

**TSCC Regular Business Meeting**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, February 1, 2023**

**2:00 p.m.**

Chair Harmony Quiroz, Commissioners Ofsink, Norton, Wubbold, and Donahue were present, as were Executive Director Allegra Willhite, Budget Analyst Tunie Betschart, and TSCC Intern David Chvorun, all via Zoom Meeting.

Absent: None

**REGULAR MEETING**

Chair Quiroz called the meeting to order at 2:05. The meeting began with introductions since David Chvorun had not met the commissioners.

**FY 2023-24 Proposed Budget**

The proposed budget was first discussed at the January meeting. At this meeting, the commissioners discussed approving and adopting the proposed budget as presented in January.

Commissioner Norton suggested discussing at the post-budget season meeting how the staffing model using on-call employees and interns is working, and that the assessment of the model should inform future personnel budget. Chair Quiroz moved to approve and adopt the budget as presented. Commissioner Ofsink seconded the motions, which passed with a unanimous vote.

**Spring 2023 Budget Season Preparation**

Once all district calendars are received, staff will verify all dates, times, and locations. Then a schedule will be prepared and sent to the commissioners. Preliminary calendars sent previously showing commissioners' hearings & meetings have not changed.

Executive Director Willhite reviewed the 2022 Budget Retrospective Notes from the July 2022 meeting. The following were some of the suggestions from the debriefing meeting following the 2022 budget season.

* Increase the pre-arranged time for some hearings. (As a result, PPS and Multnomah County are scheduled for 90-minute hearings, and the time allowed for the library will be 60 minutes.)
* Provide specific suggested response length to questions as guidelines. (During the staff meetings, staff discussed a recommended response length for questions of no more than half a page.
* Group several small districts' budgets when scheduling the discussion meetings. For larger districts, include two for discussion meetings when possible.
* Explain the "Why" analytics in the reviews, giving the reason for the change, not just that something changed.
* Incorporate responses received by staff from the district into the hearing discussion. (Since these are usually obtained when district staff receive the questions, they would need to be pulled forward into the following year's review if applicable)

Executive Director showed a draft of what Lusted Water District's Review from last year would look like with a revised format for the review. She said the review went from ten pages long to eight pages. Some of the changes made were:

* Moving the budget highlights to the first page and expanding the information on the highlights.
* Removed specific General Fund summary section since it was duplicative in a smaller budget
* Focusing on resources and requirements
* Removed Strategic Plan Alignment section
* Shortened Other Funds description

She also explained changes made to all districts' spreadsheets. The section "Requirements by Function" has been deleted because it did not represent the actual expenditures of each district – identifying categories that apply to all districts is difficult and does not always provide accurate information.

Commissioners' comments and suggestions on the prepared budget reviews were as follows:

* They liked moving the highlight section to the beginning of the review. They felt this was the right approach.
* They agreed that less reading would benefit their review process if the necessary details were available.
* When the district receives a substantial percentage of its revenue from utility rates and increases them, it would benefit the commissioners and the public to know when the previous increase occurred or how often it raises the rates.
* The Strategic Plan Section could be removed and addressed in the overall review of the district and only highlighted if it has been an area of noted or ongoing interest.

**Review a Finalize Draft Communication Plan for 2023**

Executive Director Willhite briefly reviewed the Communication Plan progress to see if there were any changes commissioners would like to see. She reported:

* The change of the TSCC Update eNewsletter from weekly to twice a month has received positive feedback. The number of subscribers continues to increase.
* The rough draft of the op-ed document was shared with the commissioners who expressed interest in helping with that communication. Commissioner Ofsink offered to take the lead on the op-ed. The goal is to have the draft completed is the end of February.
* TSCC's intern, David Chvorun, is working on a calendar showing the districts' budget committee meetings, with a focus on meetings with the opportunity to give public testimony. This will make it easier for the commissioners to choose which they would like to attend. The schedule will be completed in the next few weeks.
* A draft of the electronic letter that will be sent to the elected officials before the hearings was emailed to the TSCC commissioners for review. (The commissioners suggested a couple of edits to the letter, which staff will make.)

**TSCC Commissioner Recruitment for 2024**

Executive Director Willhite asked commissioners to think about replacements for the two commissioners who will be replaced at the end of this year when their term ends. Please send any names to TSCC staff, and they will contact them.

**TSCC Training Report**

Executive Director Willhite reported on the 2023 Local Budget Law training. She stated:

* Training report was sent to commissioners
* Fewer participants attended training this year but were more interactive since there was an in-person session.
* Staff used various elements such as videos, quizzes, and guest speakers to modify this year's training.
* Positive and constructive feedback was received following the training sessions.

There being no other regular business to discuss, Regular Business Meeting was adjourned, and the staff left the zoom meeting. The Commissioners reconvened in Executive Session to discuss the review and compensation for Executive Director Willhite.