

## 20254-BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES SELF-EVALUATION

The Board of Public Utilities Procedural Rules states:

### 3.10. BPU Self-Evaluation

a. During November and December, the BPU will perform an annual self-evaluation of its own performance. The BPU may invite major stakeholders (e.g., DPU staff, County Council, County Manager) to participate in specific aspects of the evaluation.

b. The purposes and reasons for the BPU self-evaluation are intended to:

- 1). Promote understanding of roles and responsibilities
- 2). Provide orientation for new members
- 3). Address, and perhaps help resolve, board conflicts
- 4). Clarify what members expect from the group and self
- 5). Identify priorities for the BPU's future efforts
- 6). Identify BPU strengths and weaknesses
- 7). Identify opportunities for improvement in BPU performance
- 8). Help identify needed changes to this PR
- 9). Ensure that self-evaluation aligns with at least three of the Baldrige "Criteria for Performance Excellence."

c. Refer to Appendix L for a BPU self-evaluation template adapted from the APPA Handbook for Public Power Policymakers. The BPU will change the self-evaluation topics over time to fit the changing business climate, relations with the Utilities Manager, relations with the County Council, and to include lessons learned from previous self-evaluations.

d. In its self-evaluation the BPU will address open-ended questions such as:

- 1). What did the BPU accomplish during the past year?
- 2). What did the BPU fail to accomplish during the past year?
- 3). What did the BPU do well during the past year?
- 4). What did the BPU do poorly during the past year?
- 5). What were the key issues of the past year? Did the BPU address them adequately?"

e. The BPU will seek broad participation in the self-evaluation process by:

- 1). Soliciting suggestions for self-evaluation questions from DPU staff, County staff, County Council, and the public.
- 2). Inviting the immediate past BPU member(s) to participate in the self-evaluation.
- 3). Inviting the County Council Liaison, County Manager, and County Attorney to participate in the self-evaluation.

f. The BPU will explore ways to make the BPU self-evaluation honest and candid.

g. The BPU will explore ways to collect questions, complaints, and compliments to be addressed in the annual self-evaluation process.

### GENERAL BOARD AREAS

**1. Is there a board policy manual addressing meeting procedures, committee roles and structure, election and term of officers, new member orientation, and related matters?**

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't Know

**Commented [KC1]:** From Member Hollingsworth: I would recommend using the likert scale for questions 1-9, i.e., possible responses would be strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. This scale is valuable for assessing "attitudes, opinions and perceptions." Several of the questions pertain to perception, while others are attitude or opinion oriented, thus this system seems more appropriate than simple yes or no responses. It would be important to continue to include a "don't know" response for those uncomfortable with offering any assessment. If a question would be equally well served with a yes or no answer, e.g., Q6, the respondent could simply choose strongly agree, or we might move such questions to a different section of the self-evaluation.

**2. Do all board members participate in a formal orientation?**

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't Know

**3. Are board procedures adhered to regarding bylaws, open meeting requirements, compliance with legal regulations, etc.?**

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't Know

**4. Are meeting packets complete and distributed prior to meetings?**

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't Know

**5. Is the length of board meetings appropriate?**

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't Know

**6. Is there an annual board calendar?**

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't Know

**Commented [KC2]:** From Kathy:  
Q6: responses could remain YES, NO, DON'T KNOW

**7. Does the board receive sufficient information to make good decisions?**

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't Know

**8. Are decisions made in a timely manner?**

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't Know

**9. Additional comments regarding General Board Areas of responsibility:**

Write your answer here

**BOARD POLICY AREAS**

**Commented [KC3]:** From Member Hollingsworth: Q10, 12, 14, 16, 18: Change questions to statements, then use likert scale response.

**10. Accountability**

*All the time*      *Most of the time*      *Sometimes*      *Seldom*      *Not at all*

~~Does it~~ **The board understands its obligation to see that the organization acts in the best interests of utilities customers and citizens of the county.?**

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't Know

~~Does it~~ **The board acts with diligence and objectivity on behalf of utilities customers and citizens of the county.?**

**Commented [KC4]:** From Member Hollingsworth: Q10: Use consistent language – “utilities customers and citizens of the county” vs. “utilities customers and the county.” What is intended here?

**11. Additional comments regarding accountability:**

Write your answer here

**Commented [KC5]:** From Member Hollingsworth: Q11: Too vague. Is this meant to follow from Q10? If so, is Q11’s “accountability” truly the same as Q10’s “obligation” and/or acting with “diligence and objectivity”? Delete?  
From Kathy: The PolCo software uses the section header “10. Accountability” to formulate Q11.

**12. Responsibility**

All the time      Most of the time      Sometimes      Seldom      Not at all

**Do ~~b~~Board members understand their roles?**

                      

**Do ~~b~~Board members understand the difference between their policy role and management's administrative role?**

                      

**Do ~~b~~Board members actions reflect this understanding?**

                      

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't Know -

**Commented [KC6]:** From Member Hollingsworth: Q12: Delete second query; redundant.

**13. Additional comments regarding responsibility:**

Write your answer here

**Commented [KC7]:** From Member Hollingsworth: Q13: Similar issue as Q11: Too vague and does not necessarily follow from Q12. If anything Q13 would follow better after Q10.

