

Austin Energy Utility Oversight Committee Meeting

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>> Pool: I'm going to go ahead and call us to order. I'm councilmember Leslie pool from district 7 and chair of the Austin energy oversight committee. Vice chair Kathie tovo. I'm calling our February 10, 2021 meeting to order at 1:34 P.M. We are doing this virtually. I know that both councilmember kitchen and councilmember alter are not able to join us today. I thank all the rest of you here now for helping us make a quorum. We will move through our agenda at a pretty good pace and I want to start off with approval of the minutes, approve the minutes of the October 21, 2020 meeting of our Austin energy oversight committee. Oh, there's councilmember alter. Thank you, Alison, I thought maybe you were not coming. Do I have a motion to

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approve the minutes from October? And councilmember tovo moves and councilmember Renteria is a second. Thank you all so much. General manager sergeant, are you with us? >> Good afternoon. Vice chair, if you could pull up -- >> Pool: The floor is yours. >> -- The presentation I'll begin. Can you hear me? Yes? All right. Well, good afternoon, everyone and welcome to our first meeting of 2021. Committee chair, vice chair I'm Jackie sergeant general manager. Today in addition to my report this afternoon, deputy general manager and chief customer officer Kerry Overton will provide you an update on our customer

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utility bill assistance. Following Kerry will be deputy general manager chief financial and risk officer mark lumbraski and our new deputy general manager Sidney Jackson will present the first quarter operations briefing along with an update on the decker creek power station workforce planning efforts. I will more formally introduce Sidney at the end of my presentation today. If you would please go to the next slide. First I would like to brief the committee on Austin energy's upcoming recommendations for council action or rcas. I will be providing you information on six items that will be coming forward. The first is an amendment to the existing professional engineering services contract for the Rainey street substation for \$1.4 million. As you may recall, the

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Rainey street substation is an important addition to our downtown network to better serve the central business development development and potential redevelopment along waller creek. This amendment is necessary to allow the contractor to complete the design for these new facilities. If next item is a construction contract for \$8.1 million. The new bluff springs substation is needed to serve growth in southeast Austin. Existing facilities that we have are not able to serve this development in the area without overloading our existing equipment. So this new substation will strengthen our delivery system in this part of our service territory. Additionally there's an item for three contracts for distribution pad-mount transformers totaling up to \$56.9 million divided among

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those contractors. The contracts replace an existing contract to provide three phase pad-mount transformers on an as-needed basis. We will only be purchasing as needed. These are used to serve apartment buildings, schools, hospitals, industrial sites and are designed to be weather resistant. The next item is an engineering services rotation list with two firms for the electric system engineering and technical services rotation list in an amount not to exceed approximately \$26 million. This will replace the current rotation list that is nearing the end of its available council authorization. Austin energy augments' engineering department with contractors that are qualified to provide these services on an as-needed basis as demand requires. Next slide, please. I would also like to bring

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to your attention an item to extend the terms of Austin energy's electric service franchise agreements. Austin energy service territory extends into several neighboring cities. Back in 2011, franchise agreements were executed for the use of rights-of-way within neighboring communities. The fee paid is

equal to 3% of gross electric revenues received by Austin energy from customers within those municipalities. These agreements expire next month and the coming item for council consideration will authorize an additional ten years. The final item coming to council I would like to mention is an ordinance amending the budget it is for Austin water and Austin energy to appropriate up to \$10 million of additional funds for utilities plus one payment assistance programs. These programs have provided direct and targeted relief to customers experiencing hardship in paying utility

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bills. Austin energy and Austin water will each contribute an additional \$5 million for the plus one program for fiscal year 21 to provide ongoing support during this unprecedented time of covid-19. Deputy general manager and chief customer officer Jerry Overton will provide greater detail for on customer assistance efforts within his presentation today. Next slide, please. We are pleased to announce that Austin energy has implemented a new city of Austin utilities online customer care portal. The updated site went live on January 24th. Customers can log in using their existing user name and password. They don't have to change anything. Austin energy has long sought to get the most up to date and useful information to customers in an easy to understand manner. This new portal will help

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customers conserve energy and manage their bills. The site has an updated interface, provides a better user experience, and improves self-service options. It has a new dashboard that makes it easy for customers to see their account status. And payments that are made online will now post in realtime. Customers can also view customer usage for all of the utility services they receive, not just electric service. We're very excited about this new portal which provide easier and faster access for customers to review and manage their accounts. Next slide, please. I want to share with you that Austin energy has received a new grant award. We received notice from the U.S. Department of energy that Austin energy was one of seven state and local governments selected to receive a \$1 million building technologies proving ground grant. The purpose of the grant so to improve energy efficiency, demand response

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and building to grid capabilities. Austin energy will use mesh networks of thermostats, water heater controls and other controllable devices to provide energy efficiency and demand response services to multi-family residents in which nearly half are expected to be participants with limited income. We're really excited about this. Austin energy will bring this grant award for approval in March. I want to congratulate the Austin energy staff for putting together this winning proposal and thank the team for their efforts to bring this forward. Next slide. Finally, I would like to introduce the newest member of the

Austin energy executive team. Please join me in welcoming Sidney Jackson as our new deputy general manager and chief operating officer. Sidney's executive leadership in the electric industry is extensive. Most recently he served

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in a roll question Pentagon for chief operating officer for Rochester which is Minnesota's largest municipal utility and he led both electric and water utility operations. I also want to provide a huge thank you to Elton Richards for handling the chief operating responsibilities on an interim basis. Great job, Elton. Thank you so much. With that I will pause and answer any questions that you may have. >> Pool: Does anybody have any questions for our general manager on her report? And I'm going to put this back on grid so I can see everybody. I see councilmember Renteria has his hand up. Yes, councilmember. >> Renteria: Yes, Jackie, two things. One, I just want to say that the CEO of capital metro had a real nice words and wanted to thank you for all the partnership that you have provided to them. We really like the staff and

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how they've been working with each other. So I want to just let you know that he is really happy with the nagger -- the Austin energy service. The other thing is the Rainey street substation, I know there is going to be funding for public art. I was wondering have you all gotten that far into determining what -- what you all are going to put there, what kind of art that's going to -- >> We have -- that has not been finalized, councilmember Renteria. But we can bring information back to you in a report when we get that far along with the substation. So thank you for the kind words with regard to cap metro and for the interest in the art that we'll have in that space. >> Renteria: Yeah, I would really like to see what's going to be put in there because we have this beautiful oak tree on that

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[inaudible] There and I think that we could really put some really nice beautiful to the entranceway of the Mexican cultural center. It would be really great. >> Thank you. >> Pool: Thank you, councilmember. I thought I say the mayor pro tem's hand up and then the mayor after the mayor pro tem. >> Harper-madison: Thank you, councilmember. Appreciate it. Two things. Thank you for the presentation, Jackie, and welcome to Austin, Mr. Jackson. We hope very much that you enjoy your experience working with us and vice versa. Jackie, you said something, did you say innovative -- innovation technology grant. I might have misheard. Slide before last. >> Yes. With the department of energy and it is a grant for building technologies proving grounds.

