

**CITY OF TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES
PUBLIC UTILITY ADVISORY BOARD**

MINUTES

MONDAY, APRIL 19, 2021

REGULAR MEETING

Regular meeting of the Public Utility Advisory Board of the City of Truth or Consequences, New Mexico to be held in the City Commission Chambers, 405 W. Third, Truth or Consequences, New Mexico, on Monday, April 19, 2021 at 5:30 pm.

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL:

George Szigeti, Chairman
Jeff Dornbusch, Vice-Chairman
Ron Pacourek, Member
Gil Avelar, Member - ABSENT
Don Armijo, Member

ALSO PRESENT

Traci Alvarez, Acting City Manager
Bo Easley, Electric Department Director
Sonya Williams, Utility Office Manager
Pricilla Fuentes, Electric Department Administrative Assistant
Angela Torres, CMC, City Clerk-Treasurer
Dawn C. Barclay – Deputy City Clerk

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Vice-Chairman Dornbusch made a motion to approve the agenda. Member Armijo seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- a. Regular meeting of March 15, 2021.

Member Armijo made a motion to approve the minutes. Member Pacourek seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

3. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC: (3 Minute rule applies)

Susie Crow – Virtually addressed the board regarding individuals who do not qualify for solar tax credits. Her comments are attached and made part of these minutes.

Ariel Dougherty - Virtually addressed the board regarding solar issuers. Her comments are attached and made part of these minutes.

4. RESPONSE TO COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Vice-Chairman had a response to Ms. Crow's comment. He agreed and stated there should be a better way without constraints to the general public that want to install solar units on their homes.

5. OLD BUSINESS:

- a. Discussion/Action: Catastrophic Utility Forgiveness Program.

Chairman Szigeti – Made note this topic was previously presented to the City Commission.

City Clerk Torres – Clarified it was put back on this meeting's agenda. She advised the board to choose a representative to present any available documentation to the City Commission for review.

It was determined by the board that Vice-Chairman Dornbusch would do the presentation at the City Commission meeting.

- b. Discussion/Action: Solar Installation Sizing Process and Performance Comparison.

Bo Easley, Electric Department Director – Spoke to the board about the "Solar Interconnection Application Review and Analysis" and "Account Master Report". These were documents that were made part of the agenda packet. He explained this is the process that is used to determine the home use solar application usage.

Chairman Szigeti – read allowed the ""Solar Interconnection Application Review and Analysis". Asked for any questions, no questions were asked.

Bo Easley, Electric Department Director – Went on to explain the "Account Master Report". These reports are based solely on solar residential and commercial customers only. He explained that a negative balance indicated at the top right of the report is what the customer generated in extra credit. Mr. Easley confirmed to the board any new customers must wait one year before applying for a solar permit.

The board further discussed several didn't scenario's regarding solar usage at different times of the year.

Member Armijo - Addressed the board making reference to solar producing in the future. He went on to say, without the city growing, we can produce all the extra electricity we want, but there might be no one to purchase it, which may lead the City of raise taxes and may affect the City's General Fund.

He also addressed and agreed with Susie Crow the concern about the xx of the public that cannot qualify for any solar install assistance.

c. Discussion/Action: Ordinance 664, Electricity Cogeneration.

Vice-Chairman Dornbusch – Wanted to point out some possible issues with the Ordinance. The City would be losing a percentage of the daytime market, people that over generate and the City paying back a retail rate, sizing of units. He noted to the board he would like to adopt Sierra Eclectic Coop standards, some of the points were; allows the residents to use up to 120% of their household need then they buy back the excess generation at 2.5 cents per kWh. His suggestion for the City was to sue the same guidelines sell back to the customer at night at 13.1 cents kWh. He noted the 90% rule does not allow for variations. He went on to give several suggested cost calculations.

Chairman Szigeti – Presented the board with a handout called “AN ACT, RELATING TO PROPERTY LAW; AMENDING THE DEFINAITION OF “SOLAR COLLECTOR”. He made reference to paragraph A. He pointed out the City may be in violation of solar installation. The board discussed rewriting the Ordinance 664 to reflect the new information.

Traci Alvarez, Acting City Manager - Recommended to the board they have a Public Workshop before moving forward to the City Commission.

Chairman Szigeti made a motion to table this item until the new City Manager has taken office and City Staff can arrange a Public Workshop to address this item. It will then be brought back to the PUAB for a discussion/action. Member Armijo seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

6. NEW BUSINESS

No new business.

7. COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD

Vice-Chairman Dornbusch brought to the board's attention that a public citizen had circulated a statement that had missing information and was portraying TorC in a negative way. The topic was a comparison between 5 cities in NM that own their own electrical system. She quoted

rates from Raton, NM which was verified only to be partial information; Raton has many tiers of utility rates based upon different circumstances. She failed to include the energy cost adjustment which affects the final rate/charge.

Chairman Szigeti – Acknowledged Traci Alvarez, Acting City Manager on the tremendous job she has been doing by taking on all the added responsibilities the City Managers position endures. She responded by acknowledging the City staff and departments.

8. COMMENTS FROM STAFF

Traci Alvarez, Acting City Manager – Wanted the board know she will give a Project Report update once our new City Manager has taken office, estimated time will be in July.

9. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Public Utility Advisory Board, Chairman Szigeti requested for a motion to adjourn meeting. Vice-Chairman Dornbusch seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned.

PASSED AND APPROVED on this 17th day of May, 2021.



George Szigeti, Chairman
Public Utility Advisory Board