

W. Bill Booth
Chair
Idaho

James A. Yost
Idaho

Tom Karier
Washington

Dick Wallace
Washington



Bruce A. Measure
Vice-Chair
Montana

Rhonda Whiting
Montana

Melinda S. Eden
Oregon

Joan M. Dukes
Oregon

Council Meetings
Teleconference on September 3, 2009
and
Council meeting on September 9, 2009 in Astoria Oregon

Minutes for September 3, 2009 Council Meeting
via teleconference

Council chair Bill Booth began the teleconference with a roll call to assure all members were connected to the meeting. Booth, Joan Dukes, and Melinda Eden were present at the Council's headquarters in Portland; all other members joined by telephone.

The purpose of the meeting is to consider release of the draft Sixth Power Plan, Booth said. There has been a lot of work done in the past several weeks, and I appreciate the effort, he added. Booth indicated he would have Power Committee chair Eden take over to introduce the single agenda item.

Eden made a motion that the Council release for public comment the Draft Sixth Power Plan for public comment with changes adopted by the Members at today's meeting; approve the schedule of hearings presented by the staff; and direct the staff to give appropriate notice of its decision. Tom Karier seconded the motion.

In response to a question from Dukes, Booth clarified that if there is substantive change to the draft over the course of the discussion, the motion could be amended and restated.

Eden noted that various subcommittees, Council members, and staff have worked on issues that were raised at the August Council meeting in Spokane, and she said proposed changes to the draft were made available to Council members. I have heard no complaints about the changes, and the Power Committee recommends the plan be released, she stated.

Staffer Terry Morlan provided an overview of activities that took place after the Spokane meeting. He recapped the events, noting that after issues arose in Spokane, staff sent out a "clean draft" on August 13, with "clean drafts" of the appendices sent out the next day. On August 25 and 28, the Power Committee held special meetings, focusing on Chapter 12, which pertains to BPA, and the Action Plan, Morlan reported.

He said changes were made in several areas, including clarification of the near-term conservation target and BPA's role in providing assistance with conservation programs to small rural utilities; clarification that BPA may need to acquire resources in addition to conservation; information about how analytical models will be updated; and addition of an action item saying Council staff will participate in utility integrated resource planning processes and continue to work with advisory committees between plans. On August 28, staff sent out the proposed changes to Council members, Morlan said.

Eden asked if Council members had any concerns about the material provided. Karier, Rhonda Whiting, Jim Yost, and Dick Wallace said they did not. Bruce Measure acknowledged that he did not have proposed changes, but was interested in having the motion be clear about the appendices. My thought was to leave the appendices, except for F, separate from the plan, and I'd like that to be clear in the motion, he stated.

We haven't adopted anything yet, plan or appendices, Eden responded. The appendices are the underpinning of the plan, and I don't know how to treat them separately, she said.

We discussed this at the Power Committee meeting, and I thought it was resolved, Measure responded. At least two members have not reviewed the appendices, and one I know of still contains information that is not correct, he said. Measure indicated that he would prefer to treat the appendices as "staff support" for the plan and then "get them ready for prime time."

We're proposing to release the draft to get comment on the plan and appendices, Eden stated. We've acknowledged that the appendices are draft, and I don't see the distinction you are making, she said.

I'm willing to sign on to the draft plan, but I'm uncomfortable releasing something I have not reviewed, Measure answered, referring to the appendices. Yost said he was fine with having the appendices on the web page for people to see and make comments. But let's make it clear they are a work in progress and not some part of the plan, he added.

I don't have any changes to propose to the draft, but with regard to the appendices, "it's all under review," Dukes stated. The appendices are part of the plan, she added. Dukes pointed out that some members were ready to release the plan earlier, but others wanted to wait because it shouldn't go without the appendices; now there is objection to including the appendices. All I want to do is put this in the hands of the public for review and comment, she said.

Dukes also pointed out that there had been objections to holding a hearing on the draft at the Council meeting in Astoria because there was too little time between release of the draft and the meeting. I spoke with someone there who is involved with renewable energy issues, and he indicated he would review the plan over the Labor Day weekend to prepare for the hearing, she said.

Karier pointed out that the issue of appendices is addressed in the cover letter to accompany the draft. It indicates that along with the draft plan, we are releasing the staff draft appendices for comment, he noted. I think that says what Bruce is getting at, Karier commented. Wallace said while the plan has been the focus of more attention than the appendices, language in the cover letter covers the concern. Whiting and Booth indicated they also agreed with that view.

The point is to get the draft appendices out for comment, Eden stated. They will no doubt be changed as a result, she said. They are part of the plan – they have always been the underpinnings that explain the technical analytical work, Eden continued. If we are releasing the plan for comment, we have to have comments on the appendices, she added. And we are not *adopting* anything yet, Eden said.