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So it's -- has to do specifically with buildings and being able to prove out technologies and learning opportunities so we can take those things forward and advance those technologies to help with energy efficiency and demand response and such. And I think the exciting thing about that is that we are going to be able to include participants with limited income in multi-family residences. So very exciting. >> Harper-Madison: So you picked my brain then because I was going to say what are the opportunities for inclusion as far as involvement is concerned in this type of incubator. If there are additional opportunities, I would certainly love for the district 1 office to be able to make some recommendations for organizations that are building out that pipeline, so to speak. I think our utilities, our public utilities is a really keen opportunity to involve people in that civic space

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and it not be at all about politics. Thank you very much. I appreciate it. >> Thank you. >> Pool: That's great, and along those lines, I'm thinking with the new administration in Washington we may have some new openings and opportunities heading our way with the department of energy and elsewhere and be sure to keep us apprised of changes and good stuff happening as the year progresses. Thanks. >> Certainly. >> Pool: That's great. Thanks. Mayor, you were also wanting to ask a question. >> Mayor Adler: Just as did the mayor pro tem, I just wanted to welcome Mr. Jackson home. >> Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Thank you for the welcome. Looking forward to working with you and being a resource for the council going forward. Thank you. >> Pool: We're really glad to have you here. Are there any other

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questions on the general manager's report? Great. We'll pass it back along to -- for your report, Mr. Jackson. >> I think was Kerry going to go next with the bill assistance? >> That's the order on the agenda, correct. >> Pool: Let's hear from you, Mr. Overton. That's great. I thought we were bringing up Mr. Jackson, but happy to have your report next. >> Okay. I'm just getting the mic set up. Thank you very much, councilmembers. I'm pleased to bring this update, the city of Austin utilities covid-19 relief funding. And the success that we've had so far. Next slide, please. Again, I'm going to cover some of the events that have

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occurred since your approval of the funding back in April of 2020. Talk about our extensive communications outreach in marketing plans, share some of the trends that are associated with that in terms of the payment arrangements, the accounts receivables and also debt associated with some of the customers' accounts and how we're going to continue to provide assistance for our customers. Next slide. So just as a backdrop to this, right after the approval of the initial \$10 million from both Austin energy and Austin water, the utilities immediately stopped the disconnections and waived the late fees. We suspended those activities. We launched the Austin bill help website which allows our customers to actually go

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in to register and make sure they are having a request for that relief money that they received during that time period. During that time period of may through December, we launched an extensive communication campaign. I'll talk more about that in the outreach associated with engaging our customers to make sure that they were notified about these fundings, particularly to help during this pandemic period. We also engaged our community partners that were part of helping us distribute the plus one dollars associated with that \$10 million influx. And those community partners are well over 59 of those throughout the communities that help us put those wrap-around services in the case management associated with our customers and they also started instituting the new, more flexible provisions that we put in place associated with the pandemic.

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Currently that program -- that program was to expire at the end of September 2020. Coming into the end of the year, the coa team, the executives, we all met and we understood the intentions of council, so we extended that period through 2020 into 2021, and we also then added the additional \$10 million that Jackie, the general manager, just mentioned in her report. Those funds are still available and will be available throughout the 2021 year and it's also part of the presentation which I will talk about in terms of next steps. Next slide, please. Here's a picture of how much success that we've had once we introduced the \$10 million for the utility bill relief funding.

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You can see right around March of 2020, the number of participants in the program increased and the monthly amount of dollars that were distributed in the community, it averaged about \$1.3 million a month. So customers are contacting us and they are taking advantage of these funds. As we stated earlier, we still have funds available from that 2020 we're. We're going to make those available even now and we have the additional \$10 million. Action will be coming forward to you I believe on February

the 18th for council to take action on that \$10 million. One of the highlights here is that you will see a little bit of a dip during the November -- maybe october-november period. That was explained by initially our communications was, as I stated, the program was going to stop at the end of September. So when we extended it, we immediately began to go back out and market and

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communicate that there were additional dollars available, asbestos you can see it's starting to rise back up again with the number of participants accessing those funds. Thank you, next slide. Again, we had an extensive communications program that reached all different various mediums of media including social media and mass marketing and also continued through our Austin bill help. We also did direct marketing as well to many of our household, mail calls, emails in our outreach. The communication included materials that were written in English, Spanish, Chinese, and Vietnamese. So we made sure that we covered a wide variety of the dialects and different customer base that are here in Austin. We also in that campaign in our outreach, we partnered

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with the central Texas food bank. And we tried to take advantage where were there opportunities in communities where there were other social sorry advice programs and individuals providing assistance to customers, we were also partnering with them to continue to make customers aware of the utility bill funding. Those efforts with our partners included the faith based organizations, governmental entities and all of the nonprofits that help us distribute the funding throughout the year. Next slide, please. So some of the trends that we began to see, although we were helping many of our customers, what we began to notice is that the ar, the accounts receivables greater than 30 days, it to this date it has doubled from where it was at that time period. And we expected that given

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the fact that we had suspended the disconnections and the normal collections process. As I stated, we still have funding available and we're going to make that available to our customers. We also during this time period, if you can look at the blue bars during this time period, those mark a decrease in the number of payment arrangements that were being set up by customers. As part of our going forward plan, we're going to not only continue to offer payment arrangement plans for customers who contact us, we've extended those plans to up to 36 months. So from the time that customers contact us in this continued pandemic planning period, we're going to give them up to two and three years to start paying that debt back. So the highlight here is the accounts receivables have doubled while the payment arrangements have been reduced to half. Next slide.

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This gives you another view of that. You can see if you compare where we are in the current date around December of this year to March early in 2020, about 90% of customers in the normal process would pay on time and we would manage through our collections process that additional 10%. As you can see, a very, very small amount would go over 90 days to 120 days building up on utility debt. If you compare that to 2020, December 2020 where we are now, that data shows about 66% of our customers paying on time. And we're managing right around 35 to 40% of those customers throughout this process. Next slide. The summary of that is our campaign is going to continue to try to reach our customers to make sure that

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they are contacting us to go on a payment plan and also make sure that they are eligible for the special dollars that are associated with the pandemic that they receive those. As you can see here, we like to see that they are -- management around the gray band about \$22 million in a cycle. You can see the rise. We believe that that's going to come back down as everything in the community sort of subsides a little bit and things begin to process turning back to some level of normalcy. And the programs that we're going to put in place, we believe that's going to bring that ar back down as well. Next slide. So the plan is for us to continue to encourage our customers to contact us, setting up the payment arrangement is ultimately the most important aspect of our plan going forward for them to contact us during our outreach.

