

**Trinity Public Utilities District
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD
JUNE 13, 2024**

Location: Trinity Public Utilities District Community Room
26 Ponderosa Lane, Weaverville, California
Board Present: Amanda Barragar, Alex Cousins, Nicholas Goulette, Andrew Johnson,
Michael Rourke
Board Absent: None
Others Present: Paul Hauser, Jim Underwood, Mike Garcia, Julie Catanese, Sarah
Sheetz, David DeLange and James Aven

1. President Rourke called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

2. Approval of the Agenda Order

Director Cousins made a motion to approve the Agenda Order. Director Barragar seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following voice vote:

Ayes: Amanda Barragar, Alex Cousins, Nick Goulette, Andrew
Johnson, Mike Rourke
Noes: None
Absent: None
Abstain: None

3. Public Input

None

4. Consent Calendar

Director Cousins made a motion to approve the Consent Calendar. Director Johnson seconded the motion. The Consent Calendar included:

- a. Approve Minutes of the Regular Meeting May 9, 2024
- b. Accept Minutes of the Safety Meeting May 21, 2024
- c. Validate Bills of May, 2024
- d. Approve Financial Reports for April, 2024

The motion passed with the following voice vote:

Ayes: Amanda Barragar, Alex Cousins, Nick Goulette, Andrew
Johnson, Mike Rourke
Noes: None
Absent: None
Abstain: None

5. Action Items

- a. Items Pulled from Consent Calendar
None

b. Adopt Resolution No. 24-02 Ordering Board of Directors Election; Consolidation of Elections and Specifications of Elections Order

Mr. Hauser reviewed the report with the Board. Following a brief discussion Director Cousins made a motion to Adopt Resolution 24-02, Ordering the Board of Directors Election; Consolidating Elections and Specifying the Elections Order. Director Goulette seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:

Amanda Barragar	-aye
Alex Cousins	-aye
Nicholas Goulette	-aye
Andrew Johnson	-aye
Michael Rourke	-aye

c. Review Conflict of Interest Policy and Approve Submission of the 2024 Local Agency Biennial Notice to the Trinity County Board of Supervisors

Mr. Hauser reviewed the report with the Board. Following a brief discussion Director Cousins made a motion to approve submission of the 2024 Local Agency Biennial Notice to the Trinity County Board of Supervisors, with no changes to the Conflict of Interest Policy. Director Barragar seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following voice vote:

Ayes:	Amanda Barragar, Alex Cousins, Nick Goulette, Andrew Johnson, Mike Rourke
Noes:	None
Absent:	None
Abstain:	None

d. Conduct a Public Hearing to consider Application to the United States Department of Agriculture for Community Facilities Grant Funding in the amount of \$236,140 for a Tucker Terra Sno Cat, and Adopt Resolution 24-03, approving the application; authorizing the sole source purchase; and authorizing the General Manager to execute all documents necessary to facilitate the acquisition

Mr. Hauser reviewed the report with the Board.

President Rourke opened the Public Hearing at 2:05 p.m. Director Goulette inquired about the sole source purchase and compliance with the Code of Federal Regulations. Mr. Hauser advised that there is only one manufacturer of the equipment specified, Ms. Sheetz confirmed that the inquiry had been made with the granting agency as well regarding the acquisition. President Rourke closed the Public Hearing at 2:09 p.m.

Director Barragar made a motion to Adopt Resolution 24-03, approving submission of the application to the USDA for Community Facilities Grant Funding in the amount of \$236,140 for a Tucker Terra Sno Cat, authorizing the sole source purchase; and authorizing the General Manager to execute all documents necessary to facilitate the acquisition. Director Cousins seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following roll call vote:

Amanda Barragar	-aye
Alex Cousins	-aye
Nicholas Goulette	-aye

Andrew Johnson -aye
Michael Rourke -aye

e. Approve Submission of the 2024 Update to the Trinity Public Utilities District Wildfire Mitigation Plan to the Wildfire Safety Advisory Board

Mr. Hauser reviewed the report with the Board. Following a brief discussion Director Goulette made a motion to approve submission of the 2024 Update to the Trinity Public Utilities District Wildfire Mitigation Plan to the Wildfire Safety Advisory Board. Director Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following voice vote:

Ayes: Amanda Barragar, Alex Cousins, Nick Goulette, Andrew Johnson, Mike Rourke
Noes: None
Absent: None
Abstain: None

f. Approve submission of Application to the United States Department of Agriculture for a Community Wildfire Defense Grant in the amount of \$9,516,078 for Vegetation Management efforts to reduce wildfire risk; and authorize the General Manager to execute all documents necessary to facilitate the project.

