

AUSTIN UTILITIES

MINUTES OF MEETING

7:00 am October 2nd, 2024
Date

Board Work Session

Jay Lutz
President

Members Present:

Jay Lutz, Commissioner
Steve Greenman, Commissioner
Tyler Hulsebus, Commissioner
Kristin Johnson, Commissioner
Jeanne Sheehan, Commissioner

Others Present:

Mark Nibaur, General Manager
Alex Bumgardner, Utility Operations Director
Kory Robinson, Finance & Customer Care Director
Kent Myers, Vision Companies Consultant

President Jay Lutz called the meeting to order at 7:07 am. Introductions were completed.

Staff and Kent Myers shared the working relationship between Vision Companies and Austin Utilities. The focus areas have been leadership training and culture development. Additional initiatives are strategic planning, succession work, staff development, company policy guidance and providing utility industry perspectives. The consulting relationship is going on 13 years and Kent has over 25 years in the industry.

The board provided observations of their culture experiences with the AU team. There is a cohesiveness with the AU team that is positive and needs to continue as we serve our customers and experience future staffing transitions. Additionally, the board agrees we need to hire for a good culture fit, however we have room to improve on adding more diversity within the board and organization. Organizational alignment is strong with the organization as we continue to focus on our company values.

The board and staff briefly discussed governance, the balance between guidance and limiting engagement into organizational details. Mark shared that he believes there is a healthy and productive governance balance with the board and staff, and he appreciates the current working relationship. The board members agreed that they believe the board and staff relationship is positive.

Jeanne was curious how our CAP (customer advisory panel) program was doing and shared this is an example of possible topics that the board may want to receive regular updates. A CAP update will be scheduled for a future board meeting.

The board moved into long range – big picture planning and suggested some key focus areas:

- Evolving – staff needs to be changing with economic, technology and customer needs.
- Stable – the company needs to be financially strong and organizational teams need to be knowledgeable and committed.
- Efficient, Affordable, Reliability – seeking great value for our customer.
- Open to Growth – new services, new ways of doing business, and using our resources differently, but holding to our culture.
- Being a community/governance leader, a champion for city growth and expansion, growing new load.

The board spent some time reviewing AU Next – 6 key strategic positions. Board discussion to emphasize AU Next was:

- Continue the high standard of reliability.
- Need to focus on value between rates and service we deliver – how do we measure, how do we know AU is providing value.
- We need to constantly educate our customers – what and how we serve their needs.
- Review concerns/issues from the viewpoint of the customer, not the employer.

Next the board focused on what outcomes are most important for the next 12 – 36 months:

- Succession planning, GM search and other key positions, hiring to fit our culture. (recruit, retain, develop)
- Continue to manage the relationship SMMPA and the exit of RPU in 2030. How does that change the agency?
- Maintaining affordable rates within a fluctuating resource with uncertain markets and industry changes. (what are the metrics?)
- Leveraging technology – should be part of the roadmap.
- Be a voice at our state and national partners.
- Balancing rates and infrastructure – what are the value propositions and how do we balance customer and company expectations? (rate options, new services)

Moved by Tyler Hulsebus, seconded by Steve Greenman to adjourn. Approved unanimously. Adjourned at 8:32 am.

President

Secretary