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We have something that can work for every one of our customers and we're very confident we can do it and we also have time on our side to make sure that we're not just simply cutting those opportunities off in a very quick manner, but we will resume our normal collections process. And while that process is moving forward, we will waive late fees associated with -- we'll have the late fee waivers associated with customers that contact us to set up a payment plan, but also to go on to a payment arrangement plan. As I stated earlier, we'll keep those going out to 36 months. We also extended payment options where customers can, in addition to the various mediums that we offer, they can contact us through Walmart, pay pal, venmo, and we're also going to extend and keep the Austin bill help.com website up and use

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our local partners as we mentioned. The last slide is a recap of how we're going to move forward. We've already started customer notification. We have a news release going out announcing our gradual return to the standard operations, which also will include encouraging customers to contact us to apply and take advantage of the additional money that we have out there for the bill relief efforts. We are also going to specifically in the spring, the door hangers and other campaigns to specifically look at those customers who are more at risk and have higher balances, in particular those that are not contacted yet. We are also going to continue that process through April. We're going to continue to market through this time period, and we believe by

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the late spring and summer as we return to the normal operations we will also keep those dollars associated through -- available throughout entire 2021 year. We feel confident we have the policies and procedures in place to do both things. Number 1, to protect the financial health of the utility, and number 2, to make sure that customers who need assistance will receive that throughout this process. That concludes my presentation and I am available for any questions you might have. >> Pool: Great. Thank you and could you take down so I can see the grid and let me see in there's any hands for questions. Does anybody have questions for Mr. Overton? Councilmember Tovo. >> Tovo: Thanks very much for the presentation. I think it was really valuable and has a lot of elements I want to think about a little bit.

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I might have further questions after today's meeting. First of all, I wanted to thank Austin energy for the work it's done. When I brought that resolution forward in April to ask you to look at solutions and additional resources, it was clear at that time that the financial recommendations and indications of the pandemic -- ramifications of the pandemic will be going dire and going to happen at a time where many family members were spending more time in their houses and relying on their own utilities. So thank you for -- thanks for the responsiveness early on, but thanks for the proactive way in which you are adding to that -- the decision to proactively add something into that -- to that end I think is really important and I appreciate it. I am a little concerned about the plans, the plans to start regular disconnections by May, and I wonder, I've forgotten when

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our next Austin energy meeting is scheduled. I think we're folding these into our regular city council meetings which is a great plan. But I would be interested in knowing between now and when you, you know, a month or so before you begin the regular service disconnection, I would be interested to know

how many of those customers with whom you haven't this contact are remaining. So how many people are going to fall into that category of having -- having outstanding balances who have not been in touch with us to arrange for payment plans. You know, knowing we have funds set aside to provide that assistance. I want to see if the time you've allocated, which today exemption sufficient, but it's just hard -- I think one way to measure that would be check in in a month or two to see what that number looks like for customers who have not made arrangements for payment plans. Does that seem reasonable? >> It does.

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[Multiple voices] >> Pool: March 31 we're scheduled to meet again. I'm sorry, Mr. Overton, go ahead. >> No, I apologize, councilmember pool. I was just reacting to councilmember Tovo's comments. I wanted to first thank the councilmember for recognizing the hard work of the employees on the team that has put this program together. And also I want to highlight that Austin water, part of the \$10 million in the initial amount and also the amount that's coming before you on February the 18th, Austin water is 5 million -- has a portion of that and the utility Austin energy has the additional 5 million to make the ten. And also to reiterate between our campaign and communications that are going out to our customers and the citizens, we will have enough time to come back to the council members to give you an idea of how many customers, you know, using our system the best

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way we can determine, how many customers are not responding to either setting up a payment arrangement or take advantage of these dollars available. We could give you some idea of how that fits into the plan. >> Tovo: That sounds great. Thank you very much, Mr. Overton. Again, thanks to you and your staff and also the staff other at water utility. -- Over at water utility. >> Pool: Councilmember Alter and then councilmember Casar. >> Alter: Thank I. I really appreciate this program. I was wondering how we are helping businesses in the same way. Is there an element of this program that allows us to assist businesses? I have a group of businesses that I work with on a regular basis and one they think they've expressed some challenges with the utility bills that they are having to pay at this point. Not because we're doing anything, but just as one more thing that's creating

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challenges for meeting their needs right now. >> Very specifically, the funds that we're speaking of, the \$10 million that is correct is available for our residential customers. What we have been doing for our commercial accounts, we've been extending their payment deadlines in terms of when their due dates are. We've been working with them. I don't know if referring to it as a case management would be the

best wording of it, but we are being flexible to have them work with our commercial account representatives that are in those departments to make sure if they have a plan that they can work, we're doing it on an isolated basis. We also know that we've directed them to our economic development department where dollars were available throughout the year through those existing programs. And we also have some programs that are in -- associated with the housing and planning department.

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So we've been a base of referral and consulting on those dollars, but in terms of the utilities, we've also in a -- unlike a time before, we've been extending the bill due dates and the payment time periods for them to get to bring their account current. >> Alter: Do you have a sense of the magnitude of what's not being -- not been paid for yet by the businesses? >> I don't have the specific numbers, but I would say of the numbers that you saw in the accounts receivables that I showed you today, the majority of that are residential customers. The commercial accounts are a smaller portion of that. I can get that information more specifically. But what we have been able to find is those businesses that have contacted us. Giving them the legitimate time to work out a plan that has been recognized by those individual entities and they've been very responsive

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to that. >> Alter: How is that being communicated to them as an option? >> We've had -- had one note of information that had gone out, but they are mostly getting contact information once they contact us. They are receiving that information at the time of the contact. >> Alter: Okay. I want to do some thinking about this. This might be a direction where we could add some additional relief and as we think about additional covid relief that's coming in, we may also want to think about that. But if you could send that@on sort of the amount and the number of commercial clients that are affected at this point, that would be helpful. >> Absolutely we will. And one of the things that was recognized by the business community, though the funding that we spoke of earlier did not directly help them on their specific account, they were at least pleased that it was helping their employees who are

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residents here and so when they look at the total picture of operation, they saw at least there was some relief and they appreciated that. >> Alter: Thank you. >> Okay. >> Pool: Councilmember alter, a quick question for you before we go on to councilmember Casar. Does your list of businesses, does that include any restaurants? >> Alter: Yes. >> Pool: Okay, good. I want to make sure they are in the list of entities being given consideration. >> Alter: Businesses I just have a group I'm talking with. It's not they

are eligible for this, I have a list of ten businesses we are regularly checking in with. >> Pool: Gotcha. I think maybe we could look and see how our -- especially the smaller restaurants are doing in our community and make sure we're able to make it through. That's been a -- it's been hard for us to find ways to help them and they may be on

