

Quarterly Update with PUD

November 8, 2021

2:30 p.m.

Present: Commissioner Pollock, Commissioner Swope, Becky Butler, Austin Majors, Willie Painter

Guests: Frank Corbin, Eric Rosane

Recorder: Tammy Martin

Willie Painter provided the following updates:

Winlock Substation and Transmission Facilities: PUD received a planning grant as well as PUD contributions for an analysis to construct the substation and transmission facility in Winlock. PUD was allocated \$3.5 million from the American Rescue Plan Act, and recently a \$2.5 million request was advanced to the 2022 appropriations bill at the federal level. PUD is seeking a grant from Economic Development Association (EDA) funding program to support the project. PUD estimates the project to be in the \$9 million - 12 million range. PUD is still in negotiations to determine the best site for the Winlock substation.

PUD has been able to temporarily supply power to the Lowe's distribution center. There is a need for a new substation and infrastructure. They are looking to scale the infrastructure meet incremental needs as they come forward. The goal is to start with a 25 megawatt substation and increase 25 megawatts to meet future needs. The cost for the initial phase is approximately \$13 million. They received a commitment for \$1 million from Benaroya. There is also a \$2.5 million appropriations bill being presented to Legislature that would help support the substation development. Willie said there have been numerous partners collaborating for the utilities portion of the Winlock substation.

LED Light Conversion: PUD launched a countywide program to change all high-pressure sodium lights to LED lights. They have converted approximately 600 lights. Phase II will include light poles and will begin in 2022. Private customers receiving these LED lights will see a reduction in billing for rates due to the conversion.

This initiative was identified in the 10-year plan. This was to update outdated and obsolete equipment. This will save money. 2,632 lights that were converted. Non municipal lights started first and will likely be completed in the first quarter of 2022. Any fixtures that have burned out or need replacement, have been converted. The electricity rate fees are considerably lower.

Broadband Network and Deployment Plan: Willie said that broadband is a great deficiency in Lewis County. The PUD has a network architecture plan utilizing current infrastructure. They have divided Lewis County into 17 zones. Once grant funding is secured, PUD will own, maintain and operate the infrastructure. Through partnership with private internet providers, the provider would then supply the service to private or commercial residents.

PUD resubmitted the pre-application for the Randle area. LCPUD is looking for funding to support.

SmartHub App for customers: This is an integrated software program. This will include all systems within LCPUD. There will be great new features for customers. There will be a smart phone app for customers. Access energy use and update account information, contact various departments, can much more effectively report power outages. They will also be able to push notification on power outage fix expectancy. They have approximately 34,000 customers in Lewis County and this program will help those that prefer to communicate digitally.

Willie provided an update on arrearages. The disconnect moratorium ended October 30, 2021. The PUD contacted all those in arrears to start a payment plan. The PUD has been working with those in arrears. Disconnects will begin mid-November if individuals owing haven't started a payment plan, made plans to pay down the bill or connect with a financial assistance option. The amount owed was over \$800,000, and LCPUD has been able to collect a considerable amount. There are currently 710 customers owing \$465,274.

Meeting adjourned at 3:03 p.m.