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July 28, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO: Power Committee

FROM: Terry Morlan

SUBJECT: Follow-Up on Action Items from the Power Staff Retreat

The Power Planning Division held a retreat on June 29, 2005. The purpose was to review our basic priorities and to discuss ways to enhance the Council's power planning success. You have previously received the agenda for the staff retreat and a summary of our discussion and actions we agreed on.

One area of discussion was how to improve the staff's support of Council members and the decisions they need to make. Some of the changes identified were pretty simple and have already been implemented. Others require a discussion with the Power Committee regarding their preferences and suggestions. We have already tried some changes to the Power Committee packets and meeting presentations. We have put links into the Power Committee agendas to supporting materials, we are providing Power Committee packets at the same time as Council packets, we are fronting each agenda item in the packet with a one page (usually) summary memo, and we are changing the way we use Power Point presentations in the meetings. We would like to offer Power Committee members an opportunity to provide suggestions for further changes in these areas.

But we need more help with another change we think would be beneficial to Power Committee members and staff alike. That is to make Power Committee meetings less of a staff presentation followed by Council response and more of an active discussion of issues. We think this would provide the staff with better guidance on issues and be more interesting for Council members. To achieve this change in atmosphere, it may be necessary to make the meeting less formal and more interactive. We would like to have a discussion of the pros and cons of such a change during the Power Committee meeting on August 9.

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July 5, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO: Power Division Staff

FROM: Terry Morlan

SUBJECT: Summary of Power Division Retreat, June 29, 2005

We began our retreat by discussing what we thought were the keys to the Council's success in getting its power plans implemented and how we could protect and enhance that success. Many aspects were discussed but it came down to two major themes; the quality and objectivity of the Council's analysis, and the weight of the Council's legal mandate. The latter doesn't relate to direct authority, but to the authority of the Governors and the support of utility regulators, which in turn is partly a result of the first theme. Action items from this discussion included:

- Reinstating a policy level advisory committee for next power planning process or sooner if needed;
- Reinstating a PUC staff advisory committee;
- State level advisory groups (Similar to Idaho but may take different form in each state);
- A strategy is needed to work with customer-owned utilities

The second area of discussion, although I can't claim the discussion was entirely linear, was workloads and priorities. Much of the discussion focused on activities that require substantial amounts of time, but don't really appear on our work plan. These included responding to information requests, doing small analytical tasks at the request of others, participating in the technical advisory groups for utility integrated resource plans, requests from individual Council members, and making the Council's models available to others in the region. These were recognized as being important contributors to the acceptance and implementation of the Council's plan. Action items identified were:

- Improve our participation in utility IRPs now that the power plan is done; discuss with Power Committee what would be the most effective way to allocate staff efforts;
- Consider sponsoring workshops on specific topics to reach public utilities, e.g. conservation, risk analysis, etc.;

- Improve the documentation of our models (a good use of contracting money);
- Develop a strategy for making our models widely available that doesn't turn staff into free consultants and create too large a workload.

A large amount of time was devoted to improving the central staff's support of Council members and their staff, and vice versa. Topics discussed included developing agendas for Power Committee and Council meetings, packet materials and format, and the Power Committee meeting format. Action items include:

- Create an email group called something like Power Planning Division Plus that includes staff power staff and use it for broad dissemination of materials;
- Hold regular power planning staff meetings to develop to develop agenda, discussion presentation strategies, exchange information regarding staff activities and address other power staff issues (The time proposed was Monday mornings at 8:30 AM except for the Monday of Council meeting week);
- Solicit ideas from Power Committee about items they would like to see on the agenda, perhaps at end of each Power Committee meeting;
- Use the workplan, discussion with the Power Committee and other information to develop agendas for several meetings ahead;
- Reduce the formality of Power Committee meetings (State staff will discuss this issue with their Power Committee members to see if members are willing to shift back to a less formal atmosphere of exchange and discussion, instead of presentation and reaction);
- Reduce the use and density of PowerPoint presentations, possibly use notes pages to expand on contents of slides instead of putting a lot of words on the slides, use PowerPoint if it contributes significantly to understanding, but not as a crutch to presentation;
- In Council packets, lead each issue with a short, hopefully one page, memo on the issue to be discussed, the nature of the issue (i.e. a decision, informational, requesting guidance), why it is important, a list of information that is available and links to that information, a more detailed paper if needed, and a list of issues that will be discussed in the Power Committee or Council meeting presentation;
- State staffs will ask their power committee members about preferences and ideas about agendas and packet material;
- It may be time for a refresher course on presentations and the Council has begun looking into this training.

Another general topic of discussion was how to cope with workloads. We discussed how we might better utilize available resources including Heather, state staff, and other divisions of the central staff. Staff is used to working pretty independently and in a collegial non-structured organization. There was a desire to continue that type of operation, but also recognition that there was potential value in improved communications. Some ideas and actions included:

- Using the Division calendar, which no one but Heather realized existed, to post major meetings that other might be interested in and so that Heather knows where we are when missing in action;
- Keeping Heather better informed of our whereabouts so she can respond to requests;

- Heather will look into making the Division calendar available through the Council intranet;
- Most of the issues in this area will be addressed through the regular staff meetings.
- We can make better use of the Council's web site to improve access to our models and information;
- We should consider additional formal and informal training on the use of available tools and software that could improve our efficiency and the access of others to our information;
- We discussed how to replace my position without coming to any firm conclusion. There was some agreement that we probably need someone with a strong economics background and enough experience to be able to assume responsibilities quickly, but not a very senior person;
- We agreed that someone would need to act as a deputy to me (unofficially probably) to cover Division Directors meetings and provide continuity of information and contacts when I am gone on travel or vacations.