

**WHITMAN COUNTY  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
January 3, 2024  
Meeting  
7:00 p.m.**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

**Chad Whetzel – Chairman  
Dave Gibney  
Mark Tolman**

**Brian Davies – Vice- Chairman  
Weston Kane  
David Tysz (Zoom)**

**Staff:** Alan Thomson, WC Planner; Grace Di Biase, WC Assistant Planner; Brandon Johnson, Public Works; Elinor Huber, Clerk.

**Zoom:** Mark Storey, WC Public Works Director; Paul Kimmell, Avista; Andrew Davidson, Citizen.

**7:03 p.m.** – Chad Whetzel opened the meeting. Introductions were held around the room.

Chad Whetzel – We did not have a quorum at the November 6, 2023, meeting so we need to approve the minutes from that meeting.

**MOTION** by Weston Kane and seconded by Brian Davies to approve the minutes from the November 6, 2023, meeting. Motion passed.

**MOTION** by Brian Davies and seconded by Weston Kane to approve the minutes from the December 6, 2023, meeting. Motion passed.

**Reports:**

- a. Board of Adjustment forthcoming hearings – There are none.
- b. Forthcoming Administrative Use Permits – None.
- c. Update on previous administrative use permits and variances – The conditional use for Umont LLC, on the South-Pullman Moscow Corridor to lease a parcel to Disaster Response for storage of emergency response materials and office space was approved on December 14, 2023.
- d. Update on previous administrative use permits – None.
- e. Board of County Commissioners’ action – We had a public hearing for the amendments on Chapter 19.15 and 19.16 on December 4, 2023. The code amendments were not decided on and moved to another public hearing on December 26, 2023, where they made a couple of changes. Basically, it was the interpretation of bars and taverns. Mr. Handy decided that it wasn’t correct as far as the definition of bars and taverns so he clarified that, and that language was approved by the BOCC at that time.

- f. Update on previous Board of County Commissioners' action – The zone change for Riddco property was approved on December 4, 2023, and like I said before, the code amendments to Chapters 19.15 and 16, were moved to the hearing on December 26, 2023, and they were approved at that time.
  
- g. Forthcoming Shoreline of the State Substantial Development Permits – None.
  
- h. Update on previous Shoreline of the State Substantial Development permits – None
  
- i. Planning Commission forthcoming hearings – None.

Alan Thomson - That's it for reports.

Chad Whetzel – We will move on to the unfinished business and continue conversation about creating a solar energy ordinance. Presentation by Paul Kimmell from Avista.

**Adjourned – 7:08 p.m.**

**WHITMAN COUNTY  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
January 3, 2024  
Workshop  
7:00 p.m.**

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**Staff:** Alan Thomson, WC Planner; Grace Di Biase, WC Assistant Planner; Brandon Johnson, Public Works; Elinor Huber, Clerk.

**Zoom:** Mark Storey, WC Public Works Director; Paul Kimmell, Avista; Andrew Davidson, Citizen.

**7:09 p.m.** - Chad Whetzel turned the meeting over to Paul Kimmell from Avista.

Paul Kimmell – Okay, thank you. I live at 1037 Four Mile Road, Viola, ID. My residence is where I work and I am the Business & Public Affairs Manager for Avista and I cover the Palouse but I also work (inaudible) projects, as well.

**Agenda** - So, tonight, Alan invited me to speak about how we as a utility manage all these generational resources in our portfolio including some of the renewable energy projects that we have operating currently. So, I will walk you through some of that. For now, we will go through this with a PowerPoint presentation.

A little bit about Avista, what we call the utility balancing act. How do we keep all these resources in balance? Then we will talk a little bit about resource characteristics, because not all resource generations behave the same. Whether that is wind, hydro, or coal.

Then a little bit about transmission system in WC. I shared a map with Alan earlier and I have a copy of that in the presentation, as well. Then a little bit about our clean energy goals in the State of Washington and how legislation is driving some of that. That is probably what interests you most of all and why you are seeing more of projects looking at WC as their site for their projects.

**About Avista** - Feel free to jump in any time with questions. We are based in Spokane, almost 135 years old. We were founded on the banks of the Spokane River. Our first project was essentially right there at Huntington Park right at the Monroe Street Hydro Generation Station.

