

MINUTES

Colorado Springs Utilities Board Meeting Wednesday, May 22, 2024

Utilities Board members present via Microsoft Teams or Blue River Conference Room:

Chair Dave Donelson, Vice Chair Yolanda Avila, Lynette Crow-Iverson, Nancy Henjum, Randy Helms, David Leinweber, Mike O'Malley, Brian Risley and Michelle Talarico

Utilities Board Members Excused:

None

Staff members present via Microsoft Teams or Blue River Conference Room:

Travas Deal, Lisa Barbato, Mike Francolino, Tristan Gearhart, Somer Mese, Jay Anderson, Joe Awad, Kerry Baugh, Pattie Benger, Steve Berry, Sean Bills, Jenny Bishop, Melissa Brown, Sage Church, Andy Colosimo, Dan Dilts, Matt Dudden, Natalie Eckhart, Marcela Espinoza, Brian Grim, Kelly Guisinger, Mallorie Hanson, Diana Harmon, Nick Harris, Brittany Harrison, Heather Harvey, Adam Hegstrom, John Hunter, Jennifer Jordan, Brenda Koskey, Birgit Landin, Drew Latrell, Brian Leach, Noemi Martinez, Tara McGowan, Danielle Nieves, Katlin Nolt, Jacqueline Nunez, Christopher Olney, Abigail Ortega, David Padgett, Gail Pecoraro, Jessica Ramirez, Jessica Rheinschmidt, Scott Shirola, Leslie Smith, Stuart Smith, April Speake, Admar Susic, Matthew Thieme, Amy Trinidad, Natalie Watts, Al Wells, Michelle Wills-Hills, Justin Zeisler and Jane Zook

City of Colorado Springs staff members present via Microsoft Teams or Blue River Conference Room:

Renee Congdon, David Beckett, Jamie Fabos, Michael Montgomery, Alexander Ryden, Carl Schueler and Ryan Trujillo

Citizens present via Microsoft Teams or Blue River Conference Room:

Matt Crusted, Aiden Hulting, Jeff Finn, Carrie Guy, Chris Jenkins, William Landin, Shanna Lewis, Chris Libert, Jan Martin, Tim Seibert, Logan Shay and Christian Sitarz

1. Call to Order

Chair Donelson called the Utilities Board meeting to order at 1:01 p.m., and Ms. Gail Pecoraro, Utilities Board Administrator, called the roll.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Pastor Shay Logan with Calvary Workship Center delivered the invocation, and Chair Donelson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Consent Calendar

3a. Approval of Utilities Board Meeting Minutes: April 17, 2024, Utilities Board Meeting

The Consent Calendar was unanimously approved.

4. Customer Comments

There were no customer comments.

5. Recognition

- Drinking Water Week and Worker Appreciation

Ms. Tara Kelly, Wastewater Treatment Manager, and Mr. Sage Church, Operations Superintendent I, recognized Springs Utilities employees who celebrated Drinking Water Week May 5 - 11, 2024.

- Employees who worked the 2024 Windstorm

Chair Donelson acknowledged employees who worked to bring more than 10,400 customers back online following the May 6, 2024, windstorm. The organization's employees excelled in their response. They were recognized for their teamwork, dedication and demonstration of responsibility.

6. Compliance Reports

- I-2 Financial Condition and Activities Q4 2023 and Q1 2024 Update – Contracts over \$500K*** - G7

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

- E-2 CEO Responsibilities
 - ECA/GCA
 - Water Outlook

Mr. Justin Zeisler, Water Resource Engineer, reviewed the local weather conditions as of May 15, 2024. The Colorado drought monitor shows some areas of moderate to severe drought in the southern and eastern parts of the state, with abnormally dry conditions across a large portion of western and eastern Colorado.

Mr. Zeisler stated the snowpack in the Arkansas River Basin is 130% of normal as of May 16, 2024, and in the Colorado River Headwaters Basin is 119% of normal. He reviewed the 2024 water demands, the monthly water use for May and the 2024 actual water consumption. Colorado Springs' system-wide storage is at 79.5% of capacity, 12.2% above the shorter-term average of 67.3%. The organization has 3.1 years of demand in storage (based on the past 3 years of demand). South Catamount

Reservoir remains closed for planned dam maintenance. South Suburban Reservoir has been drained for outlet work repairs.

7. Items Called Off Consent Calendar

There were none.

8. Resolution reaffirming the Arkansas Basin Preservation Principles and opposing City of Aurora's water right's purchase in Otero County

Ms. Abigail Ortega, General Manager of Resource Infrastructure Planning, provided a presentation giving historical information on the Arkansas Preservation Principles, which was signed in 2003 by the City of Colorado Springs, Southeastern, Lower Arkansas, and Upper Arkansas Water Conservancy Districts, the City Council of Pueblo and the Pueblo Board of Water. Earlier this year, the City of Aurora purchased additional shares of stock in the Catlin Canal Company and other water rights in the Arkansas River Basin. Staff expressed that this is a violation of the original 2000 Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District Intergovernmental Agreement.

