

November 4, 2019

To: Irena Netik – Puget Sound Energy (PSE) Director of Energy Supply Planning and Analytics

Cc: Jay Balasbas – UTC Commissioner
Rachel Brombaugh – King County Executive Energy Policy & Partnerships Specialist
Brad Cebulko – UTC Staff
Carla Colamonici – Regulatory Analyst, Public Counsel Division
David Danner – Utilities and Transportation (UTC) Commission Chair
Lisa Gafken – Assistant Attorney General, Public Counsel Unit Chief
Steve Johnson – UTC Staff
Ann Rendahl – UTC Commissioner
Deborah Reynolds – UTC Staff
Kathi Scanlan - UTC Staff

Subject: 2019 IRP Technical Input – Use best public participation practices in engaging the TAG

Note: The TAG acknowledges the WUTC Staff petition for an IRP schedule exemption. This technical input is submitted in response to PSE’s commitment to “continue to ... maintain and respond to public input”. This technical input should be considered an integral part of the collection of 2019 PSE IRP documents. We appreciate PSE’s commitment to also include these technical inputs in the 2021 PSE IRP.

PSE assembled its Technical Advisory Group (TAG) consistent with its charter via a nomination process during the summer of 2018. Members were selected on the basis of their subject matter expertise, and competencies or work experience and in energy resourcing, transmission, utilities, conservation, and economics.

The TAG Charter charges members with the responsibility to provide input on these topics, and it charges the PSE IRP Facilitator to “create meeting structures and lead meetings in ways that provide TAG members a meaningful opportunity to participate in discussions”. PSE scheduled nine TAG meetings between July 2018 and September 2019 – none of which presented opportunity for sincere two-way dialogue between PSE and its TAG members. Instead, each meeting consisted of lengthy presentations from the PSE IRP team, informing the TAG of their internal conclusions and decisions about electric resource costs, scenario development (including forward cost assumptions for carbon, gas, and electricity), conservation resource potential, load forecasting, resource adequacy, review of the effects of the Clean Energy Transformation Act (CETA), and electric and gas portfolio models. The 7th and 9th TAG meetings were canceled by PSE.

While the meetings did allow for interim technical inputs and questions during the presentations, many went unanswered, and the facilitator often simply moved on to the next

question. Each meeting did include a “Public Comment¹” period, which allowed 2 minutes per person to speak until the meeting adjourned. Presenters who did not get to speak in the allotted time were invited to submit their questions and inputs in writing after the meeting. PSE’s [published guidelines for speakers](#) indicate that “comments² will be summarized in meeting notes, not recorded verbatim”, and that “Representatives of the PSE IRP process will listen to comments³ but will not respond”.

WAC 480-100-238 (5) states that “Consultations with commission staff and public participation are essential to the development of an effective [Integrated Resource] plan. The work plan must outline the timing and extent of public participation.” During the TAG #8 meeting, I provided technical input indicating that there are established and proven best practices for stakeholder engagement that have been developed by the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2; see <https://www.iap2.org/mpage/Home>), and practiced by its members worldwide since 1990. IAP2 has approximately 60 members in its Puget Sound Chapter, which includes entities such as Puget Sound Energy, the Port of Seattle, and the Seattle Tacoma International Airport. PSE has two Community Projects Managers who have been trained by IAP2. I promised to furnish the names of those individuals, and further information about IAP2 to the PSE IRP team (which I did, following the meeting), and I asked the team to consult with their Community Projects colleagues.

I point out two major flaws in the TAG process used to date:

- (1) The meeting formats and process do not conform to the minimum standards of “consult” or “involve” according to [IAP2’s definitions](#), which include providing feedback on how public input influenced decisions, and/or documents why recommendations were not incorporated (see IAP2 Spectrum of Engagement below); and
- (2) The meeting formats and process do not conform to the minimum requisites of administrative due process, which include (a) notice of a hearing or convening, (b) a fair hearing or convening, (c) opportunity to be heard, (d) a rendered decision, and (e) the right to appeal decisions. Note that these are widely accepted practices for *administrative*, not *judicial* proceedings, but are based on constitutional due process, and often form the basis for public consideration of infrastructure siting, initiatives requiring a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review, IRP proceedings, and others.

We formally request that PSE post this letter on their 2019 IRP website and provide a written response to these questions:

- Will PSE consult with Community Projects Managers Keri Pravitz and Renee Zimmerman to discuss ways in which they employ IAP2 for effective community engagement?

¹ Note: PSE consistently refers to both public inputs and technical inputs from Technical Advisory Group members as “*comments*”. It would be preferable, in this case, for VP David Mills to refer to Listening Session *inputs*.

² *ibid*

³ *ibid*

- Will PSE consider additional IAP2 training for the IRP team, and report back to the TAG on these topics via a response memo and/or the PSE IRP website?
- Will PSE commit to conducting the 2021 and all future PSE IRPs in accordance with IAP2 “Involve” guidelines?

Respectfully submitted:

Kate Maracas,
 Managing Director,
 Western Grid Group

		INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION				
		INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL		To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
	PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision. We will seek your feedback on drafts and proposals.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work together with you to formulate solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.