**14. Policy Direction**

All the time      Most of the time      Sometimes      Seldom      Not at all

**Do ~~b~~Board members understand the mission, vision, values, goals and strategies of the ~~organization?~~ DPU.**

                      

**Does ~~t~~The ~~b~~board gives clear directions to management on the mission and goals of the ~~organization?~~ DPU.**

                      

**Does ~~t~~The board spends appropriate time on policy consideration and direction versus operational issues?**

                      

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't Know

**Commented [KC8]:** From Member Hollingsworth: Q14: In first query, define "organization." Is this DPU? If so, should state this clearly, and replace organization with DPU (later as well).

**15. Additional comments regarding policy direction:**

Write your answer here

**16. Monitoring**

All the time      Most of the time      Sometimes      Seldom      Not at all

~~Does it~~ **The board has ve a system for receiving and monitoring information about the department's organizational performance?**

                      

~~Are there~~ **are systems for modifying policy, procedures, processes, and priorities when the department's organizational performance does not meet standards?**

                      

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't Know

~~Are~~ **Organizational goal setting and achievements are considered during the Utilities Manager's evaluation?**

                      

**17. Additional comments regarding monitoring:**

Write your answer here

**18. Communication and Advocacy**

All the time      Most of the time      Sometimes      Seldom      Not at all

~~Does it~~ **The board strives to represent the interests of the entire community it serves?**

                      

~~Does~~ **The board communicates the value of the organizations DPU to its stakeholders partners?**

                      

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree
- Don't Know

**Commented [KC9]:** From Member Hollingsworth: Q18: Define "the organizations" and "the organization."

~~Does it~~ **The board seeks input and involves its stakeholders partners in policy considerations and decisions?**

                      

~~Do~~ **Board members support the organization DPU publicly?**

                      

~~Does it~~ **The board communicates effectively with the County Council?**

19. Additional comments regarding communication and advocacy:

Write your answer here

**BOARD RESPONSIBILITY AREAS**

**Commented [KC10]:** From Member Hollingsworth: Q20, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28: If these remain yes/no, then add don't know.

**Legal**

20. Does the board act within the guidelines set by the county charter and policies and procedures document?

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW

21. Are there written policies on board ethics and conflicts of interest?

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW

22. Additional comments regarding legal responsibility:

Write your answer here

**Financial**

23. Does the board approve annual operating and capital budgets and receive periodic (at least quarterly) progress reports?

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW

24. Does the board review a financial plan for the organization and receive sufficient information to monitor its financial strength and performance?

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW

25. Are financial goals and comparative ratios established and does the board receive tracking information?

YES

**Commented [KC11]:** From Member Hollingsworth: Q25: Define comparative ratios.

NO

DON'T KNOW

26. Are the requirements for an annual audit met and does the board receive a report on the results?

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW

27. Are the organizations and the board indemnified sufficiently against insurable risk?

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW

28. Does the board effectively recommend and advocate for rate increases with the County Council when these increases are necessary for the financial health of the department?

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW

29. Additional comments regarding financial responsibility:

Write your answer here

30. Planning

	<i>All the time</i>	<i>Most of the time</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Seldom</i>	<i>Not at all</i>
Is the board informed about the business environment in which the <del>organization</del> <b>DPU</b> is operating?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Does the board review and approve the <del>organization</del> <b>DPU's</b> mission, goals, and major strategic initiatives?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Do board members usually attend annual DPU strategy and planning meetings?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**31. Additional comments regarding planning:**

Write your answer here

**Board/Management Relations**

**32. Is there a written job description and/or employment contract for the Utilities Manager?**

YES

NO

**33. Does the board conduct a formal, annual performance review of the Utilities Manager?**

YES

NO

**34. Is the Utilities Manager's compensation linked to the results of this review?**

YES

NO

**35. Does the board make resources available for the Utilities Manager's continued professional development?**

YES

NO

**36. Is there a succession plan for the Utilities Manager, with exposure to the board of possible successors?**

YES

NO

**37. Has the board established an effective working relationship with the Utilities Manager?**

YES

NO



38. Is there board/management cooperation on determining the future direction of the organization?

YES

NO

39. Are board members' and Utilities Manager's roles clearly defined so the board focuses on its policy role and avoids micro-management?

YES

NO

**Commented [KC12]:** From Member Hollingsworth: Q39: Define "policy" role? What is line between "advising and consenting" and "micro-managing"? I.e., BPU approves rate changes, bids, etc. Is this simply "policy" role?

40. Does the board provide overall staffing direction to the Utilities Manager without becoming involved in specific personnel matters?

YES

NO

41. Is the board explicit about the information it needs from the Utilities Manager to fulfill its governance function?

YES

NO

42. Additional comments regarding board and management relations:

Write your answer here

43. Education and Development

All the time  
Most of the time  
Sometimes  
Seldom  
Not at all

**Do board members participate in educational opportunities recommended and offered by the county, department, or other entities that enhance their effectiveness as a board member?**

**44. Additional comments regarding education and development:**

Write your answer here

**OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS**

**45. What could the chair have done that would've improved the board's effectiveness?**

Write your answer here

**46. What did the board accomplish during the past year?**

Write your answer here

**47. What did the board fail to accomplish during the past year?**

Write your answer here

**48. What did the board do well during the past year?**

Write your answer here

**49. What did the board do poorly during the past year?**

Write your answer here

**50. What were the key issues of the past year? Did the board address them adequately?**

Write your answer here

**51. What changes could be made to make this self-evaluation more effective?**

Write your answer here