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your list of entities to inquire with and reach out to, but if not, maybe we could talk about a program that would include them. >> Okay. >> Pool: Thank you for that. Councilmember Casar. >> Casar: Mr. Overton, thanks for the presentation. I want to add my thanks for your staff's hard work and councilmember tovo, I appreciate you initiating the item for some of this additional relief. One thing that I didn't come away totally clear on is when you said 36 months for residential customers. Do you mean 36 months to pay off the back -- the back owed utility payments or if somebody has more than three or four months is there more than time to pay it off. Walk me through how long payment arrangements can go for. >> Very good question, councilmember Casar. The way the process works is our customers receive a

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current bill that's associated with their -- well, their current usage. And then they have -- and so far some of the customers have developed some amount in arrearage based on any time period they haven't paid it on time. First of all, the way to think about it is if they receive this utility pandemic utility relief funding, it actually is applied to lower that debt that they actually will owe over a period of time. And then 12, 24 or 36 months period, whatever they select, they will pay their current amount and they would pay some portion of that debt that's owed over that time period. And as you can recall, if they find themselves in another hardship during that arrangement, and many of the efforts led by councilmember tovo and many of you on the council at this time, we also made some other provisions that they can

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also have a restart program. So it's not set in stone at one opportunity. We will work with those customers and then they get an additional opportunity to stay successful on that payment arrangement plan. And one last item, councilmember Casar, in addition to those dollars that they are receiving from the utility, both Austin water and Austin energy, we also are doing the wrap-around services for them to access funding throughout the community from our other partners in other dollars beyond the city. >> Casar: It's all really helpful and maybe y'all have it worked out it just works out fine for the vast majority of the team. I guess the question for me is if someone, and help me see, like, if I'm missing something,

but if somebody missed five months of payments and since then has been keeping up, but has five months worth of

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arrears, that could be pretty hard to pay in three months on top of your monthly payment due each month. My guess is that if we had enough utility bill assistance that maybe you can clear most of that five months so that it's not as hard, but I guess what I'm just trying to understand is why some -- why somebody has to pay it off in three months -- or if it's even feasible for somebody to pay off in three months if they have five or six months of arrears. I trust you all will do your best to make sure that we aren't putting people in a situation where they can't pay. I just would be really open to providing whatever flexibility we need to make sure that in this really extraordinary moment people get on payment plans that they can complete. But -- but I don't know if you have anything to add to that. I just flag in my mind that 36 months may be tight for somebody with five or six months of arrears. >> Yeah, if they are five or

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six months in arrears, they can apply for the relief funding multiple months. So they are not limited for a one-time amount. So you absolutely are correct in the sense that a lot of the utility assistance for that particular customer may pay off a great portion if not all of that 100% of that amount. And that's why it's important for them to contact us. They are not limited to one month, and so we think that the way you described it can actually be into play that provides the assistance. And also I wanted to maybe clarify. There is no correlation that if they are five months behind, they only get an equal amount of numbers to pay it off going forward. That -- that total dollar amount will be meet 9 against any relief they receive and they can still have up to 36 months to pay out the difference of that, the delta.

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>> Casar: Got it. Thank you and I echo the sentiment if we need to move things or change things to make sure we have a smooth transition and don't have folks not be able to make it, you let us know and we should find out whatever it is we need to do. >> Yes. >> Pool: Thanks, councilmember Casar. I think I saw the mayor pro tem's hand up. Is that right? >> Harper-madison: You did. Thank you, chair, but councilmember Renteria had his hand up before I did. >> Pool: Oh, okay. Councilmember Renteria. >> Renteria: You said also the water utilities partner with you. Do you know if that's also includes wastewater? >> What I would say, councilmember Renteria, is when it's applied, it's all of those services. It includes wastewater, water and utilities the way

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they are applied to the account, yes. >> Renteria: That's great. Wastewater is always the highest amount because you get charged mom twice for it. -- Charged almost twice for it. >> Casar: I apologize. Clearly we were working late yesterday. Thought it was three months to pay off, not six months. Sorry for putting you through that, Mr. Overton. That was a casualty of the long council meeting yesterday. >> Pool: I think we have just lost the mayor pro tem. >> Harper-madison: Can you see -- >> Pool: We see you. >> Harper-madison: My computer was about to die. Another casualty of a long workday. I think most of my questions were answered. I want to make certain I heard you correctly. Did I hear you say there was some sure police in the --

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sure place in the \$1.3 million fund? >> Yes, ma'am. Going into the end of the fiscal year, the initial \$10 million that we had, we didn't spend all of it during in a time period where the program would have initially expired. We did a couple things. We kept those dollars available and carried them over into the fiscal year 2021. We also through the cbc charge, we bring in additional \$2.3 million and we're using that as well. So right now at this time the carryover plus the additional dollars that came in with the CDC at the start of the new fiscal year, plus the additional \$10 million that you will be taking action on on February the 18th, we have approximately \$12 million

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available at this time. >> Harper-madison: And I mean I have some assumptions and they may or may not be right. Can you tell me what the plan is for that 12.3 million? >> Yeah. It's actually pretty simple. For customers reaching out to us, if they've been impacted by the covid-19 period, whether it's loss of job, they had a reduction in their pay hours, they've been -- acquired medical expenses associated with it, the hardships. Anything that's associated with a hardship that impacted, you know, them doing this time period, they will be eligible to receive those dollars. >> Harper-madison: I think I need to look up what the parameters are for hardships. Then the other question I have there, I really appreciate seeing there's

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some payment alternative options. But I -- so Walmart, pay pal. Venmo, is I have safe to include pay cash or are these the options? >> Those are the new ones that expands the way we offer options. We have walk-in centers, other kind of electronic means in which customers can repay us. There are a host of options that allow customers to pay us back. >> Harper-madison: I like these options. I know a couple of these options have a fee associated with them. In which case I really liked the idea of, like, a square cash, you could pay through Facebook, on your mobile device, but then there's no subsequent fee. So I just wonder, I think these are great alternatives and the additional option helpful for a lot of customers, so I just wonder

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is there some consideration around fee, around the fees that folks even occur. >> It is. We have several options where they will not incur a fee on those and we include those in instructions that go out and part of our marketing campaign. >> Harper-madison: The last thing I was going to ask, I think one of my colleagues already mentioned that the hard may cutoff. I would like to be kept in the loop things moving forward if that could be more flexible or if there's something we could be doing on our end to make certain the voices of consumers who could be most impacted by that special service -- that service interruption are being heard. >> Yeah, I think we're all in it together. I think the biggest thing to

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emphasize is we're not necessarily focusing on the disconnects for the sake of disconnecting. This effort is to have the customers understand their options and their resources and the relief funding that we have available for them. So I think the biggest help is for all of us moving forward is as we start the communications in this campaign that is already started in January and February, throughout this time period as you reach out to your constituents, if you can just reiterate to them make sure that they are in contact with the utility to not ignore those contacts. And I believe that we'll be very successful. >> Harper-madison: And you know the last thing I'll ask you is if we can connect with you all to get collateral we can share in our news and social media. >> Absolutely. >> Harper-madison: Thank you. >> Pool: Great. Mayor, did I see your hand up with a question?