After more discussion to clarify whether the motion included the appendices as part of the plan or not, Measure offered a substitute motion, as follows: I move to release the Draft Sixth Power Plan, including Appendix F (Model Conservation Standards), for public review and 60-day comment period. The staff draft appendices will also be posted on the Council’s website and released for coincident public review and comment. Yost seconded the motion.

Wallace said he supported the motion, which accurately captures the idea that we want comment on both the appendices and the plan. Both Dukes and Eden said they did not think the substitute motion was necessary in lieu of the original motion, but said they would support it.

On a roll-call vote, all Council members voted in favor of the substitute motion. The 60-day comment period now begins, Booth stated.

Council members acknowledged the work of the Power Committee and staff in getting the draft plan ready for release. Eden pointed out there was more regional participation in development of the Sixth plan than in any previous power plans. I appreciate that and it says how important the plan is, she added.

Booth acknowledged the long hours and extra work the Power Committee and staff undertook to complete the draft. There have been controversy and a lot of interest, he added. “That’s positive in my view,” Booth said, adding that more involvement means a better product that will be “of use and value” to the region.

Dukes said she is anxious to hear the public comments. The staff has been flexible and offered quick turnaround as the changes evolved, she said. “It is rare to have a staff of this quality that would put everything else on hold” to complete the draft, Dukes stated.

Wallace noted that it is positive to have the region involved in shaping its energy future. There will now be a lot of opportunity for public comment and meetings, and I’d encourage as much outreach as we can make, he said.

Whiting said she appreciated all off the excellent staff work and the Power Committee effort. Karier said the draft Sixth Power Plan is particularly important to the region. “The region is at a crossroads on energy policy,” and the debate over the plan helps better define strategies for the future, he commented. This process has been “the Council at its best,” with a lot of debate and input, Karier said.

Measure called the draft better than any that have been produced in a long time. He said he had spoken to someone who described it as the most deliberative since the Council’s first plan. Despite a lot of time spent and “modest acrimony in birthing,” we spent the right amount of time in developing the plan, Measure stated.

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 a.m.

Minutes for September 9, 2009 Council Meeting, Astoria, OR.

Council chair Bruce Measure conducted the meeting in Bill Booth's absence. Joan Dukes welcomed the Council to Astoria, noting that "here, at the mouth of the river" we see where it all begins with our fish and wildlife work.

Reports from Fish and Wildlife, Power and Public Affairs committee chair:

Rhonda Whiting chair, fish and wildlife committee; Melinda Eden, chair, power committee; and Dick Wallace, chair, public affairs committee.

Rhonda Whiting, Fish and Wildlife Committee chair, reported the committee recommended funding for two southern Idaho wildlife mitigation projects, with directions to the sponsor addressing issues raised by the Independent Scientific Review Panel (ISRP). Staffer Nancy Leonard provided a briefing regarding high-level indicators that included nine management questions to be answered by the indicators.

The committee also considered three letters staff has drafted to other agencies with regard to follow-up actions to combat invasive mussels, she continued.

Melinda Eden, Power Committee chair, said there was one item on the committee's agenda: the process that will take place between the draft and the final power plans. A final plan is slated to be adopted in December, she said.

She said a couple of issues were raised that need further exploration in the final plan, including the effect of proposed changes to California's renewable portfolio standards on the supply and price of power in the Northwest. The committee suggested staff outline the issues in a white paper, Eden said. We also discussed issues related to the price and supply of natural gas and how they might be affected by the regulation of carbon and attempts to reduce coal generation.

Eden said staff will respond to comments on the plan as they are received in order to move the process along.

Dick Wallace, chair of the Public Affairs Committee, reported on a successful congressional staff visit to the Northwest. He described the activities that were part of the visit, including a trip to Hungry Horse Dam, a briefing by Flathead Electric Co-op and a visit to their landfill generation project, and an outing hosted by the Salish-Kootenai tribe at Flathead Lake. Wallace said the staff members gained a better appreciation for what the Council does.

1. **Remarks from representatives of Clatsop County, Oregon, Pacific County, Washington, and Wahkiakum County, Washington:** John Raichl, vice chair, Clatsop County, Oregon, Board of Commissioners; John Kaino, chair, Pacific County, Washington, Board of Commissioners; and Daniel Cothren, chair, Wahkiakum County, Washington, Board of Commissioners.

John Raichl, vice chair of the Clatsop County (Oregon) board of commissioners, presented a joint resolution adopted by the commissions of Clatsop and Columbia counties in Oregon, and Pacific and Wahkiakum counties in Washington in support of the lower Columbia River salmon industry. He said in light of the economic downturn, the commissions had been looking at what they could do to help preserve existing industries in the area.

