



LOS ALAMOS

**County of Los Alamos**  
**Minutes**  
**Board of Public Utilities**

1000 Central Avenue  
Los Alamos, NM 87544

*Jeff Johnson, Chair; Carrie Walker, Vice-chair; Paul Frederickson, Stephen McLin and  
Kathleen Taylor, Members  
Tim Glasco, Ex Officio Member  
Harry Burgess, Ex Officio Member  
Christine Chandler, Council Liaison*

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Wednesday, December 19, 2018

5:30 PM

1000 Central Avenue  
Room 110

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**REGULAR SESSION**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The regular meeting of the Incorporated County of Los Alamos Board of Public Utilities was held on Wednesday, December 19th at 5:30 p.m. at 1000 Central Ave., Room 110. Board Chair, Jeff Johnson, called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

**Present 4 - Board Member Johnson, Vice-chair Walker, Board Member Frederickson and Board Member McLin**

**Absent 1 - Board Member Taylor**

Deputy Utility Manager for Engineering Mr. James Alarid attended for Mr. Glasco.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Johnson opened the floor for public comment on items on the Consent Agenda and for those not otherwise included on the agenda. There were no comments.

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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Mr. McLin moved that the agenda be approved as presented. The motion passed by the following vote:

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**Yes: 4 - Board Member Johnson, Vice-chair Walker, Board Member Frederickson and Board Member McLin**

**Absent: 1 - Board Member Taylor**

**4. BOARD BUSINESS**

**4.A. Chair's Report**

Aside from the reminder for the upcoming Boards & Commissions Luncheon, Mr. Johnson had nothing to report.

**4.A. [10376-18](#) Reminder for Upcoming Boards & Commissions Luncheon**

**Presenters: Board of Public Utilities**

The month prior to a Boards and Commissions luncheon, the attendee schedule will be included in the agenda packet as a reminder during the Chair's report. Mr. McLin is scheduled to attend the January 17th luncheon.

**4.B. Board Member Reports**

Board members had nothing to report.

**4.C. Utilities Manager's Report**

Mr. Glasco was absent. Mr. Alarid provided a written report, which is included in the minutes as an attachment.

**4.D. County Manager's Report**

Mr. Burgess reported on the following items:

1) The orientation and swearing-in for the newly elected Councilors happened today. They will be taking their seats on January 1st. With Councilor Chandler going to the State Legislature, there will be a process to replace that position. Advertising for that will start on January 2nd. The new Councilor will be appointed on January 29th.

2) On the Council's State Legislative agenda last evening, Council approved a capital request for monies to promote infrastructure for affordable and/or workforce type housing. If awarded, discussions would begin with Utilities on installations for two potential projects. One is a second affordable housing project on DP Road across the street from the current project. The other is on North Mesa east of the middle school. There are 29 acres of school owned property being considered. The County has had conversations with the School Board about potentially turning that into a housing project. Utilities has weighed in preliminarily on what would be necessary to loop some of the systems to support such a potentially large development. Mr. Burgess will return with more information as he knows more.

**4.E. Council Liaison's Report**

A Council Liaison was not present. No report was given.

**4.F. Environmental Sustainability Board Liaison's Report**

Ms. Barns provided a written report, which is included in the minutes as an attachment.

**4.G. General Board Business**

**4.G.1 [11313-18](#) Quarterly Conservation Program Update**

**Presenters:** James Alarid

Deputy Utility Manager of Engineering Mr. James Alarid presented this item. The following is the substance of the item being considered.

Upon approval of the Energy and Water Conservation Plan in March 2015, the Board requested that staff provide quarterly updates on the Conservation Program and on progress towards the goals and actions identified in the plan. Mr. Alarid presented a summary of recent conservation activities.

The Board discussed this item and requested clarification where necessary.

**4.H. Approval of Board Expenses**

There were no Board expenses.

**4.I. Preview of Upcoming Agenda Items**

**4.I.1 [11475-18](#) Tickler File for the Next 3 Months**

**Presenters:** Board of Public Utilities

In addition to the items already listed in the tickler provided in the agenda packet, the following items were identified for the tickler for upcoming meetings:

- 1) TBD - Follow-up Meeting to Finish the Board Self-Evaluation (Jeff Johnson)

**5. PUBLIC HEARING(S)**

There were no public hearings scheduled for this meeting.

