



**Minutes**  
**Utilities Policy Advisory Committee (UPAC)**  
**Wednesday, Aug. 7, 2024**  
**Blue River Boardroom, 5<sup>th</sup> floor, 121 S. Tejon St., Colorado Springs, CO**  
**and Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting**

**Committee members present in the Boardroom or via Microsoft Teams:**

Chair Larry Barrett, Scott Smith, Michael Borden, David Watson, Katherine Danner and Chris Meyer

**Committee members excused:**

Gary Burghart

**Staff members present in the Boardroom or via Microsoft Teams:**

Travas Deal, Al Wells, Marcela Espinoza, Bethany Schoemer, Natalie Watts, Lisa Barbato, David Longrie, Jay Anderson, Renee Adams, Joe Awad, Leslie Smith, Gabe Caunt, David Padgett, and Matt Dudden

**Utilities Board members present in the Boardroom or via Microsoft Teams:**

Chair Dave Donelson

**City of Colorado Springs staff present in the Boardroom or via Microsoft Teams:**

David Beckett

**Citizens present in the Boardroom or via Microsoft Teams:**

Tom Carter and Albert Badeau

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Larry Barrett called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m. and called the roll.

**2. Approval of July 3, 2024, UPAC Meeting Minutes**

Committee Member Scott Smith made a motion to approve the July 3, 2024, meeting minutes and Committee Member Katherine Danner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**3. Colorado Springs Utilities: Nuclear Technology Assessment**

Mr. David Longrie, Manager of Energy Resource Planning and Innovation, started by providing an explanation of his team's responsibilities and explained their main task is energy resource planning of electric and gas. He explained the nuclear technology assessment and how Springs Utilities fits nuclear into their Electric Integrated Resource Plan. Mr. Longrie indicated that currently state legislation excludes nuclear energy as a renewable energy source.

Electric peak usage from 2015-2025 was reviewed. Mr. Longrie stated that Springs Utilities will integrate an additional 200 megawatts (MW) starting in 2025 to account for the large population growth in Colorado Springs. Chair Barrett asked if Springs Utilities has seen growth with server farms in the area. Mr. Longrie responded that the community is seeing the growth of data centers coming into the community, which is causing greater demand.

Committee Member Danner inquired about the generation capacity verses the load in the community. Mr. Longrie advised the system is made to generate 16-20% more energy than the load.

Mr. Longrie discussed the goal is to reduce 2005 carbon emissions by 80% by 2030. With the closure of the Martin Drake Power Plant and the future closing of the Nixon Power Plant, Springs Utilities will reach its goal of lowering emissions by 80%. However, he explained Springs Utilities will likely face challenges meeting higher energy loads as the population continues to grow.

Committee Member Chris Meyer asked what would happen if Springs Utilities does not meet the state's requirement of lowering emissions. Mr. Longrie stated if goals are not met, Springs Utilities will need to submit another plan to the state and advise how it will fulfill the carbon emission targets.

There was discussion on the outsourcing and transmission of power in future planning of Springs Utilities. Mr. Longrie indicated nuclear energy is not accounted for until 2040 for Springs Utilities and its estimated planning and building would take 15 years.

Mr. Travas Deal, Chief Executive Officer, discussed energy planning as it relates to military installations and how Springs Utilities supports these efforts. He also discussed the many challenges Springs Utilities faces with meeting various state mandates.

#### **4. UPAC Assignment Timeline and Action Planning**

Ms. Bethany Schoemer, Strategic Planning and Governance Specialist Senior, discussed the timeline from Sept. 4, 2024, to March 2025. Staff has reached out to various contacts and they will be attending future UPAC meetings throughout the assignment. Ms. Schoemer highlighted the committee will need to begin their recommendation discussion at the January UPAC meeting to be able to meet the deadline of March 2025.

Chair Barrett advised he will be absent from the October meeting, but Committee Member Gary Burghart will serve as Chair.

Committee Member Meyer asked for clarification on whether Springs Utilities' staff would be organizing future meetings with other companies. Ms. Schoemer replied by saying if UPAC members have someone in mind they would like to come speak, to reach out to her directly to organize the communication.

## **5. UPAC Member Research**

Chair Barrett presented his research findings on the state of nuclear technology throughout the United States. He discussed small modular reactors and their development that is underway in 19 countries. He discussed the safety, environmental and water disposal considerations that come with small modular reactors as well as the economics behind them. Chair Barrett provided an overview on United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission's licensing and permitting requirements and the roles of other agencies. He concluded by providing a list of all the energy companies located in Colorado and stated a \$900 million grant for small modular reactors was announced in early 2024 by the Department of Energy.

## **6. Citizen Comment**

Mr. Tom Carter, citizen, discussed large artificial intelligence data centers, water utilization and cooling structures. Chair Barrett thanked Mr. Carter for his comments and stated he is looking forward to him attending the Sept. 4 meeting and beginning his tenure as an alternate UPAC member.

Mr. Albert Badeau, citizen, expressed his interest in the assignment scope and that he looks forward to serving on UPAC as an alternate member beginning next month.

## **7. Committee Member General Discussion**

Chair Barrett welcomed the two new alternate members of UPAC, Mr. Tom Carter and Mr. Albert Badeau. He said they were selected out of the 10 applicants that had applied and their appointments will be going to the Utilities Board on Aug. 21 for approval.

The committee discussed the magnitude of the Palo Verde Power Plant in Arizona and how much energy it produces.

Chair Barrett recognized Ms. Lisa Barbato, Chief System Planning and Projects Officer, and thanked her for attending the meeting.

Ms. Schoemer reminded the committee that next month's meeting will take place in the Rosemont Conference Room due to technology upgrades happening in the Blue River Board Room.

## **8. Adjournment**

Chair Barrett adjourned the meeting at 9:50 a.m.

**Next meeting:** Sept. 4, 2024, at 8:00 a.m. in the Rosemont Conference Room