



MEMORANDUM

EUGENE WATER & ELECTRIC BOARD

Rely on us.

TO: Commissioners Brown, Carlson, Mital, Simpson and Helgeson
FROM: Frank Lawson, General Manager
DATE: June 20, 2018
SUBJECT: Proposed Revisions to Board Policy GP15, New Commissioner Orientation
OBJECTIVE: Information Only

Issue

The Board's governance process policy addressing new commissioner orientation (GP15) was last updated in 2005. Management recommends updating the policy to more closely reflect recent practices.

Background/Discussion

Board policies are periodically reviewed and updated as necessary. Proposed revisions to Board Policy GP15 are being provided for informational purposes at this time. After receiving feedback from Commissioners, Management intends to submit the updated policy for your consideration on the August consent calendar.

Currently, Board Policy GP15 describes a three-phased approach to the orientation. A number of actions are specified to take place after the new commissioner takes office. In some instances it may be appropriate to begin certain engagements, prior to that time.

The proposed policy has been simplified by removing restrictions that stipulate when activities may occur. Under the proposed policy, a substantial portion of the orientation may occur before or after taking office, at the discretion of the Board President, General Manager and new Commissioner. Additionally, a new provision states that a Commissioner Nominee may partake in the orientation prior to the general election, under the condition the Nominee will run unopposed and upon agreement of the Board President, General Manager and Nominee. Management believes the flexibility of these changes will benefit new Commissioners by providing additional time to prepare for their role.

The following summarizes other notable amendments to the policy.

- Board Policy GP5, Role of Board President, states "The Board President or his/her designee is responsible for the orientation of new Commissioners per Board Policy GP15". This statement has been added to GP15 to create consistency between the two policies.
- Removed references to "Board Information Manual". The former hard-copy manual

primarily consisted of information that is now available on eweb.org. Present day orientations guide new Commissioners to access the same information electronically and a hard copy will be provided upon request.

- The policy language has been updated and formatted for readability.

Requested Board Action

Information only.

Policy Number: GP15
Policy Type: Governance Process
Policy Title: New Commissioner Orientation
Effective Date: April 19, 2005, Proposed Revision July 10, 2018

The Board President or their designee is responsible for orientation of new Commissioners. The purpose of the New Commissioner Orientation is to create familiarity with policy, provide an overview of EWEB operations and make introductions to management and primary contacts at EWEB. New Commissioners have distinct backgrounds and inspirations for being on the Board, as well as diverse learning styles, varied schedules and availability. Therefore, orientations will be tailored for each new Commissioner.

The investment involved with providing a substantive overview and discussion of EWEB's operations, as well as Commissioner roles, will reap future benefits. New Board members will be well informed and better prepared to participate effectively in the Board's governance role.

During the election process or pre-appointment period, information requests from candidates will be granted in accordance with Oregon Public Records and Public Meetings Laws. A meeting with the General Manager to gain a better understanding of the Board's role and to obtain general information about EWEB will be scheduled upon the candidate's request. All such requests for information, as well as questions regarding public meetings, and scheduling matters should be directed to the General Manager's Executive Assistant.

After the general election or appointment, but prior to a new Commissioner's oath of office, the General Manager will commence the orientation with intent to complete the process as soon as practical and within an amount of time that is acceptable to the Board President, General Manager and new Commissioners. Unless specified, the elements of the orientation may take place before or after the oath of office.

In the event that a Commissioner Nominee will run uncontested, the orientation may begin prior to the general election, at the discretion of the Board President, General Manager and the Nominee.

Elements of the Orientation:

Prior to the oath of office, the General Manager will invite the Commissioner Elect, Nominee, or Appointee to:

- Attend Board meetings as an observer with the opportunity to be introduced to EWEB personnel.
- Attend Board workshops and retreats as an observer.

During the orientation process, the General Manager will:

Provide information to the Commissioner Elect, Nominee, or Appointee, including:

- Board Policy Manual
- General information about EWEB

Inform the Commissioner Elect, Nominee, or Appointee about upcoming association meetings and/or Public Power orientations and workshops. (Expenses associated with these opportunities shall only be paid by EWEB after the new Commissioner has taken the oath of office; prior to that time, the attendee shall be responsible for costs incurred.)

Design a series of orientation sessions for the new Commissioners.

- Informational meetings with, or introductions to:
 - Board President
 - Experienced Board members
 - General Manager
 - Executive Team members
 - Program Managers
- Tours of major projects and facilities

Provide written information pertinent to the Board and identify the highest priority areas.

Common resources include:

- Board Policy Manual and Bylaws
- Relevant policies and protocols
- Strategic Plan
- Annual Financial Reports
- Website review
- Organizational chart and list of key personnel

Support new Commissioners' endeavor to strengthen their connection to the public.

- Invite new Commissioners to attend community meetings with the appointed Board liaison and make appropriate introductions.
- Impart relevant information about industry trends and public power and water needs in our community.
- Familiarize the new Commissioner with EWEB's priorities, strategies, essential operations and major initiatives which will help them become knowledgeable representatives.

