



TO: Commissioners Mital, Simpson, Helgeson, Manning and Brown
FROM: Anne Kah, Executive Assistant
DATE: October 20, 2015
SUBJECT: Board Meeting Minutes
OBJECTIVE: Board Action

Issue

Eugene Water & Electric Board of Commissioners meeting minutes contain a detailed account of actions taken, as well as discussions. A significant amount of time is required for the Minutes Recorder to transcribe this level of detail for the official written minutes. In addition, a considerable amount of time is consumed by all five commissioners, General Manager and Assistant Secretary to review the minutes prior to Board approval. EWEB staff is looking for opportunities to increase efficiency and reduce costs while still providing a level of service that meets ORS Public Meeting Law requirements.

Background

EWEB has an agreement with the Lane Council of Governments (LCOG) for minutes-recording services. The annual cost is approximately \$6,000, based on the assumption of one board meeting per month. The current hourly rate is \$40.95.

An excerpt from [ORS 192.650](#) states that:

“The governing body of a public body shall provide for the sound, video or digital recording or the taking of written minutes of all its meetings. Neither a full transcript nor a full recording of the meeting is required, except as otherwise provided by law, but the written minutes or recording must give a true reflection of the matters discussed at the meeting and the views of the participants.”

The statute further explains that minutes must reflect the names of Board members present; all motions, proposals, resolutions, orders, ordinances and measures proposed and their disposition; the results of all votes and the vote of each member by name; the substance of any discussion on any matter; and a reference to any document discussed at the meeting.

Discussion

Management believes that efficiencies can be gained by reducing the content of written minutes to focus on motions and actions taken, rather than what was said and by whom. If the Board approves

of this change, the abbreviated written minutes shall be supplemented with full audio recordings to guarantee that all requirements of ORS 192.650 are met, as well as provide a complete account of the meeting that may be called upon as necessary. This proposed format for written minutes will require far less time to transcribe; staff believes that minutes recordings may eventually be accomplished using internal resources. Staff will collaborate with Commissioners to create a template that is acceptable to the Board and which will provide consistency of the meeting minutes.

A transition period will be needed to implement the revised procedure. Meanwhile, staff wishes to continue to use LCOG services for minutes recording, and rely on the expertise of its staff to provide minutes that meet the new guidelines. Successful implementation is expected in the first quarter of 2016; at that time, Management will make a determination as to whether this service should be brought in-house or retained as a contracted service.

The current eweb.org platform does not readily support audio files. Therefore, audio recordings will be available to the public upon request, in the near term. However, Public Affairs is on track to implement a modern, “cloud-based” content management system for the external web site, which will provide for the addition of enhanced features, including audio. The new web-platform project is expected to be complete in Q2 2016. Once the new website is fully operational in 2016, interested parties will have access to Board Meeting audio recordings via a link on the Board Agenda webpage for a period of one-year, after that time, the recordings will be archived and available upon request.

Recommendation

Management recommends adoption of action-oriented minutes supplemented by full audio recordings for regular EWEB Board meetings. The proposed format shall include actions that are noted briefly to reflect actions taken, rather than a full account of what was said by Commissioners and staff.

Minutes will include:

- Place and time of the meeting
- Board members present and, if relevant, absences
- The fact that a quorum was preset
- Text of all main motions and their disposition (passed, failed, postponed, etc.)
- If amendments were made, the final version of the motion as amended
- The results of all votes and the vote of each member
- Any points of order that were made and their resolution
- Public Comment will be noted with the speaker's name and topic of their remarks
- Public Hearings will be noted with the speaker's name and a brief summary of the content of the speaker's remarks.

All other requirements of ORS 192.650 will be fulfilled by full audio recordings.

This proposed change will have no impact to the existing format of Executive Session minutes

Requested Board Action

Management requests that the Board approve the proposal for action minutes as described herein. If there are any questions or if more information is needed, please contact Anne Kah, Executive Assistant 541-685-7191 or anne.kah@eweb.org.