Mr. Hauser reviewed the report with the Board. Following a brief discussion Director Goulette made a motion to approve submission of an application to the USDA for a Community Wildfire Defense Grant in the amount of \$9,516,078 for Vegetation Management efforts to reduce wildfire risk; and authorized the General Manager to execute all documents necessary to facilitate the project. Director Cousins seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following voice vote:

Ayes: Amanda Barragar, Alex Cousins, Nick Goulette, Andrew Johnson, Mike Rourke
Noes: None
Absent: None
Abstain: None

g. Approve Agreement with Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange and authorize General Manager to execute all documents necessary to complete the Agreement.

Mr. Hauser reviewed the report with the Board. Following a brief discussion Director Johnson made a motion to approve an agreement with Federated Rural Electric Insurance Exchange; and authorized the General Manager to execute all documents necessary to facilitate the project. Director Cousins seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following voice vote:

Ayes: Amanda Barragar, Alex Cousins, Nick Goulette, Andrew Johnson, Mike Rourke
Noes: None
Absent: None
Abstain: None

h. Adopt Proposed Fiscal Year 24/25 Budget and Five-Year Financial Forecast

Mr. Hauser reviewed the report with the Board. Following a brief discussion Director Cousins made a motion to adopt the proposed Fiscal Year 24/25 Budget and Five-Year Financial Forecast. Director Barragar seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following voice vote:

Ayes:	Amanda Barragar, Alex Cousins, Nick Goulette, Andrew Johnson, Mike Rourke
Noes:	None
Absent:	None
Abstain:	None

Director Johnson inquired about the recently awarded \$9.5 million grant. Ms. Catanese advised it is not in the budget.

President Rourke inquired about the vegetation management expense line item, Mr. DeLange advised that the line item is not being reduced for FY24-25.

Director Cousins inquired about existing debt. Ms. Catanese advised that the total debt is approximately \$26 million.

Director Cousins inquired about the overall fiscal health of the District, and what the insurance and CalPers obligations are. Ms. Catanese advised that the District pays its CalPers obligations monthly, and that there are approximately 3 retired employees on the District's health insurance and approximately 8 who are post 65 and receive a monthly stipend to go towards health insurance premiums. Employees hired after 2014 will not receive the post 65 benefit.

Jim Aven inquired about the industrial load. Mr. Hauser responded that the usage is pretty stable over an annual basis.

6. Reports:

a. Wildfire Mitigation Plan (WMP) Reporting Metrics Update – May 2024

Mr. DeLange advised that the District's reclosers have been placed on one shot as of last week, meaning customers may see increased outages for longer duration. Reclosers will remain in this enhanced fire safe mode until fire season ends. Inspections are ramping up, with two employees performing inspections one day per week until inspections are complete. The District applied for a grant for the acquisition of fault tamers, which will expedite the fault tamer change out project considerably. Crews have begun clearing around poles, with one crew dedicated to the North County and one to the South County. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Conservation Camp crew recently completed half a mile of right-of-way work by Bowerman Ridge, which was tremendously helpful. Mr. DeLange praised the tree crews for the work they have completed so far this year.

b. General Managers Reports:

i. Local Agency Formation Commission

Mr. Hauser congratulated Director Johnson for his re-appointment to LAFCO and thanked him for this representation.

ii. Land Exchange

Mr. Hauser reported that Congressman Huffman expressed an interest in being here to celebrate the completion of the Land Exchange. The process is currently with the Bureau of Land Management, with completion anticipated in approximately four months. Congressman Huffman was also instrumental in the District's award of a Community Facilities Grant for the acquisition of a Sno-Cat.

iii. Right-of-Way Project Update

Mr. Hauser advised that a draft document is expected in June, 2024, we are currently awaiting comments from the Bureau of Land Management and the United States Forest Service. Director Cousins inquired about the budget for the Environmental work. Mr. Hauser advised that the budget is on track, however, the number of unique comments received has the potential to impact the budget as Aspen will need to respond to each comment.

iv. Power Outage Summary – May 2024

Mr. Hauser advised that there were only two unplanned outages. Mr. Garcia advised that the line crews are doing a tremendous amount of work and are on track to complete a record number of pole change-outs this year.

