



**City of Davis  
Utilities Commission Minutes  
Remote Meeting  
Wednesday, March 16, 2022  
5:30 P.M.**

Commissioners Present: Gerry Braun, Andrew Cullen, Linda Deos (Chair), Steve Gellen, Emma O'Rourke-Powell (Alternate), Elaine Roberts-Musser, Johannes Troost

Commissioner(s) Absent: Lorenzo Kristov

Council Liaison(s) Present: None

Staff Present: Stan Gryczko, Director - Public Works Utilities & Operations  
Adrienne Heinig, Assistant to the Director

Also in Attendance: None

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**1. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Chairperson Deos called meeting to order at 5:33pm.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

J Troost moved to approve the agenda, seconded by G Braun. Approved by the following votes:

Ayes: Braun, Cullen, Deos, Gellen, O'Rourke-Powell, Roberts-Musser, Troost

Noes:

Absent: Kristov

**3. Brief Announcements from Staff, Commission Members, and City Council Members**

- L Deos spoke on the passing of Vic Fazio, former member of the United States House of Representatives for California. Mr. Fazio led efforts to establish a wildlife refuge below the I-80 overpass, which is now the Vic Fazio Yolo Wildlife Area. G Braun mentioned that Mr. Fazio is also the reason the City receives solar power from the PVUSA facility just outside of town.
- E Roberts-Musser provided two articles for Commission review:

- Byzantine water laws will leave Californians high and dry - News Break (J Troost indicated that the Commission might appreciate a presentation on water laws in the future)
- Why marine biologists think ocean cleanups are a bad idea - Vox
- G Braun indicated he would share a short piece on energy resilience, and a report on decarbonization.
- J Troost provided information on the Cool Davis event being held concurrently with the Commission meeting focused on building a drought adapted community.

#### 4. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

#### 5. Consent Calendar

A. **Utilities Commission Minutes** – January 19, 2022

B. **Utilities Commission Minutes** – February 16, 2022

Prior to the approval of the Consent Calendar, one correction was made to the February 16, 2022 minutes. E O'Rourke Powell was listed as present when she was absent.

L Deos moved, J Troost seconded, to move the Consent Calendar as amended.  
Approved by following votes:

Ayes: Braun, Cullen, Deos, Gellen, O'Rourke-Powell, Roberts-Musser, Troost

Noes:

Absent: Kristov

#### 6. Regular Items

##### A. **Solid Waste Cost of Service Study Consultant Selection Recommendation.**

The item was introduced by A Heinig, who provided a brief overview of the Solid Waste Cost of Service study process so far, including the review of the request for proposals in January 2022. She highlighted the need to review the costs associated with compliance with Senate Bill 1383, and to conduct a customer cost allocation. E O'Rourke-Powell stated that the team reviewing the proposal was careful to check the proposal with the evaluation criteria to ensure all of the requested tasks were being met, and to ascertain that the consultant was familiar with solid waste laws and regulations specific to California.

Discussion included the following:

- Comments on the single proposal, and if the City was accustomed to seeing such limited proposals for cost of service studies. Staff indicated that the cost of service studies for small utilities are small contracts, which generally run just under \$100,000, and do not attract a large number of

proposals unless the utility is unique (the Stormwater cost of service study received seven proposals). Staff also indicated that Proposition 218 requirements create a consistency in process across most consultants, as the process is clearly defined in the regulations.

- Encouraging connection with the Natural Resources Commission to determine if there are future goals of the Commission that might have an impact on service levels.
- The possibility of changing garbage collection in the future (with increased diversion of organics materials).
- The importance of accounting for upcoming regulatory changes and impacts of climate change.
- The need to ensure that the accounting of capital replacement needs for equipment (including for the on-street yard material pile collection) be clearly understood when discussing the utility financial plan and service levels.
- Ensuring that consideration of the capital replacement within Recology includes a review of possibilities for electric or alternative fuel vehicles.
- Clarification that the capital needs of the hauler (Recology) are part of the financial plan for the utility and a component of the rate structure.
- The variety of solid waste service models practiced by jurisdictions across California, with some cities performing all services, and some providing no in-house services, with a mixture of service types in between.
- The challenges of working with a private company to provide a public service.

The Commission did suggest that they undertake review of the scope for the request for proposals (RFP) for utility cost of service/rate studies to identify any opportunities for increasing the number of proposals received by the City. At the close of the discussion, a motion was made as follows:

**MOTION:** To move staff recommendation to recommend that Council approve the selection of SCS Engineers as the consultant for the Solid Waste Cost of Service/Rate Study.

Moved by L Deos, seconded by E Roberts-Musser. The motion passed by the following vote:

Ayes: Braun, Cullen, Deos, Gellen, O'Rourke-Powell, Roberts-Musser, Troost

Noes: None

Absent: Kristov

*No public comment was received on this item.*

## **B. Commission Workplan Update.**

The item was introduced by A Heinig, who introduced the annual update to the Commission's Workplan, last updated in March of 2021. She indicated that the City Council Goals have changed since the last approved workplan, and presented a worksheet to facilitate the Commission discussion in updating the Workplan, with a discussion of each item currently in the plan. During the Commission discussion, it was determined that the Workplan would be brought back for review prior to formal approval.

Discussion included the following:

- The suggestion of highlighting a “do no harm” action or goal that should be included when discussing the utilities. If not specifically called out, it should be incorporated into the Workplan and the work of the Commission. Staff suggested that the rate study process could be amended to include a focus on reviewing environmental hazards and include a focus to “do no harm” in the financial review and rate setting of each utility.
- Understanding the difference between “Community Resilience Strategies” and “City Utility Resiliency.” Staff indicated that a narrative would be provided for each item to better outline the intent of each item.
- Reviewing City energy sources and resources with an eye on City energy independence, in addition to encouraging Council support for policy changes related to energy delivery at the State level. City involvement with Valley Clean Energy and other regional agencies was highlighted as an important focus.
- A reminder that the Commission has an obligation to set rates for the here and now, but consideration of the upcoming impacts is an essential component of the rate setting, as well as how the utilities can achieve resilience and sustainability.
- Additional narrative that should be added to the metrics of value item to ensure understanding of the intent to both compare to other communities, and to the City's own provision of service. It was discussed that the factors to consider related to the utilities would include cost, customer satisfaction, and other ideas. It was also suggested that a subcommittee could be formed to further clarify the item.
- Three new items were added to the Workplan:
  - Explore the establishment of a community resilience hub
  - Participation in and influence on the CAAP process
  - Review template request for proposals for comment/feedback

*No public comment was received on this item, and no formal action was taken.*

*L Deos left the meeting at 6:55 p.m.*

**7. Commission and Staff Communication**

**A. Long Range Calendar**

The item was introduced by S Gryczko, who outlined the next few months for the Long Range calendar, and described some current staff challenges that have led staff to request cancellation of Commission meetings without pressing items. Staff requested the consideration of cancellation of the April meeting for the Utilities Commission, which was accepted by consensus. Discussion also included updates on long range items, and it was also requested that water supplies and water shortage contingency planning information shared with Council be shared with the Commission as well.

*No public comment was received on this item, and no formal action was taken.*

**8. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 7:26 p.m.