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Okay, great. Anybody else? Mr. Overton, thank you so much. Appreciate the report. General manager, we have the first quarter financial briefing next. Do we have our staff for that? Is it Mr. Dombroski? >> That's correct. >> Pool: Great. Where is that man? There he comes. >> Good afternoon. I'm first time in 2021 we've met. So happy new year. I'm mark Dombroski. Plentying Austin energy's unaudit results for the first part of 2021 and that ended on December 31, 2020. If we can go to the next page, please.

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And the fy 2020 and 2021 numbers I'm presenting today are preliminary and unaudited. And the link I've included to this page will take you to city of Austin's comprehensive financial report once it's published, usually in March. Next page. Our quarterly report follows a standard agenda in presenting our financial information. For the utility oversight committee, I normally cover the executive summary for you and highlight any specific areas that are of interest or concern. Within the report. But I'm happy to cover any area of the report if a committee member requests. Otherwise the data graphs are there for you and your staff to review and I'm happy to respond to any questions from you or your staff. I would like to briefly cover the market industry

[2:24:07 PM]

analysis section which predicts the energy usage in response to the covid pandemic. We've been able to track and measure the change in both demand and consumption since the stay-at-home order was put in place almost 11 months ago. I'll have more on that for you later. The next page. I'm going to cover the executive summary, which is detailed in the rest of the presentation. The next page, please. So as before, we are substantially compliant with all of our financial policies. Contingency and capital reserve balances are below mince, but the total cash remains above the minimum of \$457 million. So we're -- have adequate cash reserves on hand. We continue to meet our financial metrics supporting

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our aa credit rating. We are starting to see pressure on leading indicators such as operating margin and debt service coverage. This is mostly result of being in year 5 of five-year base rates. Our operating revenues of 319 million at December were 1.4% under budget. Due primarily to decreased usage. Operating expenses of 290 million were within 1.9% of budget. That's probably primarily driven by timing of budgeted expenses for the first quarter. This results in an operating income of 39 million. That 39 million, we paid debt service of 39 million and made additional transfers of 58 million. Finishing the first quarter with a deficit of \$57 million. Not to be alarmed, our plan was to have a deficit of \$56 million. We normally don't operate

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into positive until the fourth quarter. We're summer utilities so that's where we earn most interest rates were a little lower than we had forecasted, and so our earned interest was a million dollars below planned. Otherwise we're right where we thought we would be. Our balance sheet is liquid and we're adequately capitalized, however cash did decrease by 20 million due to increased accounts receivable and lower sales. And the weather continues to be the major driver for our variation energy consumption. However, we have been able to document that covid pandemic impact which has shift in consumption and demand for residential customers and I'll cover that in the market and industry section here. Details on these I can go straight to the northern Arkansas market -- market and industry. >> Pool: Does anybody have

[2:27:10 PM]

specifics for the material Mr. Dombroski has gone over? Great. We'll keep moving. >> Let me find a page number here. If we go to page 23. So as I stated that March 13 kicked off our community response to the covid pandemic when we began staying home or starting to see things like south by being canceled for the year. And so we had anticipated a change in how people use their energy.

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Now we're able to actually get some of our data and hopefully this will show how our community responded. Go to the next page, 24, please. As we reported to you back in December, even before covid, we saw a reduction in consumption about 1.9% in 2020. A lot of that is driven by weather. But it's paired with a growth in customers. We have seen 2.3% increase in number of customers. So we continue to add customers, but they tend to be in newer homes, more energy efficient, appliances, greater awareness to energy conservation. So our load is not increasing at the same rate in our customers. And that was further compounded by the covid pandemic. If you go to the next slide, this is a chart that shows

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our billed demand. And demand is how much energy something draws on. So if you have a one kilowatt light bulb and leave it on one hour, it has a bill demand of one kilowatt and uses one kilowatt hour. If you leave it on ten hours, it still only draws one kilowatt.

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If you go to the next page, this is that same time period here. So this is consumption from our residential customers alone. And so you can see that gray line there is where they were last year. The ups and downs are really weather driven. As you can see that we were considerably higher, the actual consumption is the darkening on line. As soon as May 13 hit and we started staying home, working from home, kids were staying home from school, that that energy consumption in residential customers started to increase. Other than weather, that has pretty much been our pattern that we've seen since then. So we've seen about a 3 to a 5% increase in energy consumption in our residential customers since that time period. The next page is our commercial

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consumption patterns. And so they, too, respond. You can see that gray line was a year ago. And the Orange line was this year, post-covid pandemic. And you can see that significant drop in consumption from our commercial customers. That gap has closed and you can start to see around October-November time frame that they're starting to track very close to where they were last year in terms of consumption and close to what we would expect. The model means after the account for the number of customers and the weather, what do we think that energy usage would have been. So you can see it's fairly tracking normal, given the number of customers and the weather. The big change on the commercial side, again, is the demand. So they get billed for both the demand component and consumption component. So those demand charges our

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revenue at the utility. We're starting to see some predictable patterns. I don't know how long the pandemic will go on so we don't know how long this will last. We also don't know what permanent changes the pandemic will put on energy uses. People will start to learn and telework from home so we may see this a little bit more closer to the norm in the future than we did before the pandemic. Hopefully that gave you a big picture of what we're seeing here at the utility. Financial-wise, we're operating according to plan and there's no alarms. I would be glad to answer any questions that you might have. >> That's great, Dombroski. I also wanted to emphasize the pattern to elections and the spiking in the summertime, for our new councilmember, if you might just want to pull that slide back up real quick to show

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show. And this is our normal -- well, I don't know if I should say the word "Normal," but Mr. Dombroski can explain it better but we, of course, have higher collections for -- from our residents in the summer months. >> If you go to page 26 you can see that residential. Residential really is driven by weather

much more than commercial. And you can see those spikes there. And our special months, generally June to September. We get -- so many years ago we removed seasonality of base rates so that helped stabilize bills. I'll also add that Austin energy has budget building. So customers can get a more predictable monthly bill so they don't see those spikes in the summer in their bills, especially if they're on fixed income or something along those lines and they can contact our contact center for assistance with budget building. >> Pool: Yeah, if you see it looks like we're below average

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on collections, that's because we are way above average a few months from now and it all >> That's correct. That's where our revenue is earned, in that fourth quarter. While we have a deficiency, don't be too concerned with that. Our revenues are earned in the summer months. >> Pool: Okay. Let's see. If you could pull that down, then I can see the grid and see if anybody has any -- if there are any questions for you on that. Any questions for the financials? We're going to move into the operations report next. All right. Let's go on to the first quarter operations briefing. >> Thank you, madam chair. Waiting for the report to pull up. >> Pool: Welcome, Mr. Jackson. >> Thank you, councilmember pool. I appreciate the welcome and introduction.