**Avista at a glance** - We are primarily an industrial utility serving both natural gas and electric customers, operating revenues about \$1.4 billion, Shareholder Equity, at \$2.2 billion with 1,800 employees across our service area. Again, it is about 60% of our generation portfolio that is renewable.

**By the Numbers** - Again, we serve customers in four different states, 30,000 square miles, population within that footprint of about 1,700,000 people. Those are our gas and electric customers and as I said before, about 1,800 employees.

This is interesting. We talked about pipes and wires out there at the facility, almost 2,800 miles of transmission lines, across our service area. Much of that is in Eastern Washington, north Idaho, also through Montana we have interest in (inaudible) in the eastern side of that state so we have transmission that runs from that facility. A little over 19,000 miles of distribution lines so those wires that come into your homes, run about 8,000 miles of natural gas lines.

**Service Area** - You can see a little bit more the bulk of our service area is in Eastern Washington, north Idaho and then we also have customers in southwestern Oregon. Those are all natural gas companies.

**AEL&P** - We also own a utility up in Juneau, Alaska, the city and the rural of Alaska. Alaska Electric Light Power, which is kind of a subsidiary that we leave alone. Interesting dynamics, that is all hydro based up in the mountains and then when their hydro doesn't work, they switch over to diesel generators. So it is very interesting. It has been a fun company too, for us, and great people. Juneau is a very interesting place.

Brian Davies – How long has Avista owned that?

Paul Kimmell - think we acquired that about 2016, maybe.

Brian Davies – I've been up there a few times. That was really interesting. A lot of water coming off those glaciers up above.

Paul Kimmell - Yes, it is high mountain reservoirs with hydro facilities. Not dams. There are bugs in the bottom of these reservoirs and just running a lot of pipes underground. It has been an interesting company with great people.

**Supply Mix** – Here is our supply, so how we serve you with electricity. You see about half of our portfolio is hydro projects that we either own or we contract for the generation. About 10% is wind, and those are a couple of projects. In fact, we buy all of Palouse Wind generation as well as Rattlesnake Flat out in Adams County that is northwest of Washtucna. You see those turbines out there. We also have woody biomass up at Falls and about a third of our generation is thermal, natural gas, and about 8% is coal

**Avista Rates are among the lowest in the country** - Because of that hydro that legacy hydro and some of those low-cost generation resources, our rates in both Washington and Idaho are some of the lowest in the country. We are in the top 5%. It makes us really competitive, price-wise for energy. Again, sometimes there was that craze with crypto currency for a while and they were taking (inaudible) but we weren't quite as cheap as Douglas County and Grant County PDs so we saw a little bit of that crypto currency mining activity over there for a while.

**Avista Greenhouse Gas Emissions** – Because of that hydro-base we had pretty low emissions, covered emissions across, and this is all investor and utilities on the left side of the page here, large coal generators whereas, we are over here on the right side, so pretty small footprint that way.

**With a 134 -year history of innovation** – We've been innovating since we were incorporated again in 1903. We built a transmission line from our Monroe Street hydro project in Spokane out to the mines by Wallace. That is about a 90-mile transmission line, the first one built. Since then, we have created

some really cool stuff for electric ranges, launched a lot of other things that formed Itron, a company that now is really huge. We like to innovate. We like to partner with (inaudible).

**Strengthening Communities** – A lot of the work I do is working with communities and again, not only making sure that the services we provide you are fair and competitive but also supporting the work that you do as community builders and community leaders. It really comes down to a healthy community, it really translates into a healthy utility.

**2022 Avista Corporate Philanthropy** – We do that through a lot of investment of corporate and philanthropic. We have an Avista Foundation. On average we do about 3 million dollars of corporate philanthropy and you can see the different brackets from education, health and human services, economic development, and youth. Then that small little section at the bottom is environmental and you think that you aren't putting a lot into that. A lot of that environmental money comes out of some different pots to our federal energy regulatory commission and licensing on our hydro projects. So, we don't really include that in philanthropy, but much of the work we do around watersheds and some of our work in riparian areas comes out of that.

**Avista's Regulatory Structure** – We are an investor-owned utility. Unlike a municipal utility or public utility district, we have shareholders that invest money in our company. It is a very different regulation than the other kinds of utilities, and since we are regulated that way the utility commission sets our rates. We propose rate changes and they can either approve or deny. We do have some, hopefully we keep some rate of return, rate of investment that we hope we get through those cases, but again, it is an ongoing process all the time. It is very different than Inland Power or General Electric.

