, which will be the lead on water conservation programs delivery to customers. It would also continue successful programs, including: Management of the Waterwise Demonstration Garden, Natural Yard Care Education and Outreach, and the 6<sup>th</sup> grade Water Conservation element of the *Powerful Choices for the Environment* curriculum.

Commissioner Weller asked about what might happen if water consumption goes up. Mr. Jorgenson commented on the universal conservation trend, noting areas such as toilets, water-conserving faucets, etc. He also noted that there is a very strong conservation ethic among the citizens of Bellevue.

Mike Jackman commented that the City has had excellent conservation programs for many years. At a certain point the conservation efforts take root and the other forces such as economic forces and social mores and values are deeply ingrained. In the last several years, the synergy between the poor weather, the bad economy, and conservation efforts has caused the summer peak water use to drop by 25%. The City has advanced beyond targets in this area. Mr. Jorgenson noted that Utilities is not cutting out conservation efforts completely. More of the focus will just be at the regional level, through Cascade, instead of at the local level.

Commissioner Morin asked how conservation of water saves the City money. Mr. Jackman discussed the difference between rates and the cost of water service. He explained that the cost of water is basically the cost of the system and operation divided by how much water goes through it. Mr. Jorgenson explained that it can be looked at from a supply standpoint and also an environmental standpoint. This can boil down to a philosophical discussion.

140.33PA: Utilities Customer Service/Billing – This is being proposed for a service level reduction of 0.9 FTE to reflect a reduced service level. Staff should be able to still maintain a good level of customer service.

#### Internal Support Functions and Utilities Management

- 140.42NA: Utilities Department Management and Support
- 140.46DA: Customer Service and Billing User Support
- 140.49NA: Fiscal Management
- 140.51NA: Utilities Maximo System User Support
- 140.53NA: Utilities Computer Replacement and Small System User Support

Bob Brooks briefly described each of the proposals and stated that no service level changes are being proposed.

Commissioner Mach asked if staff had looked at reducing any of the management staff. Mr. Brooks explained that all groups were looked at. The places that were identified were selected based on the criteria of having minimal effect on service levels and already having high performance levels. Mr. Jackman further explained that item 140.42NA, Utilities Department Management and Support, relates only to the Director's office. All of the other management layers within the department are embedded in the other proposals. He clarified that over the last 12 to 14 months with the City Manager's direction there has been a lot of work looking at the span of control citywide.

#### Policy-Related Proposal (not discussed at the last meeting)

- 140.29NA Utilities Rate Discount Program (new)

Mr. Brooks explained that this program offers discounts for senior low income households. Commissioner Mach asked if the discount program is based on both

age and income. Mr. Brooks indicated that it is applicable to seniors who are disabled or seniors who are low income.

### Reserves Proposals

- 140.40PA Operating Reserves
- 140.41PA Capital Reserves

Mr. Brooks explained that the Operating Reserves are designed to fluctuate up and down within some bands to help smooth the rate increases. Asset Replacement Reserves are similarly designed so that there are not spikes in rates that would be required to fund some of the larger equipment replacements. Capital Reserves is essentially R&R Reserves. These are also used to help balance the Capital transfer and the R&R transfer so there is a minimal impact on rates. Mr. Jorgenson remarked that R&R will be a topic of discussion in June.

Commissioner Weller asked what would be the next thing to cut if something more has to be cut. Mr. Jorgenson said it would depend on implications of where the service would be. He explained that staff has been diligent to operate like a business. With the last budget Utilities made significant cuts in the amount of approximately \$4 million. This budget required more cuts because of the water situation. All the programs, to some degree, have already had cuts.

Lucy Liu summarized the upcoming Budget Schedule. Staff will come back on June 7 for final comments and recommendations on proposals. The ESC's proposal comments need to be forwarded to the Results Team in June. The final budget and rate recommendation from the ESC will go to the City Council in November.

## **7. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

## **8. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE REPORT**

None.

## **9. CONTINUED ORAL COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

## **10. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion made by Commissioner Cowan, seconded by Commissioner Weller, to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m. Motion carried unanimously (4-0).**