

# Portland Utility Board

Thursday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025, 11:00 a.m.

Virtual meeting using Zoom platform

Meeting #218

## Attendees

### PUB Members

Lauren Rosenkranz, co-chair  
Lorraine Wilson  
Alexis Rife  
Darrel Bobb  
Bruk Berhanu  
Jenny O'Connor  
Cormac Burke  
Joanne Johnson, Ex-Officio

### Absent

Dr. Myra Khushbakht\*  
Julia DeGraw\*  
Kyle Chipman, co-chair\*

\*Notice of absence provided before the meeting.

### Public

Carol Cushman, League of Women Voters

### Staff

Amy Archer-Masters, Portland Utility Board Analyst, City Budget Office  
Jonna Lynn Bransford, Portland Utility Board Coordinator, City Budget Office  
Ting Lu, Environmental Services  
Shannon Reynolds, Environmental Services  
Cecelia Huynh, Water Bureau  
Sherri Peterson, Environmental Services  
Eli Rosborough, Environmental Services  
Anthony Locke, Budget Office  
Bonita Oswald, Water Bureau  
David Peters, Water Bureau

### Expert Panel Members & Facilitator

Craig Martell, Panel Leader  
Gavin Gilchrist, Panel Member  
Roger van de Marel, Panel Member  
Libby Bakke, Panel Facilitator, Consor

## Items Discussed, Action Items, Decisions

### Acronyms & Definitions

In these notes PWB stands for Portland Water Bureau, BES for the Bureau of Environmental Services, DCA for Deputy City Administrator, PBOT for Portland Bureau of Transportation, FSBF for Flood Safety Benefit Fee, and PUB for the Portland Utility Board.

### Video Recording

The [video of the meeting](https://www.portland.gov/pub/events/2025/12/18/portland-utility-board-meeting) as well as supporting documents can be found here:  
<https://www.portland.gov/pub/events/2025/12/18/portland-utility-board-meeting> .

In the below notes the **blue timestamp** indicates the approximate place in the video where a particular topic begins as well as providing a link to that portion of the video. For example, **3:45** indicates that this topic begins at approximately 3 minutes and 45 seconds into the video. Closed captioning is available by clicking on the CC symbol in the lower right side of the video tool bar.

## Meeting Summary

Summary

### Call to Order

Lauren Rosenkranz, PUB co-chair, called the meeting to order at approximately 11:04.

### Disclosure of Communications

There were no required disclosures.

### Public Comment

None were offered.

### Review of Minutes

Minutes from November 20<sup>th</sup>, November 21<sup>st</sup>, & December 2<sup>nd</sup> meetings were distributed prior to the meeting and were accepted as submitted. The group was encouraged to submit updates or corrections to PUB staff later as needed.

### Brief Updates [6:39](#)

#### Portland Utility Director

Dr. Ting Lu was chosen as the first director of the unified utility bureau, starting January 2, 2026. PUB members shared their congratulations on this appointment.

#### Bull Run Filtration Expert Panel

PUB co-chair introduced Libby Bakke from Consor Engineering, who is the Panel facilitator for the Bull Run Filtration Expert Panel. She introduced panel leader, Craig Martell, along with panel members Gavin Gilchrist and Roger van de Marel. Panel members shared their extensive experience in large-scale construction projects and expressed their commitment to ensuring a successful completion of the Bull Run Filtration project.

PUB discussed the need for two PUB members to serve as representatives for the PUB expert panel, with PUB staff having surveyed members about their interest and availability, recommending two members for the roles as well as two alternates. The board approved the appointment of Lauren and Bruk as the primary appointees, along with Darrel & Kyle as backups.

#### Vote 19:52

- Cormac moved to appoint Lauren Rosenkranz and Bruk Berhanu as the PUB representatives on the expert panel, with Kyle Chipman and Darrel Bobb as alternates.
- Jenny seconded the motion.
- Discussion: None
- Public comment: None
- Vote:
  - Lauren – Aye
  - Jenny – Aye
  - Alexis – Aye
  - Cormac – Aye
  - Darrel – Aye
  - Bruk – Aye
  - Lorraine – Aye

*Motion passed unanimously.*

#### PBOT Funding Proposal 24:08

Portland Bureau of Transportation has identified significant funding shortfalls, along with multiple years of cuts, and Public Works Service Area was asked to submit a report to explore different funding options. An [Alternative Transportation Funding Progress Report](#) was shared with Transportation & Infrastructure Committee on December 15<sup>th</sup>, with some discussion around the ideas presented.

