

**TUMWATER CITY COUNCIL WORKSESSION**  
**MINUTES OF VIRTUAL MEETING**  
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**CONVENE:** 6:00 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Debbie Sullivan and Councilmembers Peter Agabi, Michael Althausen, Joan Cathey, Leatta Dahlhoff, Angela Jefferson, and Charlie Schneider.

Excused: Councilmember Eileen Swarthout.

Staff: City Administrator Lisa Parks, City Attorney Karen Kirkpatrick, Community Development Director Michael Matlock, Finance Director Troy Niemeyer, Police Chief Jon Weiks, Fire Chief Brian Hurley, Parks and Recreation Director Chuck Denney, Water Resources and Sustainability Director Dan Smith, and Communications Manager Ann Cook.

**PUGET SOUND  
ENERGY STORM  
READINESS  
PRESENTATION:**

Kristine Rompa, Senior Local Government Affairs Representative, Puget Sound Energy (PSE), briefed the Council on how to prepare for the approaching storm season, customer resources, and how PSE responds to and restores power.

Ms. Rompa stressed the importance of assuming that any downed utility wire is energized and to call 911 or PSE immediately to report the incident.

Year-round efforts by PSE to prepare for the storm season include maintaining over 26,000 miles of electric lines through vegetation management, removal of any hazards, replacement of poles, installation of tree wire, adding conducted cover wire to reduce shorts in the electrical system caused by falling trees or limbs, targeted reliability projects, such as cable remediation and undergrounding, and adding distribution automation to enable remote operation for rerouting electricity along other paths if a line is down. PSE also installs new Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI).

PSE is the largest and oldest energy utility covering a 6,000 square-mile service territory across 10 counties serving 1.2 million electric customers. In Thurston County, the customer base is the second highest in the state with 138,837 electric customers. Storms and power outages are considered a hands-on deck situation by PSE. PSE employs over 900 individuals with emergency roles representing approximately one-third of the employee base.

During storm events, PSE creates storm bases with emergency coordination centers when power outages reach a threshold beyond what PSE can handle under normal operating conditions. Emergency coordination centers provide oversight and direction for the entire response effort.

PSE typically restores infrastructure and facilities to benefit the highest

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number of customers by restoring service in the least amount of time. Transmission systems are prioritized first as they provide power regionally and transmit power to critical generation assets, such as dams, power plants, and wind farms. Downed transmission lines can also affect other utilities. Substations are the second priority as the substations affect thousands of customers. The last priority is the distribution system comprised of power lines from substations delivering power to homes and businesses.

Other factors that come into play for restoration include lists of all critical infrastructure by service territory, such as hospitals, airports, water, wastewater treatment plants, sewage pumping stations, emergency shelters, emergency response facilities, nursing homes, and assisted living facilities.

Restoration is a physical, time-consuming process requiring many activities in the field to restore electrical service. Damage assessment teams are sent and it often takes time to identify the location of downed lines, especially in remote areas. The appropriate crews are then dispatched to make repairs. A final inspection and safety check is completed prior to restoring power.

For most outages, PSE is unaware of the outage unless notified by a customer. As local distribution lines are not monitored from a central office, PSE must rely on customer notification either through the PSE website or by calling.

Ms. Rompa shared information on ways PSE communicates with customers. PSE's outage map is available on the website and as a mobile app. PSE provides text alerts when power is restored and shares regular updates and pictures on social media channels. Estimated restoration is a conservative estimate that is updated as more information becomes available from the field. Customers can sign up to receive notifications.

PSE promotes emergency preparedness. PSE recommends two sets of emergency supplies for the car and the home. Supplies should include flashlights, extra batteries, non-perishable food, first aid kits, water, stoves, cash, chargers for cell phones, and pet food.

In Thurston County, PSE has 1,331 miles of pipes and overhead wire, 1,942 miles of underground cable, 32 substations, 994 gas mains, 188,837 electricity customers, and 57,183 natural gas customers. Ms. Rompa invited questions.

