

REGULAR SESSION –WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2022

STATE OF KANSAS)
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CITY OF KANSAS CITY)

The Board of Public Utilities of Kansas City, Kansas (aka BPU, We, Us, Our) met remotely in Regular Session on Wednesday, February 2, 2022 at 6:00 P.M. The following Board Members were present: Mary Gonzales, President; Rose Mulvany Henry, Vice President; Thomas Groneman, Secretary; Robert L. Milan, Jeff Bryant, and David Haley.

Also present: William Johnson, General Manager; Angela Lawson, Deputy Chief Counsel; Lori Austin, Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer; Johnetta Hinson, Executive Director Customer Service; Jeremy Ash, Executive Director Electric Operations; Jerin Purtee, Executive Director Electric Supply; Steve Green, Executive Director Water Operations; Dong Quach, Executive Director Electric Production; Maurice Moss, Executive Director Corporate Compliance; Chris Stewart, Director Civil Engineering; Steve Nirschl, Director Water Processing; Brian Laverack, Director of Network Operations; David Mehlhaff, Chief Communications Officer; Jerry Sullivan, Chief Information Officer; Robert Kamp, IT Project Manager; Dennis Dumovich, Director Human Resources; and, Patrice Townsend, Director Utility Services.

A tape of this meeting is on file at the Board of Public Utilities.

Ms. Gonzales called the Board meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. She welcomed all that were listening to or viewing the meeting. She stated that the Board felt it was necessary to offer the use of technology for staff as well as for the general public. Members of the community who wished to speak to the Board during the public comment session must be logged in to the Zoom meeting through the internet using their browser or the Zoom application. Those wishing to offer comments during the public comments section could click on the raised hand feature at the bottom of the application or window or press Star 9 if connected by phone only. During the public comment section of the agenda, community members would be asked to provide their name and address and had five minutes to speak. As always, the public could also email or call the BPU with any concerns. The agenda and presentations could be found on the BPU website or if they were using Zoom they would appear on their screen. Ms. Gonzales introduced herself and the other Board Members along with the General Manager, and Legal Counsel.

Roll call was taken and all Board Members were present via teleconference.

Item #3 – Approval of Amended Agenda

A motion was made to approve the Amended Agenda by Mr. Bryant, seconded by Ms. Mulvany Henry, and unanimously carried.

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Item #4 – Approval of Regular Session Minutes of January 19, 2022

Ms. Mulvany Henry said that in the Public Comments section, the spelling of Mr. Jared Emmons name was misspelled and needed to be corrected.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the Regular Session of January 19, 2022, with the correction, by Ms. Mulvany Henry, seconded by Mr. Groneman, and unanimously carried.

Item #5 – Public Comments

Mr. Keith Pappert, 9610 Georgia, wanted to make the Board aware and express his concerns regarding the Safe and Welcoming Act that would be coming up in a Unified Government (UG) Commission meeting.

Mr. Johnson said that the UG was aware of our concerns regarding any impact on BPU’s operations or revenues. There was a prevision included that would protect BPU’s interests.

Ms. Dannetta Pappert asked what provisions would be in place in regards to what would be required for someone to get utilities. She was concerned as a consumer.

Ms. Angela Lawson, Deputy Chief Counsel, stated that there was language in the ordinance making it possible to request additional information as BPU deemed necessary.

Mr. Groneman had the ordinance and said the portion which pertained to BPU said nothing herein shall prohibit the Board of Public Utilities from requiring additional identification.

Mr. Jared Emmons, 12208 Pebble Beach Dr., spoke about the cold weather rule currently in place and that of the Kansas Corporation Commission.

Ms. Mulvany Henry thanked Mr. Emmons and suggested that this should be considered for a future Work Session discussion.

Mr. Haley echoed Ms. Mulvany Henry’s comments and also wondered what the KCC’s phone call protocol was.

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Following other Board comments, it was determined that it would be beneficial to put this on the next Work Session agenda.

Item #6 – General Manager / Staff Reports

- i. *KERA Program Update:* Mr. Johnson, along with, Ms. Johnetta Hinson, Executive Director Customer Service and Ms. Patrice Townsend, Director Utility Services spoke with the KERA office regarding challenges in receiving payments. KERA said that they had hired a contract firm to help them catch up on processing the outstanding applications. KERA also indicated that they were looking at expanding their community partners which currently included, Catholic Charities, Avenue of Life, Build Power MoKan, and Economic Opportunity Foundation. He also said he was surprised to find out that utility assistance was still linked to rental assistance.
- ii. *Employee Survey:* Mr. Dennis Dumovich, Director Human Resources, gave the Board an overview of the Employee Survey which was conducted previously and on the accomplishments in 2021 from the survey. He also discussed next steps. (see the attached presentation).

Mr. Dumovich answered questions from the Board.

- iii. *Customer Survey:* Mr. David Mehlhaff, Chief Communications Officer, spoke about customer satisfaction research done in previous years and about plans to do a customer survey in 2022. It would include:
 - Surveying residential customers, small business, commercial, industrial, key accounts and also will add builders and developers.
 - Quantitative survey - Online survey, paper, telephone interview
 - Qualitative survey - Focus groups done with a third-party moderator
 - In order to identify areas of improvements the surveying would include: technology, customer service practices, billing processes, product offerings, community involvement. Finding out customer communication methods in order to create or tailor programs and offerings to work for the customer.