Promote productive communication:

- Discuss the board-staff working relationship (Board Policy BL6), including lines of communication and appropriate contacts for particular information.
- Determine the new Commissioner's preferred method of communication and use that style to the extent practical.

After the Oath of Office:

After the new Commissioners have taken the oath of office, the Board President or General Manager should maintain ongoing communication by initiating contact with new Commissioners. Examples include:

- Encourage new Commissioners to ask questions and seek information prior to Board meetings; offer to meet with them prior to the meetings during the first several months.

- Establish an e-mail address and include them in routine communication

Encourage new Commissioners to seek educational opportunities.

- Notify new Commissioners of upcoming state and national conferences.
- Establish an expectation for new Commissioners to attend conferences and explain how to obtain travel support.
- Strengthen partnerships and teamwork by arranging for the General Manager and/or other Board members to accompany new Commissioners to conferences and introduce them to others.

Definitions:

Commissioner Elect – Individual has completed the election process (primary and general elections) and has won the seat in the general election. Individual has not been sworn into office.

Nominee – Individual has won in the primary election and will either run uncontested in the general election or will run against another candidate.

Appointee – Individual has been selected to fill a vacant or soon to be vacant seat but has not been sworn into office.

Source: Board Approved 07/06/2004, Ratified 04/19/2005, Proposed Revision 07/10/18.

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Policy Title: New Commissioner Orientation
Effective Date: April 19, 2005

The focus of new Commissioner orientation is to create familiarity with policy and provide an overview of the utility's operations and key staff. New Commissioners have diverse learning needs and styles, different backgrounds and motivations for being on the Board, and varied schedules and availability for learning about the utility. Therefore, orientation to the Commissioner position will be different for each new Commissioner.

The time and effort involved in providing a substantive overview and discussion of EWEB's operations, as well as Commissioner roles, will reap future benefits. New Board members will be well informed and more able to participate effectively in the Board's governance role.

Phase 1 - During the election process or pre-appointment period

Requests for information from candidates seeking a Board seat will be dealt with in accordance with Oregon public records and public meetings laws. Specifically:

- Requests for Board runs and other information available to the public will be honored.
- Requests for information concerning upcoming Board meetings and retreats will be provided.
- A meeting with the General Manager to gain a better understanding of the Board role and to obtain general information about EWEB will be scheduled, if requested by the candidate.

All such requests for information, as well as questions regarding public meetings, and scheduling issues should be directed to the General Manager's Executive Assistant.

Phase 2 - After the election or appointment

After the election or appointment, but prior to swearing in the new Commissioner, the EWEB General Manager will:

- Provide information to the Commissioner Elect, Nominee, or Appointee (see definitions at the end of this document):
 - Board Policy Manual
 - Board Information Manual
 - General information about EWEB
- Invite the Commissioner Elect, Nominee, or Appointee to:
 - Tour EWEB facilities
 - Attend Board meetings held prior to being sworn in to observe and be introduced
 - Attend strategic planning, budget and other retreats as an observer
- Inform the Commissioner Elect, Nominee, or Appointee about upcoming association and/or Public Power orientations and workshops (EWEB would not cover expenses until the candidate has been sworn in as an EWEB Commissioner)

Phase 3 - After the new Commissioner takes office

After the new Commissioner has been sworn in and seated on the Board, the EWEB General Manager will:

- Design a series of orientation sessions for the new Commissioners to include:
 - Information and discussion sessions with or introductions to:
 - The Board President
 - Experienced Board members
 - The General Manager
 - Executive Team
 - Program Managers
 - Tours and visits to major programs and facilities

- Provide reading materials about the Board. Identify the documents that are high priorities. Help new Commissioners set up an information filing system. Common materials are:
 - Board Policy Manual and Bylaws
 - Board Reference Manual
 - Strategic and Master plans
 - Annual Financial Reports
 - Website Review
 - Organizational charts and lists of key personnel

- Help new Commissioners strengthen their links to the external community and public:
 - Invite new Commissioners to accompany Commissioners who have been appointed to community or agency groups as the Board's liaisons, to community meetings. Be sure they are introduced as new Commissioners.
 - Provide information about trends and public power and water needs in the community
 - Provide information about EWEB to help new Commissioners become knowledgeable representatives

- Maintain ongoing communication links:
 - The Board President or General Manager should initiate contact with new Commissioners and:
 - Encourage new Commissioners to ask questions and seek information prior to Board meetings; offer to meet with them prior to Board meetings for the first few months
 - Call new Commissioners before Board meetings to see if they have any questions
 - Discuss lines of communication and who to ask for what information
 - Ask new Commissioners what their preferred mode of communication is; use that style to the extent practical
 - Set up an e-mail address and include them in routine communication

- Encourage new Commissioners to seek educational opportunities:
 - Notify them of upcoming state and national conferences
 - Establish an expectation for new Commissioners to attend conferences; explain how to obtain travel support
 - Strengthen partnerships and teamwork by arranging for the GM and/or other Board members to accompany new Commissioners to conferences and introduce them to others

Definitions:

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Former Policy