Councilmember Dahlhoff noted a constituent questioned how PSE works with jurisdictions to underground power lines. Ms. Rompa responded that new construction automatically requires undergrounding distribution lines. Typically, existing transmission lines are often too expensive to underground. Other factors must be considered and in some instances where transmission lines are undergrounded, PSE and the city share the

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cost. She offered to provide some materials on undergrounding transmission and distribution lines to share with constituents. PSE considers the number of outages experienced in an area. If an area experiences repeated outages, PSE will often prioritize those areas for undergrounding as part of the capital projects program.

**EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT  
UPDATE:**

Fire Chief Hurley briefed the Council on the National Response Framework, City of Tumwater and Thurston County emergency management activities, and elected official responsibilities for emergency management.

Emergency management covers weather events and other natural or human-caused disasters. The City scales its response based on the type of incident. Emergency management creates the framework to assist with the response but also to reduce vulnerabilities, threats, and cope with disasters. Emergency management is an essential role of local government. Coordination also occurs with Thurston County with the federal government serving as the backstop when local, county, and state resources become overwhelmed. Emergency management has evolved to reflect national values, emerging threats, and it provides a safe, secure, and resilient community.

The National Response Frameworks outlines emergency management throughout the country. One key component is the National Preparedness Goal of participation by the entire community for preparedness and recovery after a disaster. Community and faith-based organizations are a key component of disaster response, as well as schools and tribal governments.

Five mission areas of focus are prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery. Thirty-two core capabilities have been identified that must be addressed in emergency management planning. The City's guiding document is the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. The City also has established a standing Emergency Management Committee comprised of directors and senior managers with a goal to coordinate City department responses and preparation activities, as well as providing staffing for an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) if an event requires a center.

The City's primary EOC is located at Station T-1 Fire Department to enable leaders to meet and organize efforts to support an incident and coordinate on-scene management activities. The EOC is enacted based on different levels of activation. Not all incidents require activation of the EOC.

Each year, the region experiences wind and snow storms with coordination by all City departments, which typically handle those events using existing resources within the City. When incidents exceed the ability to handle an

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event internally, the City activates the EOC. The EOC addresses operations, planning, logistics, and finance. All activities are documented especially if the City plans to seek assistance from FEMA. The EOC is a coordination structure to collect, analyze, share information, support resources in the response, coordinates plans, determines needs, and provide coordination and policy direction.

The City's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan guides response before, during, and after a disaster. The plan is updated on a five-year cycle. A one-year extension for the update was granted because of the pandemic. The City is updating the plan for submittal to the state for review by the end of December 2023. After the state review of the plan, the Council will receive a briefing on the update with a subsequent request to approve the Emergency Management Plan.

Within the City, staff continues ongoing activities, training, and exercises. The committee will resume monthly meetings to ensure all training and exercises are scheduled. The City also works closely with the City of Olympia on planning efforts.

Fire Chief Hurley described emergency efforts with Thurston County. The City of Tumwater is a member of the Emergency Management Council, which coordinates education, emergency preparedness, and other emergency management activities for member jurisdictions in the county. The City works with Thurston County on hazard mitigation planning. Tumwater's Annex is included within the county's plan. The City participates in the Disaster Recovery Council, which was supported by Thurston Regional Planning Council. The region anticipates reinitiating the work of the Disaster Recovery Council.

Fire Chief Hurley reviewed a list of elected official responsibilities during an emergency event. Some basic training for elected officials includes on-line classes sponsored by FEMA's Emergency Management Institute. The first training is Introduction to the Incident Command System. The training course, IS-70, is an introduction to the National Incident Management System, which provides the framework on how jurisdictions operate and structure command systems within emergency management organizations. General elected official responsibilities focus on communication, policy decisions, and support of rescue efforts. Primary responsibilities include taking care of themselves and families during an emergency by being prepared. Elected officials are required to establish and maintain an organization for emergency management. The City recognizes the requirement within the Tumwater Municipal Code. As an elected official during a large-scale emergency, it is important to maintain contact with the City Administrator or designee. The Council and Mayor may be requested to act with an emergency proclamation and coordinate with other jurisdictions.

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Councilmember Jefferson asked about the timing of the last activation of the EOC. Fire Chief Hurley said he believes the last activation was during the Nisqually Earthquake. However, over the years, extensive staff coordination has occurred for different events.

