



LOS ALAMOS
where discoveries are made

2024 BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES SELF-EVALUATION

FINAL SURVEY RESULTS
November 1, 2024

(Distributed to 17 individuals; 9 responded.)

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 89% (8)

NO 0% (0)

DON'T KNOW 11% (1)

Do all board members participate in a formal orientation?

YES 67% (6)

NO 22% (2)

DON'T KNOW 11% (1)

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

YES 100% (9)

NO 0% (0)

DON'T KNOW 0% (0)

Are meeting packets complete and distributed prior to meetings?

YES 100% (9)

NO 0% (0)

DON'T KNOW 0% (0)

Is the length of board meetings appropriate?

YES 89% (8)

NO 11% (1)

DON'T KNOW 0% (0)

Is there an annual board calendar?

YES	100% (9)
NO	0% (0)
DON'T KNOW	0% (0)

Does the board receive sufficient information to make good decisions?

YES	89% (8)
NO	0% (0)
DON'T KNOW	11% (1)

Are decisions made in a timely manner?

YES	100% (9)
NO	0% (0)
DON'T KNOW	0% (0)

Additional comments regarding General Board Areas of responsibility:

N/A

Q2. BPU does not have a formal orientation process for new members. It tends to be informal and tailored to the individual. A formal checklist might help to make sure all relevant areas are covered.

Accountability

Question	All the time	Most of the time	Sometimes	Seldom	Not at all
Does the board understand its obligation to see the organization acts in the best interests of utilities customers and citizens of the county?	56%	33%	0%	11%	0%
Does the board act with diligence and objectivity on behalf of utilities customers and the county?	56%	33%	0%	11%	0%

Expand all / Collapse all

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

Does the board understand its obligation to see the organization acts in the best interests of utilities customers and citizens of the county?

56% 33% 11%

Does the board act with diligence and objectivity on behalf of utilities customers and the county?

56% 33% 11%

Additional comments regarding accountability:

The board is one-sided and only represents a portion of the county

N/A

Responsibility

Question	All the time	Most of the time	Sometimes	Seldom	Not at all
Do board members understand their roles?	33%	56%	11%	0%	0%
Do board members understand the difference between their policy role and management's administrative role?	33%	44%	11%	11%	0%
Do board members actions reflect this understanding?	22%	56%	22%	0%	0%

Expand all / Collapse all

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

Do board members understand their roles?

33% 56% 11%

Do board members understand the difference between their policy role and management's administrative role?

33% 44% 11% 11%

Do board members actions reflect this understanding?

22% 56% 22%

Additional comments regarding responsibility:

Who is the board responsible to? County Council? the Charter? The ratepayers? This isn't well understood

Policy Direction

Question	All the time	Most of the time	Sometimes	Seldom	Not at all
Do board members understand the mission, goals and strategies of the organization?	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%
Does the board give clear directions to management on the mission and goals of the organization?	56%	33%	11%	0%	0%
Does the board spend appropriate time on policy consideration and direction versus operational issues?	33%	33%	22%	11%	0%

Expand all / Collapse all

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

Do board members understand the mission, goals and strategies of the organization?

67% 33%

Does the board give clear directions to management on the mission and goals of the organization?

56% 33% 11%

Does the board spend appropriate time on policy consideration and direction versus operational issues?

33% 33% 22% 11%

Additional comments regarding policy direction:

The mission and goals are in contradiction to the charter

N/A

Q14. BPU is responsible for operation of the department, in addition to strategic direction. So some time on operational issues is necessary.

Monitoring

Question	All the time	Most of the time	Sometimes	Seldom	Not at all
Does the board have a system for receiving and monitoring information about the department's organizational performance?	56%	44%	0%	0%	0%
Are there systems for modifying policy, procedures, processes, and priorities when the department's organizational performance does not meet standards?	67%	0%	11%	22%	0%
Are organizational goal setting and achievements considered during the Utilities Manager's evaluation?	78%	11%	11%	0%	0%

Expand all / Collapse all

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

Does the board have a system for receiving and monitoring information about the department's organizational performance?

56% 44%

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

67% 11% 22%

Are organizational goal setting and achievements considered during the Utilities Manager's evaluation?

78% 11% 11%

Additional comments regarding monitoring:

I wasn't sure on this question and Don't Know wasn't an option so chose "sometimes"

The BPU doesn't follow chapter 5 of the charter but is unwilling to modify the charter to reflect current practices

N/A

There is no formal system for addressing perceived departmental performance shortfalls except through discussion with the Manager or through his performance evaluation. Since each situation is different, it isn't clear there should be a "system" or what it could be.

Communication and Advocacy

Question	All the time	Most of the time	Sometimes	Seldom	Not at all
Does the board strive to represent the interests of the entire community it serves?	33%	44%	11%	0%	11%
Does the board communicate the value of the organizations to its stakeholders?	33%	22%	33%	11%	0%
Does the board seek input and involve its stakeholders in policy considerations and decisions?	33%	33%	22%	0%	11%
Do board members support the organization publicly?	44%	44%	11%	0%	0%
Does the board communicate effectively with the County Council?	44%	33%	22%	0%	0%

Expand all / Collapse all

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

Does the board strive to represent the interests of the entire community it serves?

33% 44% 11% 11%

Does the board communicate the value of the organizations to its stakeholders?

33% 22% 33% 11%

Does the board seek input and involve its stakeholders in policy considerations and decisions?

33% 33% 22% 11%

Do board members support the organization publicly?

44% 44% 11%

Does the board communicate effectively with the County Council?

