

**CITY OF TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES  
PUBLIC UTILITY ADVISORY BOARD  
AGENDA  
MONDAY, MAY 17, 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, May 17, 2021 at 5:30 pm.

**CALL TO ORDER**

**ROLL CALL:**

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

**1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

- a. Regular meeting of April 19, 2021

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

**4. OLD BUSINESS:**

- a. Discussion/Action: Set time and date for Ordinance 664, Electricity Cogeneration Workshop. George Szigeti, Chairman

**5. NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Discussion/Update: Water/Wastewater Project Update. Traci Alvarez, Community Development Director
- b. Discussion/Update: Electric Pole Replacement Project. Bo Easley, Electric Department Director
- c. Discussion/Action: Recommendation of Meter Reading Fee for Non-AMI Customers. George Szigeti, Chairman

**6. ADJOURNMENT**

**There will be a limited amount of in-person attendance allowed to the public based on COVID safe practices. The meeting will also be available via teleconference using the information listed below:**

**Public Utility Advisory Board Meeting  
Mon, May 17, 2021 5:30 PM**

**Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.  
<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/320211941>**

**You can also dial in using your phone.  
United States: [+1 \(224\) 501-3412](tel:+12245013412) Access Code: 320-211-941**

**New to GoToMeeting? Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts:  
<https://global.gotomeeting.com/install/320211941>**

**Please note that beginning July 1, 2021 we will no longer stream city meetings via teleconference, and all meetings will be in-person and open to the public.**

**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)**

**Susan 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 issues. Her comments are attached and made part of these minutes.

### **4. RESPONSE TO COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

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

### **5. OLD BUSINESS:**

#### **a. Discussion/Action: Catastrophic Utility Forgiveness Program.**

**Chairman Szigeti** – Mentioned this topic was previously presented to the City Commission.

**City Clerk Torres** – Clarified it was put back on this meeting's agenda so the board can 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 electric usage for the solar application.

**Chairman Szigeti** – Read allowed the "Solar Interconnection Application Review and Analysis".

**Bo Easley, Electric Department Director** – Went on to explain the "Account Master Report". This report is 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 to establish history on electric usage.

The board further discussed several different 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 to raise taxes, and may affect the City's General Fund.

He agreed with Susan Crow's concerns about some of the public who cannot qualify for solar install assistance.

No action was taken on this item.

**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 Electric Coop standards. Some of the points were allowing 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 to the City was to use the same sell back guideline's which were selling 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 Definition of "Solar Collector". He made reference to paragraph A. He pointed out the City may be in violation of solar installation. The board discussed re-writing Ordinance 664 to incorporate this 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** – Took a minute to 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 with a “Thank You”, and gave credit to the City Staff and Department Heads.

#### **8. COMMENTS FROM STAFF.**

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

#### **9. ADJOURNMENT.**

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

**PASSED AND APPROVED on this 17<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2021.**

---

George Szigeti, Chairman  
Public Utility Advisory Board

PUAB Public Comments April 19, 2021  
Ariel Dougherty

Greetings.

In order for the public to understand what goes on at Advisory Boards and garner any input or comments from the public – the intent of what any member of the public is actually stating should be recorded in the minutes. “Her thoughts” then repeating the agenda item is not adequate or sufficient. I submitted my comments from the last meeting, which I request please be added into the approval of the minutes of the March 15, 2021 PUAB meeting. I hope future recorded minutes will have more explicit details.

On the Old Business of the Solar Installation Sizing Process, exactly what are we sizing? I see no summary of the material. Nor is there any subsequent analysis. So please what are we getting at here in the thirty or so pages of information?

On 664, I am in agreement with what Mayor Whitehead said at the last Commission meeting under the discussion of the EV Charging station. She underscored how she is for spending the extra funds now for the level three hookups instead of having to put in updates later on. I feel the same way about my solar installation. Why am I being restricted now for installing solar panels against my past electrical use, when I project an increase in the future with among other things, an electric car. How can this advisory committee and the City Commission justify providing a service aimed for visitors which we citizens will be asked to pay for, when you won't allow us citizens to account for the same service via our own solar use.

In your understanding of citizen solar production and how it is costed you are constantly mixing apples with oranges and missing the point of the larger picture. We all need to get off of fossil fuels as fast as we can. I am trying to do my bit. But the present version of 664 ties my hands, limiting me to what the City's electrical grid is sourced from. It does not fulfill the objective that was outlined in the 2014 Comprehensive Plan for citizen's access to renewables and improved energy efficiency. Instead you force me to have energy redundancy. No improved energy efficiency there

## T or C Public Comment

---

**From:** Suz Crow <suzcrow505@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 15, 2021 8:56 AM  
**To:** T or C Public Comment  
**Subject:** Fwd: For PUAB public comment

**Re: fees for keeping our analog meters. Any demand of extra payment to avoid having privacy, security or health infringed upon within one's own home is extortion,** particularly in light of the fact that microwave radiation, including that emitted by smart meters, is classified by the WHO as a possible human carcinogen.