The Utilities Board agreed to move this matter forward to the June 11 City Council meeting.

9. Proposed changes to the Undergrounding Policy

Mr. Joe Awad, General Manager of Systems Planning and Projects, presented information on two proposals.

This presentation included cost comparisons for overhead vs. underground cost estimates, structures, attributes and considerations, and what industry peers are doing. Current construction practice and policy were reviewed.

- A resolution directing the CEO to underground portions of the Kelker south plant 115kv transmission line within the footprint within the footprint of the COS creek plan.

Utilities Board Member Michelle Talarico spoke in favor of the resolution, as the resolution sponsor. Resident Jan Martin, board president of Pikes Peak Waterways, spoke in favor of Board Member Talarico's resolution. Martin stated that that Pikes Peak Waterways has been working in conjunction with other community partners on restoring the COS creek plan. This is a long-term project.

Chris Lieber, principle at N.E.S., also spoke in favor of Ms. Talarico's resolution. N.E.S. is the project manager for the COS Creek Plan. Lieber said that the COS Creek Plan has been listed with the Army Corp of Engineers for grant funding at both the federal, state and other philanthropic opportunities.

Resident Max Crumsted who was there on behalf of the Mill Street Housing Association had specific questions regarding this resolution, which were answered.

Board Member Talarico made a motion to adopt the Resolution directing the CEO to underground portions of the Kelker south plant 115kv transmission line within the footprint of the OS creek plan. Ms. Henjum seconded this motion. This resolution passed with a vote of 7 to 2, with Board members Donelson and Risley opposed.

- A resolution directing the CEO to underground portions of the Kelker south plant 115kv transmission line adjacent to residential areas

Vice Chair Yolanda Avila spoke to this resolution as the resolution sponsor. There were no citizen comments with regard to this resolution.

- Board Member Avila made a motion to adopt the resolution directing the CEO to underground portions of the Kelker south plant 115kv transmission line adjacent to residential areas. Ms. Henjum seconded this motion. This resolution failed on a vote of 2 to 7, with all members but Ms. Avila and Ms. Talarico voting against the motion.

10. Board Member Updates

Board Member Helms encouraged looking at distribution line undergrounding.

Board Member Talarico would like to add more undergrounding / overhead transmission discussion to future Strategic Planning Committee meetings.

Board Member O'Malley asked if Strategic Planning / Finance was "forever" joined. It is not, the previous meeting was a one-time joint meeting. He explained he would like to see how Project COPE can be expanded, – perhaps expanding it to an app or putting a QR code on Springs Utilities trucks.

Chair Donelson explained citizens are invited to the first State of the Utility on Thursday, June 6 at 2:30 p.m., at COS City Hub.

Board Member Henjum explained she found the joint Strategic Planning Committee/ Finance Committee meeting very helpful. She would like to see this occur on an annual basis. She stated the Employee Climate Survey is currently underway. The goal this year is 80% participation, the Board encourages all employees to complete this year's survey. They want to hear how they are doing.

Vice Chair Avila stated she would like continue to work on undergrounding transmission lines. She gave an update from the May Personnel Committee meeting.

11. Summary of Board Actions

- Approval of April 17, 2024 Utilities Board Meeting Minutes
- Approval to place a resolution reaffirming the Arkansas Basin Preservation Principles and in support of regional efforts to ensure that Arkansas River Basin water is not permanently transferred out of the Basin on a future City Council regular agenda
- Approval of a resolution directing the CEO to underground portions of the Kelker south plant 115kv transmission line within the footprint within the footprint of the COS creek plan
- A resolution directing the CEO to underground portions of the Kelker south plant 115kv transmission line adjacent to residential areas failed on a vote of 2 to 7.

12. Executive Session

Ms. Congdon, City Attorney's Office – Utilities Division Chief, read the following language to enter Executive Session:

In accordance with City Charter art. III, § 3-60(d) and its incorporated Colorado Open Meetings Law, C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(d) and Utilities Board Bylaws Rules 10(c)(4) the Utilities Board, in Open Session, is to determine whether it will hold a Closed Executive Session on one issue. The issue to be discussed involves specialized details of security arrangements involving critical infrastructure and operational assets.

The City Attorney's Office, on behalf of the Chair of the Utilities Board, shall poll the Utilities Board members, and, upon consent of two-thirds of the members present, may conduct a Closed Executive Session. In the event any Utilities Board member is participating electronically or telephonically in the Closed Executive Session, each Utilities Board member participating electronically or telephonically in the 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 Closed Executive Session. If consent to the Closed Executive Session is not given, the item may be discussed in Open Session or withdrawn from consideration.

Ms. Congdon polled the Utilities Board Members. With a vote of 8-0, with Board Member Leinweber excused, the Utilities Board unanimously approved to go into Executive Session. The Utilities Board took a five-minute break and entered Executive Session.

13. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:41 p.m.