We want to protect the fisheries resource, and we want to be involved in decisions that have an economic impact on our communities, Raichl said. We would like to be actively engaged in what the Council does in the estuary, he stated.

2. **Council decision on project reviews and within-year adjustments:**

Mark Fritsch, manager, project implementation; and Lynn Palensky, program planning and special projects coordinator.

– **Project #1995-057-00 and #1995-057-01, *Southern Idaho Wildlife Mitigation***

Staffer Mark Fritsch reintroduced two southern Idaho wildlife projects that were part of the wildlife categorical review in July. At that time, staff recommended BPA fund 34 of the projects, he said. But the two southern Idaho projects did not meet scientific criteria so were not recommended for funding, Fritsch explained. These projects have to do with habitat protection in the middle and upper Snake, he added.

Staffer Lynn Palensky outlined the recommended five-year funding levels and explained the programmatic issues that had arisen with the projects. She noted that for one of the projects, a one-year recommendation was being made for capital due to a large acquisition that is being pursued.

The recommended funding levels, according to a staff table, are \$3.2 million five-year expense budget (annual average \$642,122) for the first project, along with a one-year capital budget not to exceed \$2.5 million for new acquisitions. For the second project, there is a recommended five-year expense planning budget of \$475,665 (\$95,133 per year) with no capital funding recommendation at this time.

Palensky also noted that for both projects, the Idaho Department of Fish & Game had requested \$400,000 in additional expense funding to use for acquisitions that are not eligible under BPA's capital policy. Staff recommends pulling those funds from the total request, she stated.

Both projects were subject to qualifications from the Independent Scientific Review Panel (ISRP), Palensky continued. We would recommend the funding be conditioned on addressing the ISRP concerns; the responses will be reviewed in the next funding cycle, she added. Palensky said staff would be developing a schedule for future reviews and performance check-ins.

Dukes made a motion that the Council recommend that Bonneville fund the Southern Idaho Wildlife Mitigation Projects, Projects 1995-057-00 and 1995-057-01, subject to the conditions outlined in the decision memorandum and as presented by the staff and recommended by the Fish and Wildlife Committee. Wallace seconded the motion, which passed on a 5 to 0 vote.

Karier noted that the funding recommendation is not a budget recommendation rather it is a ceiling on funding. It could be less, but not more, he added.

3. Briefing on draft of Council Fish and Wildlife Program’s management questions for High-Level indicators:

Nancy Leonard, Fish, Wildlife and Ecosystem M&E Report Manager.

Staffer Nancy Leonard reported on comments the Council received on its proposed high-level indicators, noting that a repeated comment was in fact a question. People wanted to know what questions these indicators are supposed to answer, she said.

In response, staff drafted nine questions, Leonard said, that range from whether Columbia River Basin fish and wildlife (F&W) ecosystems are functioning properly to whether the Council’s F&W program is having the expected biological effect on species and their habitat. The proposed indicators will be shaped to answer the questions, she said.

“There is a great discussion going on in the region,” and it has surpassed our expectations, Karier said. We’re now moving to more general considerations, “and we need to rein this in,” he added. I’m ready to vote on indicators, such as total returns to the Columbia, wild fish counts, and survival through the hydro system, Karier indicated.

Staffer Tony Grover noted that while staff can continue working on the questions and indicators, “at the end of the day, it’s the Council that decides.” We want to end up with “a few focused indicators of progress,” he stated.

4. Council decision on letters about follow-up actions for invasive mussels:

Jim Ruff, Manager, Mainstem Passage and River Operation.

Staffer Jim Ruff presented three draft letters – to the Department of the Interior, Corps of Engineers, and NOAA Fisheries – asking for immediate action in response to the threat of invasive mussels being introduced into the Columbia River Basin. In its letter to the Secretary of the Interior, the Council asks for mandatory inspection and decontamination of all watercraft leaving mussel-infested waters in the Southwest; in the Corps letter, the Council raises an alert about the threat invasive mussels present to the federal dams and requests the Corps take immediate action to initiate an early detection system; the Council raises the same alert to NOAA Fisheries and asks the agency to sign on to the invasive mussel response plan and use the Quagga/Zebra mussel action plan.

Dukes made a motion that the Council approve for the signature of the Chair the three letters on follow-up action related to invasive mussels as presented by the staff and recommended by the Fish and Wildlife Committee. Eden seconded the motion.

Karier said the letters are well-written and informative. The letter to NOAA Fisheries asks the agency to sign on to a Quagga/Zebra Mussel Action Plan, and I would like to know more about that, he said.

The motion passed on a 5 to 0 vote.

5. Council Business:

– Approval of minutes

Dukes made a motion that the Council approve for the signature of the Vice-Chair the minutes of the August Council meeting held in Spokane, Washington. Wallace seconded the motion, which passed 5 to 0.

Approved October _____, 2009

Vice-Chair

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