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Mr. Mehlhaff and Ms. Johnetta Hinson, Executive Director Customer Service answered questions from the Board.

- iv. *Miscellaneous Comments:* Mr. Johnson met with Ms. Gonzales, Board President, to discuss future Work Sessions.

He would be reaching out to the Board as well as the Executive Team to update them on Executive Staff Development and to discuss next steps.

He also spoke about his and Mr. Mehlhaff’s trip to Topeka to meet with the Wyandotte County delegation. They were also able to meet with the Governor’s Chief of Staff to give an update on topics related to BPU.

He would be getting with the Board about scheduling this year’s APPA Hometown Connections workshop training.

Item #8 – Board Comments

Mr. Haley appreciated Mr. Johnson and Mr. Mehlhaff’s trip to Topeka. He also appreciated the continuous awareness of what the utility did. He shared his phone number, 913-544-6749. He also was glad to be going over the cold weather policy. He also mentioned going over audits with the Mayor and spoke about the charter review.

Mr. Groneman spoke about the UG’s Economic Development and Standing Committees. He was on the Public Works and Safety Committee and gave an update on one of the upcoming action item topics that had been moved on to the full Commission, the Safe City and Welcoming City Act. He also thanked staff for the reports.

Mr. Milan commented on policy reviews and the responsibilities as Board members, including the relationships, responsibilities and limitations when dealing with local, state as well as outside entities. The Board needed to readdress and look at the roles, responsibilities and authority they all had as Board members.

Mr. Bryant had no comments.

Ms. Mulvany Henry had no comments.

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Ms. Gonzales said she would be reaching out to the regarding future Work Session topics. She also shouted out to the crews working in the current weather.

Item #9 – Adjourn

A motion was made to adjourn the Regular Session at 7:16 P.M. by Mr. Bryant, seconded by Ms. Mulvany Henry, and unanimously carried.

ATTEST:


Secretary

APPROVED:


President

BPU EMPLOYEE SURVEY

Plans for 2022

- **Employee Survey Overview**
- **Accomplishments From 2021**
- **Next Steps**

Survey Overview

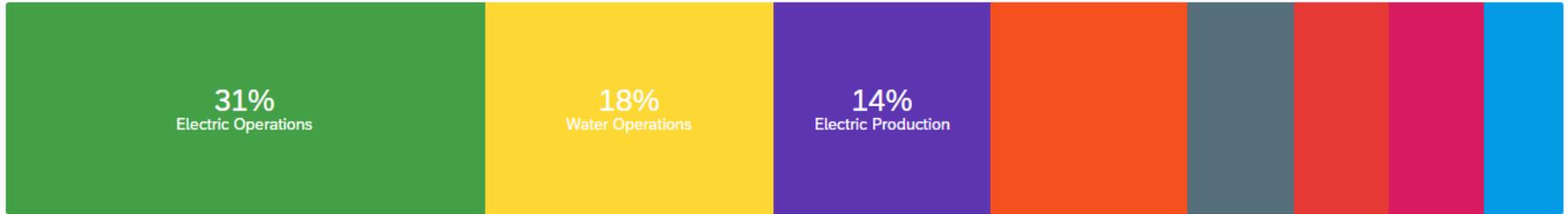
Distribution Review

1. Survey link sent via email (including one reminder email and included in Watts and Water newsletter)
2. Postcard sent to employee homes with QR code to online survey
3. Printed copies for certain locations
4. 24 questions

Total Responses

- 351 Responses or 69% of organization
 - Expected response rate is 30%
- 68 of responses were written
- 69% of responses in operations

Demographics Breakdown



■ Electric Operations (31%)
 ■ Water Operations (18%)
 ■ Electric Production (14%)
 ■ Accounting & Finance/Purchasing/Human Resources/Admin Services (13%)
 ■ Customer Service (7%)
 ■ General Management (6%)
 ■ Information Technology (6%)
 ■ Electric Supply (5%)



■ Supervisor (61%)
 ■ Director (23%)
 ■ Executive Director or Officer (9%)
 ■ General Manager (3%)
 ■ Acting Supervisor (3%)
 ■ Acting Director (1%)
 ■ Project Manager (1%)

Recommendations/Accomplishments

1. **Send Post-Survey email to employees from leadership (Completed)**
 - Thank employees for their participation
 - Announce some next steps/action items

2. **Communicate Compensation Statements for BPU benefit plans and comparisons (Completed)**

3. **Develop supervisor/employee relationship training to improve communication and mgmt. skills**
 - Supervisor training started in Spring 2021 (In Progress)

4. **Year-round benefits communication campaign (Completed Microsite, QR codes, In Person Meetings, Online Open Enrollment, Home mailers, etc.)**
 - Ensure bulletin board has online applicability (i.e. QR codes)
 - Consider website/Intranet that has all needed benefits information (can be used for employees, new hires and as a recruiting tool)
 - Develop benefits app for cell phones

Next Steps

- New Survey will maintain 75% of previous questions to see how we compare to the baseline
- We will add new survey questions regarding training needs and possibly other areas
- After survey we recommend conducting focus groups/individual meetings to gather more data
- Goal is to conduct survey by end of March
- Do focus groups in April
- Have results to the Board in May