Director Barragar inquired about the outage that took place on June 3, 2024. Mr. Garcia advised that a squirrel got into Lewiston substation and took out three substation fuses, and a 60kV fuse. Mr. Garcia also advised that in addition to the reclosers being on fire settings, fire equipment has been added to each truck for fire season and the District is looking into purchasing a 500-gallon water buffalo trailer.

v. Trinity County Fair Junior Livestock Auction

Mr. Hauser plans to attend the Junior Livestock Auction this year and with the Board's approval will spend approximately \$25,000 on livestock. Funds come from Public Benefit funds that are required to be collected by the District and the livestock is donated to the Trinity County Foodbank and the Roderick Senior Center in Hayfork. The Board concurred with the amount.

vi. United States Forest Service – Special Use Permit

Mr. Hauser advised that the District has been in negotiations with the USFS regarding renewal of its Special Use Permit. The District has been operating on an expired permit for several years, which, in consultation with other utilities, does not seem to be uncommon. The District is seeking a renewed permit, that will incorporate the new standards outlined in the Right of Way Project environmental work, which will result in a new Operating Plan for the District. However, the USFS has now included strict liability in its permitting language, along with a requirement to maintain wildfire liability insurance, which the District does not have, and cannot get. Ms. Sheetz advised the other issue the District is facing is that the USFS has declined to approve new line extensions on USFS land until the District's permit is renewed. Mr. Hauser concurred stating that there are several customers waiting for power due to this issue.

President Rourke inquired if there is a possibility that this could be revisited if we do get wider rights of way. Mr. Hauser responded that potentially it could be, but that regardless of what the permit language says, the Right of Way Project does

reduce the risk profile for the District, which is a benefit to all customers and communities.

c. Committee Reports

- Ad-hoc Forestry Committee
None

d. Board Member Reports

Director Barragar advised she will be serving as a local area advisor during disasters for the Junction City area.

Director Cousins advised that he and Ms. Sheetz recently attended the Northwest Public Power Association Annual Conference in Salt Lake City. Topics of interest included the State of Utah's success on negating strict liability when maintenance/construction standards are met. System reliability was also a big topic, Director Cousins encouraged the District to continue its efforts on vegetation management and system hardening to elevate and prioritize reliability. He encouraged participation in maintaining the District's uniqueness and to continue to advocate on carrying on that tradition. Additional topics included increased costs for equipment and materials, the demands for electrification of the grid, lack of infrastructure and lack of power supply to meet increasing demand while concurrently down different types of power production.

Ms. Sheetz advised in addition to the topics Director Cousins noted that underserved communities who qualify for social equity funding was an interesting topic, in particular how it could potentially relate the residents of Trinity Pines/Post Mountain should they desire to be connected to the grid.

Director Goulette advised that the Watershed Center recently received approximately \$6.9 million for the Upper Trinity Watershed and the Trinity County Resource Conservation District was awarded funding for meadow restoration.

7. Discussion Item

None

8. Communications Received

None

9. Meetings and/or Workshops

- a. Golden State Power Cooperative – Annual Conference
Sacramento, CA
September 23, 2024
- b. National Rural Electric Cooperative Association – Region 7/9 Meeting
Sacramento, CA
September 24-26, 2024

- c. Northern California Power Agency Annual Conference
Napa, CA
September 24-27, 2024

Mr. Hauser requested that Board Members advise Ms. Sheetz if they would like to attend.

10. Public Input
None

The Board took a brief recess at 3:41 p.m. and then entered into Closed Session at 3:47 p.m.

11. Closed Session

- a. Closed Session Item Under Government Code Section 54956.9
Conference with Legal Counsel – Claim
Claimant: Heidi Garcia
No Reportable Action

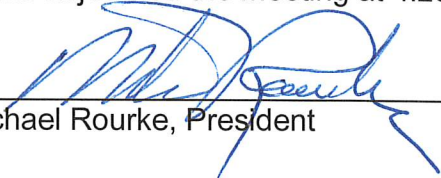
- b. Closed Session Item Under Government Code Section 54957.6
Conference with Labor Negotiator
Agency Negotiator: General Manager
Employee Organization: Unrepresented Employees

Director Cousins made a motion to increase: the Electric Superintendent's salary from \$8,543.30 to \$8,927.75 per pay period; the System Engineer's salary from \$6,354.52 to \$6,640.47 per pay period; the Chief Financial Officer's salary from \$7,080.77 to \$7,788.85 per pay period to make it commensurate with industry standards; to promote the Vegetation Program Manager to Assistant Electric Superintendent and increase the salary from \$6,354.52 to \$7,447.50 per pay period; and to promote the Administrative Services Manager to Assistant General Manager and increase the salary from \$6,354.52 to \$7,447.50 per pay period. Director Cousins seconded the motion. The motion passed with the following vote:

Ayes: Amanda Barragar, Alex Cousins, Nick Goulette, Andrew Johnson, Mike Rourke
Noes: None
Absent: None
Abstain: None

12. Adjournment

There being no further business, President Rourke adjourned the meeting at 4:28 p.m.



Michael Rourke, President

ATTEST: 

Andrew Johnson, Clerk