**6. CONSENT AGENDA**

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**Mr. McLin moved that the Board of Public Utilities approve the items on the Consent Agenda as presented and that the motions contained in the staff reports be included in the minutes for the record. The motion passed by the following vote:**

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**Yes: 4 - Board Member Johnson, Vice-chair Walker, Board Member Frederickson and Board Member McLin**

**Absent: 1 - Board Member Taylor**

**6.A [11468-18](#) Approval of Board of Public Utilities Meeting Minutes**

**Presenters:** Board of Public Utilities

**I move that the Board of Public Utilities approve the meeting minutes of November 20th, 2018 as presented.**

**7. BUSINESS**

**7.A [11464-18](#) Annual Board of Public Utilities Self-evaluation for 2018**

**Presenters:** Board of Public Utilities

The Board conducted its annual self-evaluation using the same questionnaire from the 2017 evaluation. Rather than scoring, prioritizing and assigning action for every question, the Board focused only on those questions where action or improvements might be necessary. The members identified those questions they wished to discuss. If a question was not discussed, it was assumed that the members felt the Board was already doing well in those areas.

Prior to conducting the evaluation, the Board discussed whether the questionnaire format was still useful in its current form and if the questions were still valid. The Board also

discussed whether or not they should have solicited more staff input. After discussion, it was decided that the Board would conduct the evaluation as planned, but a follow-up meeting would be scheduled to discuss ways to possibly improve the self-evaluation and get more input. Mr. Johnson will also document the comments and possible actions and will discuss with Mr. Glasco when staff might be able to provide more input.

The following questions were discussed and actions identified for follow-up:

**1) QUESTION I.E Is the length of Board meetings appropriate?**

ACTION - Some members felt that some meetings are still too long, but overall, the efficiency and length of the meetings has improved. The Board considered if some of the routine agenda items could be removed to save more time, but none were specifically identified for removal. Perhaps when setting the agenda, the Chair and Utilities Manager could consider which items are flexible and could be moved when agendas are long. The Board could also consider scheduling more special meetings as necessary.

**2) QUESTION I.G. - Does the Board receive sufficient information to make good decisions?**

**QUESTION I.H - Are decisions made in a timely manner?**

ACTION - A member felt that sometimes they do not receive sufficient information to make informed decisions, even after requesting it several times. The member also felt that sufficient time is not always given to digest information on complex issues before being asked to make a decision or gather adequate public input. Other members acknowledged that this does happen in some cases; however, they did not necessarily feel that this is always a pervasive problem. It was recommended that when members feel they have not received sufficient information or time to make a decision at a meeting, they should move to table the item until the requested information is provided, and if the other members concur, more time can be given. The Utilities Manager will be asked to provide input.

**3) QUESTION II.A.1 - Does the Board understand its obligation to see the organization acts in the best interests of DPU customers and citizens of the County?**

ACTION - This discussion was also related to #2. A member felt that some requests and arguments made by the Department don't always demonstrate that they are acting in the best interest of the customers and citizens, especially if data is lacking to justify a course of action. While it was acknowledged that this could appear to be true in some cases, no other members expressed a concern in this general area.

**4) QUESTION II.B.2 - Do Board members understand the difference between their policy role and management's administrative role?**

ACTION - No specific examples have been identified, but the Board wants to continue to ensure that it does not inadvertently set policy in violation of the Charter. For a time, two Board members and two Councilors were meeting regularly to discuss issues of mutual concern and would report back to their respective bodies. Members felt this was very constructive, and it was recommended that the Board reach out to Council to revive that practice. It was also suggested by the Assistant County Attorney that it might be helpful to think about what is actually called a policy and what is called a procedure, such as the Board's Policies and Procedures Manual.

**5) QUESTION II.C.2 - Does the Board give clear directions to management on the mission and goal of the organization?**

ACTION - A member felt that while the Board does guide the Department through policy decisions, the direction to the department through the mission and goals is a little more ambiguous. The Utilities Manager will be asked to provide input.

**6) QUESTION II.C.3 - Does the Board spend an appropriate time on policy consideration and direction versus operational issues?**

ACTION - A member felt that the Board did well in this area, but wanted to know how others felt. There were no comments or concerns.

**7) QUESTION II.D.2 - Are there systems for corrective action where performance is below standard or reward when performance is above standard?**

ACTION - A member did observe that the Department does well commending people for good performance, but the Utilities Manager will be asked to provide input.

**8) QUESTION II.D.3 - Are organizational goal setting and achievements taken into account during the DPU Manager's evaluation?**

ACTION - It was felt that the Board does this in general, although the evaluations have recently been more of an assessment of the Utilities Manager's leadership across broad goals, which seems to be more appropriate for such a position. The Utilities Manager will be asked to provide input.