Even a \$5 monthly fee represents 20% of my monthly electric usage which is a usurious fee. Our community is primarily low income with many of those retired and on fixed incomes. Making opt-out or trip fees discriminates against low-income customers. We should not be penalized for our choices.

The 2005 clean energy act was intended as an opt-in program. The phrasing stated that advanced technologies are "TO BE OFFERED". It is a violation of the intent of the law making them mandatory. Additionally, the NM Regulatory commission set precedent April 11, 2018, Case No. 15-00312-UT by denying PNM any form of opt-out or trip fees as punitive and a hardship to customers.

Please recommend those choosing to keep analog meters be responsible for sending an image of their meter reading monthly by email, and change the policy that requires a utility employee to go out and read the meter, when you have visual confirmation of the reading in a photo. This is an unnecessary waste of our taxpayer dollars. Any fee that is imposed should be waived when the customer provides any form of self reporting, be it photos by email or documentation sent or dropped off at the office.

An opt-out /trip fee discriminates against those with medical conditions and violates the Americans with Disabilities Act.

### New Mexico Statutes Chapter 62 § 62-8-1. Rates

Every rate made, demanded or received by any public utility shall be just and reasonable.



Please take these concerns into consideration when you make your recommendations to the commission.

Thank you,  
Susie Crow

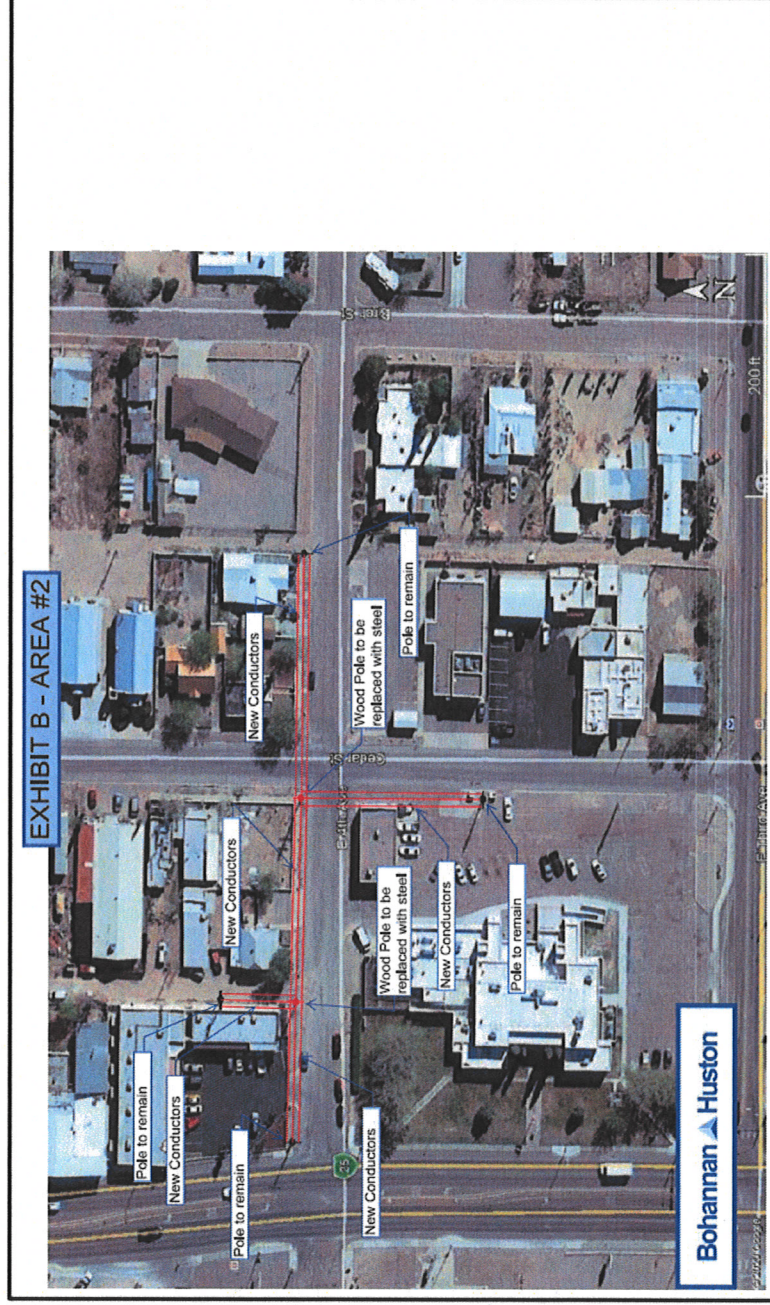
TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES  
12.47KV DISTRIBUTION LINE  
UPGRADE

# Replace pole and conductor.





Replace 2 poles with steel poles.





Install 2 steel poles and replace 19 wood poles and conductors.

