

**PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT NO. 1 OF COWLITZ COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

**MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING OF COMMISSIONERS**

**Tuesday, March 11, 2025**

**John Searing Auditorium and Microsoft Teams**

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**Present:**

**COMMISSIONERS**

Dave Quinn, President

Duane Dalglish, Vice President

Bruce Pollock, Secretary

**STAFF**

Alice Dietz, Communication & Public Relations Manager

Brian Scheuble, Operations Superintendent

Casey Kalal, Director of Operations

Dever Haffner-Ratliffe, Regulatory Affairs Coordinator

Gary Huhta, General Manager

Heather Sorensen, Director of Customer Service & Compliance

Jeremy Beck, Safety Manager

Lance Larwick, Director of Engineering

Marisa Heard, Manager of Employee Services

Monica Petterson, Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board

Nyx Currie, WSU Practicum Student

Richard Hughes, General Counsel

Stacie Pederson, Risk Compliance Manager

Steve Taylor, Director of Regulatory & Regional Affairs

Tien Dinh, WSU Practicum Student

Trent Martin, Director of Accounting/CFO

**PUBLIC**

None

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Pursuant to published Notice, Commissioner Quinn called the Regular Board meeting of the Commissioners of Public Utility District No. 1 of Cowlitz County, Washington to order at 2:00 p.m.

**2. CHANGES/ADDITIONS TO BOARD AGENDA**

Commissioner Quinn noted an addition to the agenda of Staff Recommendation No. 8/3/11 regarding the acquisition of real estate.

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

It was moved by Commissioner Dalglish and seconded by Commissioner Pollock to approve the March 11, 2025 Board Agenda as amended.

The motion carried 3 to 0.

**4. APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES**

It was moved by Commissioner Dagleish and seconded by Commissioner Pollock to approve the February 25, 2025 Regular Board Meeting minutes as written.

The motion carried 3 to 0.

**5. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA ITEMS AND OTHER DISTRICT BUSINESS**

There was no public comment.

**6. MOTION TO RATIFY VOUCHERS/PAYROLL**

Approval of Vouchers in the amount of \$8,205,582.87. The Board reviewed expenditures of the District as required by RCW 42.24.180 for which payments were issued between February 24, 2025 and March 6, 2025, under the provisions of Resolution No. 2762.

It was moved by Commissioner Dagleish and seconded by Commissioner Pollock to ratify the vouchers/payroll.

Risk Compliance Manager Stacie Pederson reported expenditures this period consisted mainly of power supply, taxes, benefits, and the purchase of transformers and a new vac trailer.

The motion carried 3 to 0.

**7. WSU PRACTICUM STUDENT INTRODUCTIONS**

Lance Larwick introduced WSU Practicum students Tien Dinh and Nyx Currie.

**8. GENERAL MANAGER REPORT**

**BPA Day Ahead Market Decision:** General Manager Gary Huhta reported BPA issued a draft policy last week with their decision to go with the Southwest Power Pool Markets+ for day ahead marketing. From BPA's perspective, they found Markets+ to be a superior market design that does a better job of reflecting the value that hydro brings to the market, while also providing for more fair and equitable treatment of transmission loads. The draft policy is out for a 30-day comment period and a final record of decision will be made in May 2025. Public Power is nearly 100% in support of BPA's decision to go with Markets+.

**BPA Workforce Update:** BPA has experienced significant workforce challenges recently due to orders by the Trump Administration to curtail federal employees. BPA released some of its employees and lost others to early retirement. However, BPA received authorization last week from the Department of Energy to reinstate nearly all of the probationary employees it previously released. The Department of Energy has also agreed to exempt BPA from complying with the Reduction in Force order released by the US Office of Personnel Management.

**Columbia River Treaty Update:** The US and Canada are currently operating on a temporary 3-year agreement. Though they came to an agreement in principle late last year, the process was not completed to get the final agreement in place. Additionally, with the recent change in Administration, this process is now on pause until the new Administration gets up to speed. This is a common practice and could last for

up to a year. As of now, we will continue to operate under the temporary 3-year agreement until the permanent deal is put in place.