**9) QUESTION II.E.2 - Does the Board communicate the value of the organizations to its stakeholders.**

**QUESTION II.E.5 - Does the Board communicate effectively with the County.**

ACTION - This discussion was also related to #4. Several members felt that communication with Council had improved this last year and it was pointed out that they seem to appreciate it when members attend Council meetings. Overall, members felt that the Department does a very good job with communication and outreach and the Board's role should be to ensure that the Department continues to do a good job of public outreach on key issues.

**10) QUESTION II.E.3 - Does the Board seek input and involve its stakeholders in policy considerations and decisions.**

ACTION - Members felt that the Board generally does well in this area, especially through joint meetings with Council on important issues, but perhaps there is some room for improvement. There are some opportunities coming up in the near future for the Board to assess what kind of public and stakeholder input tools are available and how to filter the feedback to make decisions that are in the best interest of the whole County. The Utilities Manager will be asked to provide input.

**11) QUESTION III.C.3 - Do Board members usually attend annual DPU strategy and planning meetings?**

ACTION - Direction is given by the Board through the course of the year, which is always

considered during Department strategic planning. The Board considered assigning two members to attend those meetings as the dates get closer.

**12) QUESTION III.D.9 - Does the Board provide overall human resources direction to the DPU Manager without becoming involved in specific personnel matters?**

ACTION - The Board is involved in human resources direction in terms of monitoring staffing levels and approving collective bargaining agreements; however, it was felt that the Board has a very limited role in dealing with human resource issues and perhaps this question should be changed.

**13) QUESTION III.D.10 - Is the Board explicit about the information it needs from the DPU Manager to fulfill its governance function?**

ACTION - The Utilities Manager will be asked to provide input.

**14) QUESTION III.F.1 - Do Board members participate in educational opportunities recommended and offered by the DPU or other entities that enhance their effectiveness as a Board member?**

ACTION - One member expressed a hesitance to go on travel to learn more about Utilities related programs or projects because of public perception of possible travel abuse. No other members expressed this same concern, but discussed the importance of traveling or completing training when necessary to better serve the County. Members were asked to consider whether or not some sort of minimal training requirement should be imposed on members, and if so, how that might be enforced. This will be discussed again at the follow-up meeting.

**8. STATUS REPORTS**

**8.A 11469-18 Status Reports**

**Presenters:** Board of Public Utilities

The following informational status reports were provided to the Board in the agenda packet:

- 1) Electric Reliability Update
- 2) Accounts Receivables Report
- 3) Safety Report

**9. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Mr. Johnson opened the floor for public comment on any items. There were no comments.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

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APPROVAL

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Board of Public Utilities Chair Name

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Board of Public Utilities Chair Signature

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Date Approved by the Board

ATTACHMENT  
OFFICER REPORTS  
SUBMITTED AT THE MEETING



**Utility Manager's Report  
December 19, 2018**

1. AMI Project was approved in the December 18, 2018 County Council meeting. The council placed the condition that the contract cannot be executed until the council approves the policy allowing customers to opt-out of having AMI installed at their home or establishment.
2. Rafael De La Torre, Deputy Manager for Electric Distribution, has submitted his resignation. After over ten years with the DPU, Rafael will be leaving on January 11, 2019.
3. Pajarito Well #4 engine replacement needed. The engine is a large diesel unit installed in 1981 and rebuilt in 2002. The engine is now obsolete and parts are no longer available. The goal is to have the engine replaced in early summer of 2019.
4. On December 13, 2018 the 2019 DPU management audit kick-off meeting was held. The consultant was onsite for the day. A series of meetings will occur in January, February and March to gather information and draft the contents of what will become either a Zia application to Quality New Mexico or a stand-alone management audit adhering to the Malcolm Baldrige Quality Management Criteria for Performance Excellence.

**Environmental Sustainability Board (ESB) liaison report**

*Susan Barns, ESB Liaison*      12/19/2018

Tomorrow night's ESB meeting will include:

- Discussion of the ESB Work Plan for FY20
- Presentation on options for at-home composting systems
- Election of Chair and Vice Chair, and the 2019 meeting schedule

Other items to note:

- Due to James Robinson's election to County Council, the ESB will have an opening starting in January. If you have any family, friends or co-workers who might be interested in joining our Board, please encourage them to apply!
- Yard trimmings roll cart collection has stopped until March. Curbside Christmas tree collection will begin the week of January 7.
- Corrugated cardboard dumpsters have been placed at additional collection sites around LA and WR to accommodate holiday cardboard generation. Additional sites include North Mesa Ball Fields, Ice Rink, four Fire Stations, and Municipal Building. We encourage you to unstuff your recycle cart and save the County some cash by dropping off your cardboard at one of these sites!