**Our Stakeholders** – So, for us we have stakeholders that are our customers, our shareholders, our community and our employees.

**2022 Avista Corporate Responsibility Report** – You can scroll through the next couple of slides. There is lots of good information.

**Energy is on demand** – When you flip a switch you expect it to light up. You like that power to be there. What does that look like?

**Resource Planning – The Utility Generation Balancing Act** - For us, we look through three lenses. We want to keep it affordable. The services we sell you we want to make sure it is affordable, reliable, and also, we are required to clean energy as you can see through our portfolio. So those are the three lenses historically that we have looked at.

**Meeting Customer Load** – But at the end of the day, we always have to meet that load. Based on what our customers expect out of us, we have to make sure that load is real time. A generation must always equal load. That is the utility balancing act. So, what I am going to walk you through is some of our different resource types and I'm going to look at two different days.

You can see, the yellow line is an August 11, 2021, and the blue line is December 29, 2021. So, we wanted to look at a summer day and a winter day and what that looks like capacity-wise. That load shapes in those two different time frames are very different. Summertime there isn't much load in the mornings, and by lunch it starts ramping up in the afternoon. Then in the winter time, just a little higher all the way through the day and into the evening.

We are starting to see that load change a little bit. We are seeing a little higher in the summer so a little more demanding in the summer, we are almost seeing our summer peaking exceeding our winter peaking. We have always been a winter peaking facility. So, that has been interesting the last 5-6 years.

**Balancing The Day** – This is what we are going to look at. So, balancing those few days, the December day and then the August day and how those are different resource types. We will come back to this in a minute. How those different resource types, how we stack them as a utility coal, thermal, some of our purchases, and natural gas, hydro, etc. This heavy black line is actually below on those two days. So, you can see we are a little over generating on that December day and a little under generating on the August day. So, I will tell you, essentially, we went out to the market because the market was cheaper than us having to run our resources. That is not uncommon.

**Resource Characteristics – Benefits and Limitations** – So, we talk about resource characteristics, clean energy versus reliable because there are differences with each of those resource types. From wind and solar which is very clean, the run of the river hydro, all of the other more traditional reliable sources, whether it is coal, natural gas, nuclear, etc.

**Hydroelectric** – So, to talk about a different resource type now. This is our Noxon Rapids Facility in Noxon, Montana, roughly 250 MW up on the Clark Fork River. It is one of our larger hydro projects. It is not our largest hydro project. We have one a little down river which is interesting. Alan would appreciate this as a planner. From start to finish from siting it to actually completing it and turning it on, two years. Pretty amazing. That was in the late fifties when that was built. I'm not sure what it would take today, if we could even build it.

**Hydro Generation Variability** – So, with hydro there is some generation variability and as you might expect it is more about that snow pack, what that water behind the reservoir and that dam looks like. In any given year, that variability can change. You can see in 1996, the first four months of 1996 there was a lot of snow mount so we really ran the generation hard. Then a couple years later, you can see in 2001 where it was a really low water year. So, there is variability in hydro, but nevertheless, it is pretty reliable.

**Hydro Flexibility** – Again, on those two days, how did we use our hydro system? Both our Clark Fork project and river system projects in our contract hydro, we keep them pretty level, at least in the winter time and then in the summer we ramp it up in the afternoon. Again, a lot of flexibility.

**Natural Gas** – This is our Coyote Springs Thermal Plant down in Boardman, Oregon.

**Natural Gas Price Variability** - The variability with natural gas is mostly around prices and the cost of natural gas. You can see some of those spikes. Those were probably what we call a polar vortex or some market event, or weather event where prices just spiked because it was super cold. That is really the impact of natural gas and that variability is usually about the cost of that resource and whether or not (inaudible).

We have an underground storage facility in Jackson Prairie, which is near Chehalis, where we can actually buy natural gas on the off season and store it underground and then we can pull it back out when we need it, so we are typically pulling it out probably right now.

**Coal** – This is our coal plant over in Colstrip, Montana. We are one of six owners. We have a 15% interest in those two taller stacks, there. We are a small player in that thermal coal unit, but it is what we call a mine mouth operation where the coal is actually mined a few miles away and it is just a conveyor into the plant as a thermal resource.

**Stable Baseload Coal Generation** - So with coal, you can see it is a really stable baseload. You feed it and it runs. So, you can see on those two days, we just kept it right level, just kind of how we operate it with a very stable baseline.