[2:35:56 PM]

My name is Sydney Jackson, I'm the chief operation officer for Austin energy. It's my pleasure to be here with you today. As I mentioned earlier, I look forward to being a resource for all of you looking into the future. So the operations report today is pretty standard fair. You will hear a lot of we are meeting expectations or we have robust performance and that's a good thing. I am only going to do a kind of a high fast fly-by, only focusing on the highlights. So the main things we're going to speak to today are power generation with focus on the removals. And if you can go to the next slide, please. Also take a look at some district cooling as we have incremental capital investments and capability be that space. Look at standard system reliability and look at some metrics in that area. And then also looking at the -- lastly, the snow events that occurred on

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January 10th and as you are aware, we have an encroaching snow event as well. And that is going to be the agenda that I'm going to walk through today. Next slide, please. Looking at power generation, our power generation fleet has been working very well, consistent with expectations, near 100% availability. Availability is looking at the time that the units are available for operation in the energy market. We have had planned outages. At with the exception of the planned outages we're at 100% availability. In addition, given that this is the first quarter report and it is the first time in the first quarter report we

have had an opportunity to report that the decker steam unit number one has been retired from commercial operations, as you well know. And that is consistent with the generation and

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climate protection plan to 2030. Looking at the next slide, please. The focus here is on our renewable performance. And in the lower right-hand corner of this slide you can see the performance is robust and consistent with expectation at 41%. Over looking at the lower left, we do have net load that is consistent with perhaps 2019 levels. And as our cfo just mentioned, affected by not only the pandemic but also seasonal load variations as well. But again, strong renewable performance from our renewable portfolio in that first quarter. Next slide, please. The are you renewable portfolio has a unique profile. In this profile, the production profile is pretty consistent with what we have become accustomed to seeing. And this is just a

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reaffirmation of the same. Next slide, please. I mentioned we're going to take a quick look at some of our district cooling activities. We have had increased investment, increased capital investment, also increasing our capability at these three districts. The Mueller campus as well as the Austin community college and the downtown district where we are increasing not only our capability but capacity as well. And all of those projects are on target and on schedule. Next slide, please. So one of the things we look at in operations, we spend quite a bit of time looking at is the reliability of the system and measuring it in terms of its performance. So our overall reliability for the system, just looking at the number of customer hours and the number of outage minutes, we are approaching 99.99%, but

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actually looking at metrics associated with if you have an outage, what does that outage look like in terms of duration, in terms of response and the like. So we are on target for fiscal year 2021. We are meeting those targets. And that is good news. Perhaps the expanded news would be the snow event of January. Once that data rolls into quarter two it would put downward pressure on those but that is to be seen. Some of the strategic initiatives that we are working on and support of grid resilience and reliability has to do with vegetation management, which is a common theme you're going to see in the snow event that we're going to report on shortly. Wildfire mitigation is also a strategic intent and also using vegetation management to focus on some of our worst performing feeders or feeders where there's opportunities for immediate improvement. We also are doing a

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number of substation updates as well as some of the data modeling of some of our circuits as well. And then lastly, one of the things that has just hit the street in terms of request for proposal is a transmission study. You can see that there on the page of the last -- at the bottom. And that is going to be a very important initiative that we will be speaking to over -- for quite some time once that -- once that data is received. Next slide, please. So that ends the standard report. I did want to specifically speak to the snow event of January 10th. It was a wide ranging event. And as you know we have an encroaching snow event. It was quite the challenge for the utility. All hands on deck. The -- as the graphic shows, this was an event that spanned from the

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north all of the way to the south of our footprint. It was an event that affected 32 distribution circuits and why that's important, it just requires a lot of response time to get to all of those circuits and evaluate and disposition what some of the faults were. The average outage response time was 170 minutes. So for the average customer that experienced an outage during this time, it was 170 minutes prior to its restoration. Some shorter, obviously some longer. The overall outage characteristic associated with this the out ooj was vegetation contact. I believe you have a video that affirms that. So falling branches, blowing trees and the like actually impacting our overhead distribution system. One of the good news stories here is from a safety perspective. So Austin energy was able to respond to this

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without any vehicle accidents, without any personnel injuries, without any osha safety recordables. So that was a commendable response. And as I mentioned, almost -- I didn't mention actually but almost a 66,000 customers affected, 7,000 customer calls. Kudos to all hands on deck that responded to it from customer service to field crews to substation technicians to line workers and the variety of personnel that were all on hands to respond to this. Jeff, do we have that video? Here it is again. The purpose of this is just the notion that a picture is worth a thousand words. So we have protection

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systems on our infrastructure. And these protection systems are designed to, one, curtail electricity when the fault occurs. Also it does protect the public from coming in contact perhaps with a down line when the fault is detected. It also protects our infrastructure from overloads. And just moving to the last slide, one more, please. Just want to affirm continued environmental focus as we have new renewable

projects that remain on schedule, whether they be solar and wind and those are on schedule and on target. And madam chair that concludes my presentation. >> Pool: Your initial presentation to, we're really glad you're here with us. Good report. I can remember a time and maybe some of my colleagues on the dias can remember a time when we would have regular

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electrical outages in the city. But we've become much more resilient. The system is sturdier. And so even though we had nearly 24-hour outage in January, the outages could go on for days. And you know, a couple of decades ago. Was the 24-hour outage like shorter periods in different parts of the city for a total that it was out over the 24 hours or was that the same areas were all out for that same amount of time? >> Well, as the snow encroached on -- as the snow encroached our footprint there were some outages that got more snow than others. So the outages did follow the weather pattern as it migrated through our footprint. Does that address your question? >> Pool: I guess so. A better way to ask it was, how many of those who had power outages had a 24-hour or 11 1/2-hour power outage? >> I would say not looking at all the

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numbers, I would say zero. The average customer outage was 170 minutes. >> Pool: Okay. >> I did hear a report of maybe very few isolated cases where maybe someone may have had a five-hour outage but most of them were 50% were below 170 minutes and 50% above. >> Pool: Great. Okay. Let me see if anybody has any questions. There it is. Councilmember alter? Yes. >> Alter: Thank you. Welcome, Mr. Jackson. Pleased to have you onboard. And I was happy to see your emphasis in terms of strategy to focus on the vegetation management and allow fire mitigation efforts. I think on the latter it's really important for our city to have Austin energy a partner in our efforts to mitigate those risks. So I appreciate that emphasis. And as you know, my

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district has experienced some reliability issues especially to the vegetation management so that is a high priority for me and I look forward to working with you and continuing to work with the leadership to address that issue in my district and citywide, the challenges challengeare great and the opportunity to dovetail that with our wildfire mitigation efforts are important and we should be recognizing and redoubling those efforts. I look forward to continuing to work with you in that capacity. >> Thank you very much, councilmember alter. Your feedback is much appreciated. And I will assure you that we are redoubling our efforts. In fact, our budget for some of our vegetation management is greater than it was

a year ago at this time. So we do have abundant resources and we're looking to apply those and make effective improvements this year. Thank you.

