



RIVERSIDE PUBLIC UTILITIES

Board Memorandum

BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES

DATE: NOVEMBER 27, 2023

SUBJECT: BOARD OF PUBLIC UTILITIES' ANNUAL WORK PLAN

ISSUE:

Consider discussion of the Board of Public Utilities' Annual Work Plan, provide feedback to staff and recommend to City Council for adoption.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board of Public Utilities recommend to the City Council the adoption of the Board of Public Utilities' Annual Work Plan.

BACKGROUND:

Riverside City Charter Article 12, Section 1201 states, "There shall be a Board of Public Utilities. All of the provisions of Article VIII of this Charter relating to boards and commissions generally, to the organization, meetings, conduct of proceedings, and expenses thereof, and to the appointment, qualifications, term of office, removal, compensation, and powers of members thereof, where not inconsistent with the provisions of this Article, shall apply to the Board of Public Utilities."

DISCUSSION:

To help focus and guide the work of all boards and commissions, City staff, at the direction of the City Manager's Office, have been tasked to work with each City board/commission to develop an annual work plan. The purpose of the work plan is to align the meeting body's efforts with City's strategic plan and ensure meaningful input and action during board/commission meetings. The City Council Inclusiveness, Community Engagement, and Governmental Processes Committee (ICGC) is tentatively scheduled to review each board/commission workplan at a later scheduled date. These recommendations will be provided to the City Council for review, recommendation, and approval. Once approved the work plans will be returned to the Board for review and implementation.

The Board of Public Utilities (Board) is tasked with the following powers/duties/functions, per Article 12, sections 1200 through 1205 (Powers, Duties and Functions) of the City Charter:

1. Consider the annual budget for the Department of Public Utilities during the process of its preparation and make recommendations with respect thereto to the City Council and the City Manager.
2. Authorize, and let public works contracts in compliance with Section 1109, within the limits of the budget of the Department of Public Utilities, any purchase of equipment, materials, supplies, goods or services, or any acquisition, construction, improvement, extension, enlargement, diminution, or curtailment of all or any part of any public utility system when the amount exceeds \$50,000, and authorize the City Manager, or his designee, to execute contracts or issue purchase orders for the same. This amount may be increased in \$1,000 increments by ordinance to account for inflation whenever the cumulative increase in the consumer price index exceeds \$2,000 from the last increase. No such purchase, or acquisition, construction, improvement, extension, enlargement, diminution or curtailment shall be made without such prior authorization.

Notwithstanding the above, such a purchase, or acquisition, construction, extension, enlargement, diminution or curtailment may be made without prior approval (1) for work done at the request of and at the expense of a customer, pursuant to rules established by the Board of Public Utilities and approved by the City Council, or (2) if there is an urgent necessity to preserve life, health or property (i) as determined by the Director of Public Utilities or, (ii) if the amount exceeds \$100,000 by the Director of Public Utilities and the City Manager. As soon as practicable thereafter, the Director of Public Utilities shall take the matter under Section 1202(b)(2) to the Board of Public Utilities for ratification.

3. Within the limits of the budget of the Department of Public Utilities, make appropriations from the contingency reserve fund for capital expenditures directly related to the appropriate utility function.
4. Require of the City Manager monthly reports of receipts and expenditures of the Department of Public Utilities, segregated as to each separate utility, and monthly statements of the general condition of the department and its facilities.
5. Establish rates for all utility operations as provided under Section 1200 including but not limited to water and electrical revenue producing utilities owned, controlled or operated by the City, but subject to the approval of the City Council.
6. Authorize the Director of Public Utilities to negotiate and execute contracts with individual retail customers for water, electric and any other utility service as provided under Section 1200, consistent with rates for such individualized service established pursuant to Section 1202(e).
7. Approve or disapprove the appointment of the Director of Public Utilities, who shall be the department head.
8. Designate its own secretary.
9. Make such reports and recommendations in writing to the City Council regarding the Department of Public Utilities as the City Council shall deem advisable.
10. Exercise such other powers and perform such other duties as may be prescribed by ordinance not inconsistent with any of the provisions of this Charter.

Within this framework, the Board is asked to discuss and recommend topics of interest and proposed areas of focus for Board action over the next year. Staff has prepared an initial draft Plan to begin the Board discussion.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT:

This item contributes to:

Strategic Priority #4 – Environmental Stewardship:

Goal 4.2 – Sustainably manage local water resources to maximize reliability and advance water reuse to ensure safe, reliable, and affordable water to our community.

Strategic Priority #5 – High Performing Government and the following goals:

Goal 5.1 – Attract, develop, engage, and retain a diverse and highly skilled workforce across the entire City organization.

Goal 5.2 – Utilize technology, data, and process improvement strategies to increase efficiencies, guide decision making and ensure services are accessible and distributed equitably throughout all geographic areas of the City.

Goal 5.3 - Enhance communication and collaboration with community members to improve transparency, build public trust, and encourage shared decision-making.

Strategic Priority #6 – Infrastructure, Mobility & Connectivity, and the following goal:

Goal 6.3 – Identify and pursue new and unique funding opportunities to develop, operate maintain, and renew infrastructure and programs that meet the community's needs.

This item aligns with each of the five Cross-Cutting Threads based as follows:

1. **Community Trust** – The Board Work Plan provides a transparent view and communication of Utility finances in a forum that accommodates community engagement and the involvement of Board of Public Utilities.
2. **Equity** – The Board Work Plan is available to all members of the public via the City website, and the presentation of the proposed plan in a public forum accommodates community engagement from all members of the public.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility** – The Board Work Plan demonstrates the Utility's commitment to responsible management of the Utility's financial resources.
4. **Innovation** – The Board Work Plan will help in meeting the community's changing needs as the Utility's infrastructure needs are projected to grow as the system continues to age.
5. **Sustainability & Resiliency** – The Board Work Plan demonstrates the Utility's commitment to the long-term fiscal health of the Utility and preservation of Utility services.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact associated with this report.

Prepared by: Todd M. Corbin, Utilities General Manager
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Certified as to
availability of funds: Kristie Thomas, Finance Director/Assistant Chief Financial Officer
Approved as to form: Phaedra A. Norton, City Attorney

Attachments:

1. Draft Work Plan Ideas and Notes
2. Board and Commission Template
3. Presentation