Mayor Sullivan mentioned her participation along with several other Councilmembers to training in Ocean Shores sponsored by FEMA. The disaster scenario was based on a 9.0 Cascadia subduction earthquake for recovery from day 30 to nine months after the earthquake. The exercise prompted a regional effort that resulted in a document addressing a media structure during a disaster.

Fire Chief Hurley added that the training exercise was responsible for initiating the Disaster Recovery Council with TRPC leading the effort with grant funding. There is recognition of the need for more ongoing work.

**AMENDED  
INTERLOCAL  
AGREEMENT WITH  
OLYMPIA, LACEY, &  
THURSTON COUNTY  
REGARDING  
CREATION OF A  
PUBLIC FACILITIES  
DISTRICT  
MODIFICATION TO  
SECOND  
AMENDMENT:**

City Administrator Parks reported the Capital Area Regional Public Facilities District was formed in 2002 by the cities of Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater, and Thurston County. The district was formed through an interlocal agreement between the jurisdictions. The agreement has been amended three times prior to the current proposal. The Public Facilities District (PFD) funded the Hands On Children's Museum in Olympia and the construction of the Regional Athletic Complex in Lacey. In 2017, the Legislature amended the authorizing statute enabling PFDs to extend the timeline for imposing tax from 25 years to 40 years. The proposal would implement the change in state law and extend the timeline of the interlocal agreement for the PFD for an additional 15 years. The extension would enable phase 3 of the Lacey complex to be financed and completed. The PFD is funded by a portion of sales tax returned from the state portion of collected sales tax within the region.

Staff recommends approving the placement of the proposed amendment to the interlocal agreement on the consent calendar at the Council's meeting on November 21, 2023.

Councilmember Dahlhoff requested additional background information on the initial establishment of the PFD. She understands the regional process would afford an opportunity for Tumwater to sponsor a project. She asked whether the discussion surrounding a potential PFD 2 to support the construction of an indoor sports complex to include a recreational aquatic facility would be reflective of Tumwater's ability to sponsor a project.

City Administrator Parks explained that the current proposal is specific to the two existing PFD facilities. When PFDs are created, it is based on specific projects approved by voters in the region. In terms of future projects in Tumwater, a current opportunity was generated by recent

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legislation passed during the last session sponsored by Senator Hawkins from the 12<sup>th</sup> District. A PFD would be limited in scope to indoor sports fields/facilities and aquatic centers. It is an option if a location could be identified to site an indoor recreation, aquatic center, or both. If another PFD is implemented in the region, it would need to be for a specific project and placed as a ballot measure for voter consideration. The new legislation stipulates that the funding source would be from new and additional sales tax generated within the region.

Councilmember Jefferson commented on the need for both an indoor sports complex and an aquatic center.

**MAYOR/CITY  
ADMINISTRATOR'S  
REPORT:**

City Administrator Parks advised that she, Manager Ramirez, and Kelsey Hulse with Strategies 360 have been meeting with legislators to advocate for the City's legislative agenda. Particular emphasis has been focused on the Habitat Conservation Plan and a request for seed money to acquire and develop mitigation land. Other discussion points centered on transportation and the E Street Connection. The meetings have been with Representative Doglio, Representative Bateman, Senator Hunt, and with the Governor's budget writing staff.

City Administrator Parks advised of recent activities surrounding brewery redevelopment. No firm information is available at this time; however the Council will receive updates as more information becomes available. The Department of Ecology reached a settlement agreement with the current brewery property owner regarding the spill in February 2019. Many preliminary conversations have centered on the potential of creating a PFD in terms of brewery property redevelopment. However, the first priority is identifying environmental contamination and the extent of the contamination. Staff is focusing on initiating phase I and II environmental assessments of the property. The City plans to utilize EPA funds of a \$500,000 grant to fund the work on the brewery site. The City plans to issue a Request for Qualifications for a consulting firm to assist the City using the EPA grant and the grant from the Department of Ecology to complete similar work on the Washington State Department of Transportation property located off Capitol Boulevard.

Mayor Sullivan announced the arrival of two new police officers after successfully graduating from the Law Enforcement Academy. She shared information about each officer.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**With there being no further business, Mayor Sullivan adjourned the meeting at 6:49 p.m.**