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>> Pool: Anybody else? Yes, councilmember kitchen. >> Kitchen: Thank you. Mr. Jackson, I wanted to just give you an opportunity to speak a little bit more about something you started to highlight, that was upcoming, that was the transmission system of the future. If you could just provide a little bit more information for the public specifically, you know, about what does that mean, you know, what system? >> Yeah, absolutely, councilmember kitchen. That is a big topic. It's almost the Pandora's box of sorts in a good way. So we as Austin energy participate in the market so local deliverability is an issue trying to make sure we have enough resources and capacity, but also it's an issue that's broader than that and it's looked at as the whole energy market as well in terms of

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transmission capability. That capability is impacted by generation. It's also impacted by the ability and flexibility and the dispatchability of certain generations. But at the end of the day when we look at this transmission plan, it is associated with our resource and generation and climate protection plan trying to make sure that as we move forward as a utility that our transmission plan, our generation plan, our reliability, our resiliency are all aligned and then all those constraints and all those boxes are checked in orchestration, if you will. I think that's the best way I can explain it at a high level. >> Kitchen: Thank you. That's great. That's a very good explanation for people. You had specified a next action or next step on that. Could you speak to that again? >> We do have an rfp out. I will say the engineering team, the

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transmission planning team inside Austin energy has spent an exorbitant amount of time and writing the actual rfp and that is out on the street or it is just about to go out on the street. And it describes we're soliciting all the -- a number of engineering firms to come to the table, give us a proposal. We'll evaluate those proposals and begin that process. >> Kitchen: Thank you. I appreciate that. >> Pool: Okay. Anybody else? Were there any other hands up? All right. Mr. Jackson, thanks so much. We'll see you at your next meeting for another report. >> Thank you. >> Pool: All right. The next item is number 6, the decker creek power station workforce planning report. This is something that I know that this committee has been following since the very beginning. Councilmember tovo has special interest in this topic. Are you doing this one, too, Mr. Jackson? >> I am not.

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Our vice president of power production, Mr. Pat Sweeney, will be presenting that. >> Pool: Great. Mr. Sweeney is coming on now. I see him. Thanks. >> Good afternoon, mayor and councilmembers. I'm going to give you our update since the last time we talked and met about Decker, which is back in October. So since then we've increased our meeting frequency with employees. We had been on a quarterly meeting frequency and now we're meeting with them monthly. We also completed additional training. We've been providing training in various forms throughout this time frame. We had a significant one that we conducted with the electric power research institute, which -- EPRI, which we're members of. That was training to focus on distribution system and it included 20 attendees. You can imagine a lot of

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training oftentimes is online but in this case we work with AEP to make that an online training buzz R because it was originally set up as an in-person training. So that helped both them and us to deliver that to the employees. In addition, we also started a long-plan job sharing process. And that is with the retirement of Decker one officially on October 31st. So since that time we've had 20 staff that have identified a request for job shadowing. Actually generated 59 requests. So about three requests per person on average, and those are in about seven different areas of the utility. District cooling, for example, facilities there, but there are others. We had to adjust our plans based on COVID conditions. A lot of those were focused on being in person and we pivoted in some cases to virtual

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and making other plans to continue that and make them safe for employees during the pandemic so they can continue that. So thus far we've had four employees, 20% of the folks have completed the shadowing opportunities. And we've had six other folks currently who are in them and they're under way and they'll complete this month and then the balance of those requests will be unfolding over the next several months. Those are well under way. In addition, we've had about 80% of the staff who who may be impacted -- who have now completed career assessments and over half of them taken advantage of career coaching workshops that have been offered 11 times since we commenced this work almost two years ago now. And those are activities we continue to offer. So it's -- both career coaching and the assessments are oath items are things that folks have not taken advantage of them can continue to

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do so for the remainder of this year. Lastly, at the last council meeting councilmember tovo asked about including language in our solar rfps for opportunities. Because of purchasing restrictions we can't include that in there but we have taken steps to provide the staff links to those employees. The contractors who we work with who build those facilities so they can go directly to those -- to those providers and see the opportunities that they might have. And that will be an ongoing thing as that set of providers changes over time. That is all I have for the update. If there are any questions, I'll be happy to take them. >> Pool: Councilmember tovo, did you have anything? >> Tovo: I do, thank you. Thanks for the report, Mr. Sweeney. I think I would be interested in getting a little bit more information about why that's challenges. Is it just the fact those are already on the street and going back

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and doing that would be a problem or if it's a problem prospectively including, you know, pursuing those opportunities. >> It's my understanding -- >> Tovo: Go ahead. >> It's my understanding it's an issue of including a requirement in the rfp that relates to positions that we have that we're seeking for folks. >> Tovo: I guess I would like, if you could put me in touch with whoever the -- I don't know if that's our purchasing staff or if that's a legal interpretation but I would be interested in getting a little bit more detail about why that's -- I don't mean to question -- just to better understand it. >> Certainly. We will do that. >> Tovo: And I wondered if you could talk for a minute about the shadowing. I know those sounded like good opportunities, the job shadowing opportunities for employees, to see what some other jobs are like

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throughout the city. I'm concerned that -- I'm concerned that given the environment we're in with the pandemic that those -- that those may not be happening. Can you help us to what extent the shadowing opportunities are going on and if there's an opportunity to extend the period of time for those shadowing opportunities. >> So for the duration we're going to continue the shadowing throughout the balance of this year. So that's an ongoing activity. And they are ongoing. We have completed -- four folks have completed their initial. We have six on the way. We have more in the planning stages. One of the examples I give is several folks wanted to be shadowing in our control rooms. So our control rooms are - we have a small set of folks that manage those facilities. They've been identified as very critical

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employees. We actually have specific plans about sequestering those employees. So one of the things that we just commenced this week is testing, a rapid testing that is specific to those employee groups, proving that out and so with that being available with the new capability that's evolved over the past many months, obviously, we're hoping to open up those to more in-person type shadowing opportunities. That's really the best form to do it, is in-person. All the others rest canned, they will be conducted because there's enough space requirement -- spacing and all that can be achieved in the other settings. Again, that's an ongoing activity and they're under way. >> Tovo: I'm sorry. I want to make sure I captured that. Four individuals shadow, do the job shadowing, you have six under way. Are those waiting for the opportunities because they're in the operating rooms you're talking about? >> Some of them are.

