



Pend Oreille County Public Utility District

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Pend Oreille PUD Board Meeting Report – March 18, 2025

NEWPORT, WA – The Board of Commissioners for Public Utility District No. 1 of Pend Oreille County (PUD) convened for a regularly scheduled meeting on March 18, 2025, at the PUD’s Newport office. Key actions and discussions from the meeting included the following:

Surplus Property Declaration

The Board approved the declaration of surplus property for Fleet Asset #333, a 2007 Ford F-150 Crew Cab Truck. This approval allows the vehicle to be made available for public sale through a sealed bid process. Detailed information, including photos and bidding instructions, will be posted soon at PUD offices and popud.org.

Public Hearing on Electric System Line Extension Fees and Charges, and Electric Rates, Fees, and Terms of Service

The PUD held a public hearing to review proposed updates to electric system line extension fees, metering policies, and electric vehicle (EV) charging rates.

- **Line Extension Fees:** These fees, which are updated annually to reflect current material and labor costs, apply to new customer connections and do not affect existing customer electric usage rates.
- **Advanced Meter Opt-Out Program:** PUD staff discussed a proposed program allowing customers to opt out of advanced meter installations. Customers choosing this option would pay a one-time fee of **\$100**, along with a monthly **\$30** charge to cover manual meter readings conducted four times per year. In months when a manual read is not performed, bills would be based on estimated usage.
- **EV Charging Rates:** The PUD owns and operates two EV charging stations - one in Newport and one in Metaline Falls. The Newport Chamber of Commerce covers the electricity costs for the Newport location, while the Metaline Falls station does not currently have a sponsor.
 - A proposed rate for drivers to use the Metaline Falls facility includes a \$1 per session fee and a \$0.47 per kWh energy charge.

Five members of the public participated in the hearing, asking questions about the proposed updates and rates. The Board is set to take action on these proposals at its April 1, 2025, meeting.

Proposed Changes to Low-Income Assistance Programs

PUD Director of Customer Service Sarah Holderman presented proposed changes to the PUD's low-income assistance programs, specifically the Neighbors-in-Need Grants.

- **Expanded Eligibility:** Currently, customers must be facing disconnection due to non-payment to qualify for Neighbors-in-Need assistance. The proposed changes would remove this requirement, allowing any customer whose household income is at or below 80% of the area median income (AMI) or 200% of the federal poverty level to apply. Eligible customers would receive a \$250 grant toward their electric bill, funded by the PUD.
- **Senior and Veteran Discounts:** The PUD also proposed increasing the low-income senior discount from \$5 to \$10 per month and establishing a new low-income veteran discount for honorably discharged veterans.

Commissioners will review and take action on these proposed changes at the April 1, 2025, meeting.

Next Board Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Pend Oreille PUD Board meeting will be held on April 1, 2025, at the PUD's Newport office, where the full minutes from the March 18 meeting will be reviewed and approved.

For more information, visit popud.org.

About Pend Oreille County Public Utility District

Pend Oreille PUD was established in 1936 and began operations in 1948. The PUD is governed by three locally elected Commissioners. A General Manager and staff operate the utility within policies set by the Board of Commissioners. The PUD has four operating systems: The electric system distributes electricity to the county, the production system produces power from the Box Canyon Hydroelectric Project, the water system consists of nine individual water distribution subdivisions, and the community network system provides wholesale broadband communication services. For more information visit: <http://popud.org>.