## **9. ACTION ITEMS**

### **9.1. Motion to Approve Staff Recommendation No. 5/3/11 – Vegetation Management Contract**

It was moved by Commissioner Dalglish and seconded by Commissioner Pollock to approve Staff Recommendation No. 5/3/11.

Operations Superintendent Brian Scheuble explained the District's contract with Asplundh Tree Expert for vegetation management services is set to expire on March 31, 2025. In preparation for the new contract term, bids were solicited through the advertised bid process for a new one-year contract with the option to renew annually for up to three years. Of the three bids received, Asplundh Tree Expert submitted the lowest bid. Based on their work reputation, prior work history with the District, references, and proven ability to provide for the District's needs, staff recommends the Board authorize award of the Vegetation Management Contract to Asplundh Tree Expert, LLC.

The motion carried 3 to 0.

### **9.2. Motion to Approve Staff Recommendation No. 6/3/11 – Business Operations Policies**

It was moved by Commissioner Dalglish and seconded by Commissioner Pollock to approve Staff Recommendation No. 6/3/11.

Executive Secretary Monica Petterson explained the Board last approved the Business Operation Policies on March 12, 2024. The Policies have been reviewed and updated by staff and the District's General Counsel as part of the annual review and update cycle. Revisions primarily consisted of the addition of clarifying language to the Business Continuity Policy and Procurement and Purchasing Policy, as well as other minor modifications and cleanup throughout the document.

The motion carried 3 to 0.

### **9.3. Motion to Approve Staff Recommendation No. 7/3/11 – Transfer of Accounts to Reserve for Bad Debts, Q2 2023 – Q2 2024**

It was moved by Commissioner Dalglish and seconded by Commissioner Pollock to approve Staff Recommendation No. 7/3/11.

Heather Sorensen, in her role as Auditor for the District, requested authorization to transfer \$171,744 to the Reserve for Bad Debts. The balances presented are for terminated service and bankruptcies during Q2 2023 through Q2 2024. Collection action for these accounts will be continued through the District's collection company and as customers return to service.

The motion carried 3 to 0.

### **9.4. Motion to Approve Staff Recommendation No. 8/3/11 – Acquisition of Real Estate**

It was moved by Commissioner Dalglish and seconded by Commissioner Pollock to approve Staff Recommendation No. 8/3/11.

Manager of Employee Services Marisa Heard explained the District has identified a 1.67 acre parcel for sale adjacent to the District’s Operations Center campus and within close proximity to the Columbia Way Substation. The site is currently vacant, fully fenced, level, and graveled. As part of the Operations campus long-term facilities needs plan, this parcel will be considered for current and future growth opportunities. Staff recommends the Board approve the purchase of this property, with the final sale contingent upon the satisfactory results of a Level I and II Environmental Study.

The motion carried 3 to 0.

**10. STAFF REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS**

Director of Accounting and CFO Trent Martin provided an overview of the District’s outstanding Electric System and Production System Revenue Bonds. He explained the District has an opportunity to refund the Production System bonds for interest savings and discussed with the Board the refunding options and market considerations. The Board gave its verbal approval for staff to continue to explore this opportunity.

**11. COMMISSIONER REPORTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS**

Commissioner Dagleish will attend Kelso/Longview Chamber meetings this week and next week.

Commissioner Pollock will attend WPUDA meetings next week.

**12. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None needed.

**13. MOTION TO ADJOURN MEETING**

It was moved by Commissioner Dagleish and seconded by Commissioner Pollock to adjourn the Regular Board Meeting at 3:18 p.m.

The motion carried 3 to 0.

Attest:

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*David F. Quinn*  
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President

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*Bruce Pollock*  
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Secretary

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*Duane Dagleish*  
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Vice President

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*Monica Petterson*  
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Prepared by Monica Petterson  
Executive Assistant/Clerk of the Board