



**Minutes**  
**Utilities Policy Advisory Committee (UPAC)**  
**Wednesday, July 3, 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, Vice Chair Hilary Dussing, Gary Burghart, Scott Smith, Michael Borden, David Watson, Katherine Danner and Chris Meyer

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

Travas Deal, Al Wells, Marcela Espinoza, Bethany Schoemer, Natalie Watts, Abby Ortega, Renee Adams and Tristian Gearhart

**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:**

Chris Bidlack

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

Tom Carter

**1. Call to Order**

Chair Larry Barrett called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m. and called the roll.

**2. Approval of June 5, 2024, UPAC Meeting Minutes**

Committee Member Scott Smith made a motion to approve the June 5, 2024, meeting minutes and Committee Member Micheal Borden seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**3. Resolution of Appreciation for Hilary Dussing**

Chair Barrett read the resolution of appreciation for Vice Chair Dussing and thanked her for her many contributions and commitment to UPAC since 2019. Vice Chair Dussing expressed gratitude toward Springs Utilities' staff and stated she was grateful to be a part of the committee. Committee members thanked Vice Chair Dussing for her dedication and told her she will be missed.

**4. Nuclear Generation Assignment Scope**

Chair Barrett started by discussing the purpose of the next UPAC assignment was to examine nuclear power options for Colorado Springs Utilities. Ms. Bethany Schoemer, Strategic Planning and Governance Specialist Senior, explained the assignment was

approved by the Utilities Board on June 18, 2024. Chair Barrett reviewed the list of 12 questions approved for UPAC to examine and advised the assignment is to be completed and presented no later than the March 2025 Utilities Board meeting.

The committee discussed two options for draft schedules. Option one included presentations from multiple outside energy agencies with integrated presentations from Springs Utilities. The second option consisted of an alternative schedule that included having UPAC members research one to two of the 12 questions outlined in the scope. Each month would focus on the research conducted by UPAC members and guest presentations would be integrated throughout. Both options would begin August 7, 2024, and conclude no later than March 19, 2025.

Mr. Dave Donelson, Chair of the Utilities Board, thanked UPAC for taking on this assignment and advised the Utilities Board will appreciate learning more about energy, reliability and emissions. Mr. Travas Deal, Chief Executive Officer, pointed out this assignment will be a collaborative effort between UPAC and staff. He stated Springs Utilities will bring forward information they have related to nuclear energy to the meeting on Aug. 7. Alternate Member Meyer asked staff to provide a list of entities Springs Utilities has reached out to for UPAC to leverage when collecting their own research.

Committee Member Burghart expressed preference on selecting the first assignment scope option. He stated he believes UPAC will benefit from outside entities coming and sharing their expertise. Chair Barrett countered that it would be difficult reaching out to all the companies listed, however, Mr. Deal advised Springs Utilities staff would be responsible for reaching out to the contacts first.

Committee Member Danner suggested choosing a hybrid approach, incorporating guest speakers and having UPAC do research on their own. She proposed having a dedicated meeting where organizations within the community would be able to provide feedback. She also recommended having a midpoint meeting to touch base with the Utilities Board and staff.

The committee discussed risk tolerance and whether it would be best to invest or be self-reliant on the different opportunities and roadblocks that come with nuclear power. They further questioned different efforts, such as how the renewable energy portfolio could consider nuclear as a renewable energy source and the presence of stability and reliability to customers.

Chair Barrett agreed with Committee Member Danner's suggestion of going with a hybrid approach. He expressed readiness in providing his own research and reaching out to contacts by the next meeting on Aug. 7. Ms. Schoemer clarified Springs Utilities will bring forward their list of the organizations and if there are gaps, UPAC can provide a list of their resources.

Committee Member Watson asked when Springs Utilities will be able to provide the list of contacts and who those contacts are with. Ms. Abby Ortega, General Manager of Infrastructure and Resource Planning, informed the committee her team has made contacts across the industry. She stated it would be best to allow Springs Utilities to gather those contacts and present them at the next meeting to avoid duplicating efforts.

The committee discussed best practices on how to share articles found for the assignment. It was confirmed all items should be sent to Ms. Schoemer and she will be responsible for distributing the information to the committee to avoid violating the Colorado Open Meetings Law.

**5. Citizen Comment**

None

**6. Committee Member General Discussion**

Chair Barrett advised there is a vacancy on the committee due to the resignation of Vice Chair Dussing and recommended promoting Alternate Member Meyer to a regular member at the July 17 Utilities Board meeting.

Chair Barrett stated the Vice Chair vacancy will not be filled immediately. He said both the Chair and Vice Chair's elections are in December 2024 and it would be appropriate to wait until then to vote for both.

Chair Barrett discussed the two alternate member vacancies on the committee and advised interviews will be at the end of July.

**7. Adjournment**

Chair Barrett adjourned the meeting at 9:14 a.m.

**Next meeting:** Aug. 7, 2024, at 8:00 a.m.