

MINUTES

CITY OF FORT COLLINS • BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS



ENERGY BOARD

November 10, 2022 – 5:30 pm
222 Laporte Ave – Colorado Room

ROLL CALL

Board Members Present: Alan Braslau, Steve Tenbrink (remote), Dan Gould (remote), Marge Moore, Jeremy Giovando, Bill Becker, Sidra Aghababian

Board Members Absent: John Fassler, Emilio Ramirez

OTHERS PRESENT

Staff Members Present: Christie Fredrickson, John Phelan, Kendall Minor, Rhonda Gatzke, Lance Smith, Cyril Videgar (remote)

Members of the Public: Tom Loran, Ryan Seeboth

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Vice Chairperson Becker called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & AGENDA CHANGES

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Newly appointed Board Member, Tom Loran, whose term begins in January 2023, presented himself to the Board.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

In preparation for the meeting, board members submitted amendments via email for the October 10, 2022, minutes. The minutes were approved as amended.

STAFF REPORTS

(attachments available upon request)

Executive Director's Update

Kendall Minor, Utilities Executive Director

Phillip Amaya will start on November 14 as Light and Power's new director (title: Deputy Director, Utilities Light & Power). He is coming to Fort Collins Utilities having 25 years of experience at Magic Valley Electric Cooperative in Texas.

Mr. Minor said staff is preparing to send out a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a new ADMS (Advanced Distribution Management System). The RFP will seek to hire a consultant to help develop roadmaps and scope of work for the project. The Utility has been using ACS for just under three years, but it is not meeting the distribution needs of the Utility.

On Oct. 25, City Council voted to adopt an interim climate goal of 50% below 2005 levels of greenhouse gas emissions by 2026.

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REGULAR MEETING

The 5% electric rate increase was recently approved by City Council, along with the Income Qualified Assistance Program (IQAP).

Board member Giovando asked how the City is evaluating its security risk against cyber-attacks. Mr. Minor said the City recently rolled out multifactor authentication for the entire City, but as it relates to MDMS (Meter Data Management System), the upgraded version will fortify the Utility's security and data. Mr. Phelan added that some utilities are only just now rolling out Advanced Metering Infrastructure for first time and the Utility is working on refresh after 10 years.

Board member Braslau said he is very pleased that the IQAP was approved, and it is time to look at expanding the public outreach. The Utility estimates that it is not reaching enough people who are being left behind despite their qualification for the program. Mr. Smith said Colorado's LEAP program remains the determining eligibility, but staff is going to begin helping LEAP with public outreach and enrollment. Mr. Braslau would like to see the Utility set an enrollment goal.

Vice Chairperson Becker expressed concerns about abandoning ACS after only a few years. Mr. Minor said there may have been some missed opportunities in the roadmap planning and ACS is ultimately geared more for transmission systems than distribution. Outage support works well, but the GIS mapping portion does not work well for Light and Power crews. There was lack of training because it was implemented right before the COVID-19 pandemic and IT was not able to support staff. Mr. Minor added that many lessons were learned along the way that staff will use in selecting a new product.

Board member Gould asked about the Utility's plan to hire grant writers, he wondered where they plan to hire from and what are the targets. Mr. Minor said the Utility is currently awaiting final contracts with two different firms, Stantec and Tetra Tech, who will facilitate the writing of grants and grant administration with their grant writing teams. There is a lot of federal funds and grant money out there for system upgrades as they relate to electrification planning.

PURPA TITLE I HEARING UNDER IIA

John Phelan, Energy Services Senior Manager and Energy Policy Advisor
(attachments available upon request)

The Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 has "shall consider" language which requires the Utility to review new standards and make a determination concerning implementation of standards.

More specifically section 111(a) of PURPA, 16 USC 2621 states, "Each state regulatory authority (with respect to each electric utility for which it has ratemaking authority) and each **nonregulated electric utility shall consider** each standard established by subsection (d) and **make a determination** concerning whether or not it is appropriate to implement such standard to carry out the purposes of this title. For purposes of consideration and determination...the purposes of this title supplement otherwise applicable to state law. Nothing in this subsection prohibits any State regulatory authority or nonregulated electric utility from making any determination that it is not appropriate to implement such standard, pursuant to its authority under otherwise applicable state law."

PURPA was initially put together in response to the 1970s energy crisis, its most commonly known for encouraging small independent power production. Since then, it has been updated many times (1992, 2005, 2007, 2021).

The language requires the Utility to complete some due diligence and processes, but it is important to note that City staff is already doing much of the work outlined. There are two new components: demand

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response and flexibility, and electric vehicle charging. Under demand response and flexibility, the “shall consider language outlines the following: “shall promote” the use of demand response and flexibility practices and may establish rate mechanisms for the recovery of costs for demand response and flexibility. Under electric vehicle charging, the “shall consider” language outlines the following: “shall consider” measures to promote greater electrification of the transportation sector, including establishing rates that: promote EV charging options, improve the customer experience with EV charging, accelerate 3rd party investment in EV charging, and appropriately recover the marginal costs of delivering electricity to EVs and EV charging infrastructure. Mr. Phelan noted the City is less mature on the EV side than the DR side, but this is all largely work staff is already invested in.

Procedurally, staff must commence the process with a public notice (the Energy Board meeting tonight satisfies that requirement), then hold a public hearing (likely another Energy Board meeting in 2023), and then create a recommendation for City Council to consider.

Board member Braslau wondered what the feeling is right now concerning adoption or dismissal of these rules since City staff is already doing much of the work. Mr. Phelan said the inclination, based on the City Attorney’s Office recommendations, is to decline formal regulatory requirements, because Fort Collins is home rule municipality, and it doesn’t change what work staff is already doing. However, Mr. Phelan recognizes that may create an issue in public perception.

Board member Braslau moved the Energy Board recognizes the “shall consider” requirements of PURPA under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act related to grid flexibility and electric vehicle charging standards and recommends that Council hold a public hearing and make a determination considering such standards. Staff will present findings for consideration by the Energy Board prior to a Council hearing in 2023.

Board member Moore seconded the motion.

Discussion:

None.

Vote on the Motion: It passed unanimously 7-0, with two absent.

APPROVE 2023 WORK PLAN

(attachments available upon request)

Board members reviewed the draft work plan and discussed their suggested changes and comments.

Board member Giovando moved to approve the 2023 Energy Board Work Plan with discussed changes.

Chairperson Tenbrink seconded the motion.

Discussion:

None.

Vote on the Motion: It passed unanimously 7-0, with two absent.

BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Board member Braslau reapplied and was interviewed for the Energy Board; he will be reappointed at the upcoming City Council meeting for two more years and at that time will reach his term limit (2024).

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Four new members will also be appointed: Tom Loran, Brian Smith, Bill Althouse, and Vanessa Paul. Board members asked Board member Aghababian what would be helpful (from her perspective as a new member this year) for the incoming new members. Ms. Aghababian suggested a cheat sheet or glossary of acronyms.

Board member Giovando said the public comment period has opened for the 5th National Climate Assessment.

FUTURE AGENDA REVIEW

The Board's December meeting will include an update to the Environmental Justice Grant and the Board will begin drafting their Annual Report for 2022.

ADJOURNMENT

The Energy Board adjourned at 7:10 pm.