**Biomass** – The biomass plants up at Kettle Falls we’ve just celebrated 35 years of his operation. We burn wood waste up there. We turn it into steam runs and turbines. It is not a big producer, about 50 MW but what it did when we built it, it solved the local air pollution problem. There were some lumber mills that were just burning wood waste and local pollution was horrible, so we said that with all this wood waste, let’s clean it up and let’s burn it and turn it into a resource. It has worked out really well.

**Kettle Falls is a stable baseload generator**- The challenge with that is just making sure the wood stock is available. We were often trucking wood waste in from southern BC and surrounding area. It just kind of depends. So that the only concern there was in the supply of our wood stock. But you can see, we run it pretty stable across those two days. We didn’t change much of its operation.

**Wind** – This is our Palouse Wind project in Oakesdale. We don’t own that. We have a long-term power purchase agreement. We have entered into that since it’s construction (inaudible) so we enter into a long-term, we buy all of the generation off this plant for X number of years. So, we negotiate with them for a price. It has been good.

**Wind Generation is Sporadic** – But you can see wind generation on those two days, we are still looking at December day, and the August day, it is pretty sporadic. You can see in the December day, we must have had a cold front come through, lots of wind early in the morning when nobody is awake, 2:30-3:00 o’clock in the morning. It spiked up to almost 110 MW and then at 2:00 in the afternoon, the wind stopped, no generation, and then it ramps back up later in the day. But we have to track that with some other resource, like I said, just to keep that balance. Then you can see what it did in August. There is a lot less production, a little spike mid-day and then just kind of stuck around with 35MW. So, again, it is what we call an intermittent energy source.

**Solar** – This is our solar project out in Lind. This is a 24 MW project, just north of the community of Lind. The footprint on this is about 200 acres. So, you can kind of get a feel for this. About 80,000 panels out there. We built this with our commercial customers in mind. We had customers say, “Hey, Avista could you offer us some renewable energy? We’d like to have some in our own portfolio for companies. We want to show that greenhouse gas, how they mitigate for that, etc.” So, we created this program and we sold that out to our commercial customers. It has been a good deal.

**Solar Production is Seasonal** – But you can see that solar production is very seasonal. And you can see in the summer time, when the sun comes up around six, the panels start working. Then they just kind of hover across there, there were probably some clouds that floated by in mid-day in those little dips and then as the sun goes down, the generation stops. Then, seasonally, you can see, in the winter time, the lower sun angle, less production.

So, we look at that what we call capacity factor. So, as you think about a project whether it is solar or wind, how efficient, how reliable, what does that capacity factor look like? For us in this project, and this is not necessarily how other projects work, but for us, it is about 26% efficient. So, you can count on that generation a quarter of the time. With our Palouse wind project, in our Rattlesnake, it is around 35-37% capacity. So, a little more reliability, but nevertheless intermittent. We have to be mindful of that as that generation tapers off, whether it is as the sun sets or the wind stops. We have to have another generation source ready to ramp up within a few days.

Alan Thomson – What was the wind efficiency?

Paul Kimmell – Thirty-six percent capacity.

Alan Thomson – And then solar was 24%. So, wind is more efficient than solar?

Paul Kimmell – More reliable. From that aspect, yes.

Dave Gibney – Half of the day the sun is not there.

Paul Kimmell – Yes, in the winter time,

Alan Thomson – When was that solar panel, when did it go into operation?

Paul Kimmell – I think it was 2018-2019. In our footprint, Adams County probably some of the sun is part of the Avista service area. It gets 8 inches of rainfall annually, and there is not a lot of cloud cover. It works in our portfolio. That's what I'll say.

**Energy Storage** - We have looked at energy storage and how we use that to store some of that generation resources. We had a vanadium flow battery sited on Schweitzer's campus up at their manufacturing plant for several years. We had a big grant with Washington Commerce to just kind of test out that technology. It did some interesting things. But again, it wasn't quite ready for prime time.

For a utility like us, the tesla wall battery, great stuff, but we need utility scale. So, if we build renewable projects and we look at battery storage alongside that, you can see in that wind, if the wind was blowing at two in the morning can we store that generation, because we certainly don't need it on our system at two in the morning. We are hoping that energy storage will continue to mature a lot of that technology and will share a little bit more of the integrity. We work hard on energy efficiency. It has the least cost resource. Again, we use less which seems counterintuitive for a company that might want to sell me some product, but it is actually more efficient for us to reduce your energy and it delays us from having to build more generation.