44% 33% 22%

Additional comments regarding communication and advocacy:

Evidently, 33% of the county does not want 'green' energy. The board does not represent 1/3 of the county.

N/A

More public outreach by BPU members (newspaper articles, etc.) would help.

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

YES 89% (8)

NO 11% (1)

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

YES 100% (9)

NO 0% (0)

Additional comments regarding legal responsibility:

"profit transfer," according to the charter, should only occur after all other responsibilities have been met. Even in years when there was no profit, the transfer still occurred.

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

YES 100% (9)

NO 0% (0)

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

YES 100% (9)

NO 0% (0)

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

YES 100% (9)

NO 0% (0)

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

YES	100% (9)
NO	0% (0)

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

YES	100% (9)
NO	0% (0)

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	100% (9)
NO	0% (0)

Additional comments regarding financial responsibility:

none

None

capital spending may need to slow down until revenues from rate increases catches up

Rename 'profit transfer' to something like 'franchise tax'

N/A

Members of the public typically come to Council meetings to oppose rate increases, so clear support from the BPU would be appreciated. In addition to DPU staff presenting.

none

No additional comments

Planning

Question	All the time	Most of the time	Sometimes	Seldom	Not at all
Is the board informed about the business environment in which the organization is operating?	44%	44%	0%	11%	0%
Does the board review and approve the organization's mission, goals, and major strategic initiatives?	89%	11%	0%	0%	0%
Do board members usually attend annual DPU strategy and planning meetings?	67%	22%	0%	0%	11%

Expand all / Collapse all

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

Is the board informed about the business environment in which the organization is operating?

44% 44% 11%

Does the board review and approve the organization's mission, goals, and major strategic initiatives?

89% 11%

Do board members usually attend annual DPU strategy and planning meetings?

67% 22% 11%

Additional comments regarding planning:

what is the business environment? An accurate picture is not being painted.
BPU members do not attend DPU staff strategy and planning meetings. Feedback from staff tends to be ad hoc.

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

YES	100% (9)
NO	0% (0)

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

YES	100% (9)
NO	0% (0)

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

YES	100% (9)
NO	0% (0)

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

YES	100% (9)
NO	0% (0)

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

YES	67% (6)
NO	33% (3)

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

YES	100% (9)
NO	0% (0)

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

YES	89% (8)
NO	11% (1)

Are board members' and Utilities Manager's roles clearly defined so the board focuses on its policy role and avoids micro-management?	
YES	100% (9)
NO	0% (0)

Does the board provide overall staffing direction to the Utilities Manager without becoming involved in specific personnel matters?	
YES	100% (9)
NO	0% (0)

Is the board explicit about the information it needs from the Utilities Manager to fulfill its governance function?	
YES	100% (9)
NO	0% (0)

Additional comments regarding board and management relations:
 Really am not sure on some of Q32-41 but that answer is not available.

Education and Development

Question	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?	11%	56%	33%	0%	0%

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?	11%	56%	33%
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Additional comments regarding education and development:

BPU members are all busy people. Finding time, especially for travel, is hard. On-line education might be easier.

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

Some discussion are too far into the weeds. Possibly, keep discussions at higher level

Pay attention to the third of the county that does not align with County Council's goals

What did the board accomplish during the past year?

none

Action or position made on LARES, multiple aspects progressing towards electrification and renewed union contracts.

rate increases, updated strategic plan, board education, expand UAP

They worked to help DPU provide information that is most meaningful to them as a board

adjust solar rates to be more equitable

Approved revision to Rule E-5

Uniper settlement, solar policy

help DPU navigate through significant changes in the utility environment

Kept "routine" business and operations moving smoothly. Initiated Elec. Distr. study and establishment of additional staff engineer position to focus on modernizing distribution. Approved Foxtail Flats. Addressed Rule E-5 where previous Boards had "kicked the can down the road."

What did the board fail to accomplish during the past year?

none

N/A

n/a

Present to the council the unrealistic nature of carbon-neutral, or net-zero

N/A

Nothing substantial

no significant failures

Get a clear understanding of effects and limits of PV power fed back into utility system.

What did the board do well during the past year?

none

Understanding the complex and uncertain market related to sustainable renewable energy resources.

Staff appreciates the Board's involvement and thoughtful questions and support

Board members work well together even through disagreements

adjust the solar rates

Supported the carbon free goal with Foxtail Flats PPA.

cover the breadth of issues before DPU

See response to Q46.

What did the board do poorly during the past year?

none

N/A

n/a

They struggle to streamline meetings

Come to grips with the reality that natural gas is the best solution for the next few decades

N/A

no significant failures

Rule E-5 could have been handled better.

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

none

Strategic planning session was effective. Budget process is very effective, resulting in smooth execution of projects and initiatives when they come back for action.

Electrification, Elk Ridge gas issue, Gas Compliance, Capital Projects. Yes, addressed adequately

Solar rate change, utility rate increases, end of CFPP. The board handled all these with attention and thoughtfulness.

purchasing 'carbon free' power. The board is powerless to address this.

Addressed cost of service with Rule E-5

Elk Ridge NG is still pending resolution, get in front of the electric rate restructuring process

1) changing electric market. It is a work in progress; 2) water system maintenance - yes; 3) Elk Ridge - another work in progress

Identifying major new sources of carbon-free electric power. Yes, Foxtail Flats is contracted. Others are being explored.

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

none

N/A

Some questions have only yes/no answers, but the answer is "not always" or something other than yes/no

Include "I don't know" as answer for those taking the survey who aren't board members

put n/a or 'i don't know' as some of the answers that simply are yes or no.

I think the word "self" should be removed from the description because it is open to others to complete.