PWSA leadership wanted PUB to be aware of some of the options, which – if approved – would appear as fees on customers’ utility bills, similar to how the Flood Safety Benefit Fee (FSBF) will be added to utility customers’ bills starting July 1, 2026. It is likely there will be a longer runway prior to implementation of any proposed fees compared with the rollout of the FSBF. No decisions have been made but they will have more updates early in the year; PUB Staff will stay current with updates and will identify next steps and potential for coordination or engagement on these. ([The video of the presentation to Council Committee and follow up discussion be found at this link.](#))

#### PUB Member Questions, Concerns, Comments

1. Member requested clarification: it would be a second line item on utility bills.  
**Response:** Yes, it would be.
2. Co-chairs were informed of the proposal – what level of engagement has happened?  
**Response:** So far, PUB co-chairs were just informed, no engagement yet.
3. PUB member expressed a desire for more information and potential engagement with the appropriate advisory board with PBOT. Concern about adding additional fees to the utility bill without sufficient engagement.

4. Another member shared the previous concerns and wondered if the update from DCA Dhanapal to PUB co-chairs was recorded.  
**Response:** No, it wasn't recorded.
5. Co-chair clarified that it was a very brief information-sharing from DCA Dhanapal during the leadership team meeting. Echoes previous concerns around adding fees to the utility bill.
6. Member shared that there are 4 recommendations on the report, and they are not seeing the correlation between transportation and water/BES as utilities. Wants to have that concern on the record.

PUB has an expectation of authentic engagement from advisory groups and/or the public on this.

### **Bureau Budget Updates 36:50**

Director Ting Lu, Shannon Reynolds, and Cecelia Huynh shared a presentation with PUB about Budget Priorities, asset management, budget guidance, and challenges and uncertainties, then opened up to questions from PUB members.

Shannon Reynolds, the BES Risk Assessment Division Manager, shared background and information about BES's Asset Management and Capital Improvement Plan. She explained BES's diverse asset portfolio, valued at \$27 billion, as well as the investment gap of about \$7 billion. She outlined their approach to managing and investing in these assets, highlighting the need for increased capital investment in certain portfolios. She also described BES's strategic risk management policy and the development of an organizational risk matrix to inform investment decisions and mitigate risks. She concluded with a summary of how risk assessment work is being used to guide strategic investments and budget planning.

Cecelia Huynh from PWB presented the three budget scenarios that the Bureaus need to plan for, which include maintaining current service levels (status quo), developing reduction packages to align with forecasted rates, and demonstrating a 5% reduction in projected rate revenue. Key challenges and uncertainties were discussed, including updated filtration costs, environmental obligations, and the impact of enterprise efficiencies and realignment efforts.

The group reviewed the timeline for the budget process, including deadlines for submitting budget scenarios, receiving feedback, and presenting rate requests to Council.

### ***PUB Member Questions, Concerns, Comments***

1. Member asked how this process is different to how PUB has interacted in the budget process in the past with advocacy around rate increases? How can that engagement happen so that PUB knows what is needed and why and how it is affordable to the community.

**Response:** They plan to come back to PUB, describing the work they've been doing, what they'll continue and what won't be able to be continued. What's the impact of service reductions to the community. PUB staff clarified that because of the multiple scenarios there may be more of an opportunity to advocate for what they consider appropriate rate increases.

2. Follow up on initial question – hoping that PUB is given information that is unfiltered so that PUB can best provide their oversight role.

The conversation ended with a reminder for participants to submit questions or areas for further exploration in preparation for the next meeting and upcoming budget discussions. They planned to spend a significant portion of the January 6<sup>th</sup> meeting with engagement and discussion related to the presentation.

## PUB Budget and Leadership Engagement

PUB lacked time to engage on this topic and made plans to continue this discussion at their January 6<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## Announcements & Next PUB Meeting

## Closing

**Meeting adjourned at 12:33pm**

**The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2026.**

Possible topics

- Carryover from this meeting
- Others?

Likely future topics

- Budget Development

Potential Future Topics: Carryover from prior meetings, One Water director hiring, Natural Resources Service Delivery, Permitting reorganization update, strategic & equity plans updates. STEP, PCEF updates, filtration update.