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And others -- several others are scheduled to occur that will begin the latter part of this month and then March. So they'll keep rolling. Again, 20 individuals made a request, that made 60 -- almost 60 requests. So in other words, they requested shadowing in more than one area. And so we're cycling through. >> Tovo: I'm sorry, I don't -- >> Some of those same folks will cycle through after they complete one -- >> Tovo: I'm not sure if those problems on my end or on your end but I keep -- I'm only hearing like every other word you're saying. Is that my end? I'm sorry. >> I don't know. Let me turn my -- >> Tovo: Did you say -- could Ju could you just tell us again how many requests you had for shadowing and you said it's not

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necessarily -- because some individuals requested to shadow a couple of different -- >> Correct. >> Tovo: How many individuals and how many requests? >> I'll turn my video off here and maybe that might help. So we have 20 individuals who made shadowing requests, okay? And they requested 59 instances of shadowing. Shadowing. In other words, folks identify I want to go to these two or three places. And so four folks have completed one of the instances already. We have six folks currently in a shadowing activity that will run the course this month and then we've got others that will be starting up this month in March. Of course we're balancing out requests versus needs for folks and their -- so again, we're moving the cycle through all of those requests.

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It will take several weeks and probably a few months. But we are moving through them. >> Tovo: Okay. Thank you. So of my initial question was about whether you can extend the period of time, but it sounds as if from what you're saying, I don't know if this is accurate, as is committed to allowing those individuals to have the shadowing opportunities they've requested even if it takes longer than

anticipated given the pandemic. >> Yes. >> Tovo: Is that correct? >> We will continue this throughout the balance of the year. >> Tovo: Okay. I appreciate it. Thanks. And I have a question about ppe but it's appropriately probably another section. >> Pool: All right. Are you sure because we're done with our items. We're just moving on to future items identifying anything for future meetings. And I wanted to talk about our next meeting

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date. >> Tovo: If I could then ask the question. When you were talking about the small environment and of course the need to really prioritize employee safety, that reminded me of a question I had. I interacted not too long ago with one of our city employees and I interacted as a member of the community, not as a councilmember. They were not an ae employee. And I won't identify what department they were in. They did have a mask on even though they came over to talk to me. This also a question for the city manager and since I was reminded of it in this presentation, I wondered, general manager or others on the call from ae, what kinds of -- what kinds -- whether the utility is proactively providing ppe to employees when they're with customers and do they know -- do employees know if they

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don't have their own ppe, do they know how they can access that through the city? >> This is Jackie sergeant general manager. We have actually stood up our incident command environment and we have done that since we started this pandemic issuance -- or situation. We have someone who is specifically designated to ensuring that we have in stock appropriate ppe and then there are weekly distributions of that ppe and people have ready access to that and there is a request process and all managers and superintendents are well informed of that and have access to getting that ppe and they don't have to wait for that distribution if there was a situation that were to arise. Of course ppe is something -- personal

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protective equipment is something that is known to the electric utility and it is part of our processes as we protect our employees from the hazards of working in our environment. But then also with the onset of covid, also protecting each other, protecting the public, protecting our customers. And so information readily available, equipment is readily available, and we have plenty of resources and there is communications on this on a regular basis. >> Tovo: Great. Thank you for explaining a little bit more about how you're handling that at the utility. And I know you said the managers in your different

programs are well informed. And they know how to access additional, if they need it outside the distribution times. Do all employees, do all staff know how best to access it? I mean, are those

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managers -- do those managers have a mechanism for making sure that all their staff know how to access ppe? >> Well, they should and it's my understanding that they do because of the regular communications that occurs. You will recall that we still continue to have a large number of our workforce working remotely. So they're not in contact with other employees. They're not in contact with the public. And so those folks working in that environment may not have the ready access but they don't need it to do their job. >> Tovo: Yeah. >> But for those people that have that regular contact, whether it's when our payment centers are actively open, when it is our line workers who continue to provide safe, reliable service for the community, whether it's the folks in our control rooms, we have had incidences

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where we have identified employees that aren't following the protocols. We have taken measures to correct that. And then we have re-enforced our communications. And I stress communications on a weekly basis to all of our employees to be mindful of protecting not only themselves but their co-workers and their families and the public. And so we have been very straight forward in our communications on this and in making sure that we have access to the appropriate equipment. >> Tovo: Yeah. Thank you, general manager. Just again, the anecdote I was describing did not involve Austin energy employees. It was when I have seen Austin energy employees out and about they are always masked but we did get a question about it generally. So I just wanted to make sure that I understood how that message is getting out to your team. Thank you. Thank you for all of your work and to your staff for all of your work and such

[3:06:29 PM]

extraordinary times, including the snowstorm. So thanks for including the information, too, about your response. >> Pool: That's great. Thanks. Does anybody have any more questions, either for general manager or any of her team while we're here. I think we're supposed to have snow the early part of next week again, so we may be in for more fun. All right. That's our last item. Does anybody have anything right now top of mind that you want to put out there to discuss at a future meeting? I think councilmember tovo wants to continue to have the decker creek power station workforce updates, so that will return to our agenda. If you have anything between now and posting date, just send it along to

my staff, councilmember rent terryia, did you have anything there? I think he was just raising his hand to turn off his camera. The next meeting is

[3:07:30 PM]

March 31st. The meeting after that on our planned schedule is may 26th, which is the last Wednesday of may. I'm going to -- I'm working with staff to move that to Tuesday June 1st, which is just six days later. Also at 1:30. And we're looking at shifting from a Wednesday to a Tuesday meeting date for these to make the schedule a little bit easier for everybody. I'll get you an updated schedule as soon as we get it all finalized. Just as an early look at it though, the July 27th date that we already had planned is a Tuesday and that's a 1:30. September 22nd we moved to September 28th at 1:30 and November 10 would move to november6 at 1:30. So we will finalize all of that information to everybody. And hopefully that will work for y'all's schedules. And does anybody have anything else for the

[3:08:30 PM]

good of the cause? Great. Well, thank you all for being here today. Thanks to the staff. And welcome to our new operations staffer, Mr. Jackson, and we will see you all next month. >> Bye, everybody. >> Bye, thank you.