**Energy Efficiency** – We, as the utility, have had some of the original energy efficiency programs across the country. So, we have always made energy efficiency available.

**Demand Response** – A few years ago, in Pullman we had our market demonstration project where we put in advance metering and then we asked customers to put in some advanced thermostats, smart thermostats. Then through our program, we said, "Hey, can we manipulate your thermostat two degrees up or down in winter and summer?" We didn't get a lot of response, unfortunately, so we learned a little bit. We learned that customers really didn't care that much, at that time. We had an



energy portal to see real time, to see what kind of generation you had. It was saying that most customers in their experience with utilities, about 15 seconds a month. (inaudible) That is okay, but we need to keep offering it.

**Balancing the Day** – So, you see, getting back to those two days, we see how we did, balancing those two days. In December, we were a little long on generation, which isn't unusual. We had pretty decent hydro generation throughout the entire day. So, we were long on energy. So, we would put that additional generation on the market and another utility would buy it.

Then in the summer, we were a little short. That is not unusual for our hydro projects to be a little shorter with generation in the summer. But you can see how we use coal, how we use some of our contract, how we use our natural gas. But you see, when we are a little short, we go out to the market and we will find a cheaper resource.

In some cases, it is actually an inverted market where actually utilities, say in California, that the excess solar generation need to just get that off the system. So, they will literally pay public utilities to take that generation. That's really good for our customers. It doesn't happen that often but we see that happen a little bit here in the northwest with these spring wind days down in the Columbia Gorge. We've got a lot of water flowing and a lot of wind blowing. The Bonneville Power System we need to steal some of that generation, either in curtail wind or something.

**Whitman County Transmission** – So, what does that look like here in Whitman County? Again, I provided this map to Alan a few weeks ago with the transmission. You can see we've had both 115 and our 230 kV system that runs pretty much north/south and a little bit east/west. You can see how we run our system. But this is the part of the interstate highway and (inaudible) and then we have these off ramps and substations along where we need to drop it down and reduce that whole (inaudible) and turn it into an (inaudible.)

You can see how our transmission system is aligned in WC. Again, as we see more renewable development ideally, their preference is to locate closer to transmission, so they don't have to go (inaudible), because we won't go very far. So, a third-party developer like that wants to identify sites closer to our transmission, if in fact, they want to tie into our system.

Alan Thomson – There are other utilities in WC, like Inland Power and Light. Does that cover most of the blank area?

Paul Kimmell – Yes, pretty much. Sometimes, they will run on our system for some of that transmission. They purchase their power from the federal dams' system.

Alan Thomson – Inland Power does that?

Paul Kimmell – Yes, they don't have generation themselves.

Alan Thomson – Does Avista take power from the dams, from the Snake River?

Paul Kimmell – Occasionally we will buy from the federal pool. So, by and large you can see we have enough generations to supply our customers with our own generation.

Dave Gibney – So, there is no electricity in Lacrosse?

Paul Kimmell – Absolutely, there is. We have distribution. This is just transmission. This is like our highway. This is how we move our electrons on the highway.

Dave Gibney – I noted when I looked at this, that all of these substations have numbers by them except Chambers.

Paul Kimmell – I'm not sure, so as I stated, our transmission system facilitates the transfer of a generation from that source, whether it is a dam or a natural gas plant or a wood waste or a wind farm. The Palouse Wind Project has to tie in by the Thornton substation. But we put it on our system and then we move it to market where our customers (inaudible). It is as simple as that.

**Transmission Service** – This is really getting into weeds, but we have people that work on transmission services. Not only for our own use, but for a third party. That is kind of what, Alan, we were talking about in the case of the renewable energy project wanting to locate in WC. Why would they tie into our system? Because the system is here already? They will sometimes use our system to wheel that generation to wherever their customer or their market is, so again, it is not unusual and there is a federal process that we follow with that.

You can see, you go out to that website, it is called the OASIS, which is Open Access Same-time Information System. We, like other utilities that have transmission, we open up that queue for third party generators to get their projects into our queue. Then there is a process for us to study that to understand how that additional generation will impact our system, whether or not we have the capacity on a given system to set that power and move that power to wherever it goes. That is kind of what we are seeing with this.

**Avista** – This slide is horrible but what you can see here in WC, here is we have a project in the Palouse and it is a wind project. WC, looks like it would tie in with Shawnee-Thornton, and then some dates, and then we are in progress with some day use study on that.

Alan Thomson – What wind project are you talking about there? Is that Palouse Wind?

Paul Kimmell – No, that's a proposed project. They have to come to us and say that we are looking at building a generation facility and we need to wheel our generation through your transmission system. So, this is the process. They have to essentially get in our queue and that queue opens up certain times of the year. They make application and then there is a whole series of studies that we require of them and money to do the studies. So, that is a project.

Dave Gibney – (inaudible)

Paul Kimmell – I would say that, my understanding is that (inaudible).

Alan Thomson – Is Daystar in the queue?

Paul Kimmell – No.

Alan Thomson – They need to get in the queue.

Paul Kimmell – The queue will open back up I think, in March.

Alan Thomson – Because their project is not going to happen until 2025-26.

Paul Kimmell – So, this is our only WC project and that is why I highlighted it. It is the only written project in our transmission queue. This is all public access if you want to go and look at that. The link is on that page.

Dave Gibney – (inaudible)

Paul Kimmell - It depends, I couldn't tell you accurately.

Alan Thomson– Talk a little bit about when they are in the queue and when a project comes online. How does Avista deal with that? Do you have capacity or can they get on the system and go elsewhere?

Paul Kimmell – Right. I mean, we have to determine whether it is something that can be in our system and especially, if we are not the off-taker. If that power is going to get wheeled to the market in southern California or something, we just have to ensure that we have the capacity on that system to move that power. It isn't like those electrons that are generated there literally in Southern California, that just have enough capacity to be able to resist and be able to move that (inaudible).

Dave Gibney – Theoretically you could say, “No,” to the project?

Paul Kimmell – We have. I couldn't tell you how often. In some projects we just say, “Hey we can't handle that additional capacity.” Sometimes they will build additional transmission to move it to another site on our system. (inaudible)

Dave Gibney – Do you have some idea of how much before you are maxed out and can't do anymore?

Paul Kimmell – Yes, and that is what these studies help us understand. It's challenging with intermittent generation. You have a resource like a wind project and that can ramp up literally in a few minutes. When you've got to manage that in a real time basis and make sure that that capacity on that (inaudible). But we have great people working on these programs.

Alan Thomson – It is entirely possible that the perspective project, which is the wind one here, we go through the whole process of getting it evaluated and you could reject it.

Paul Kimmell – Potentially, I'm not suggesting that is the case.

Alan Thomson – Yes, but it is possible.

Paul Kimmell – Yes, it is possible, but I think sometimes we will make upgrades on our system. We will put bigger conductors, bigger wires to move more power around. Sometimes, we make those upgrades for wind, whether it is for grid hard use for fire danger, or we do a lot of sink hole conversion. We also upgrade conductors and that increases capacity in certain areas.

**2023 Cluster Study Map** – What that looks like, I think we have three studies going and now cluster studies. This is our CA5 our Palouse study and you can see this green dot is identified as a wind project on our Shawnee system. So, that is likely the Harvest project.

Dave Gibney – So what the blue CA-5 is?

Paul Kimmell - Yes, it is just the (inaudible) of the other two studies.

Dave Gibney – But it's a wind?

Paul Kimmell – The color codes are, green is a wind project, these are some solar storage on here, (inaudible)

Alan Thomson – That would be in Adams County then?

Paul Kimmell – Yes, it would be.

Alan Thomson – Is that the wind farm in Adams County, or is it something new?

Paul Kimmell – Those are solar projects. I don't know anything about them. They are in the queue, so we are doing the study.

Chad Whetzel – I thought Adams County denied solar.

Alan Thomson - No, it was Grant. Adams has a solar ordinance.

Chad Whetzel – (inaudible)

Paul Kimmell – Again, that last paragraph, *“The capacity of the grid must be expanded through the addition of new infrastructure, such as transmission lines, substations, and transformers—or through rebuilds using components that provide higher ratings.”* Sometimes we will do that just because we need it for our own reasons. Sometimes we will do it because we anticipate some additional generation from third parties. So, we don't speculate like that. We don't have customers share hold their capital in speculating with (inaudible) The utility commission wouldn't allow us to speculate that anyway.

Alan Thomson – How does the new state law,

Paul Kimmell – We are getting into that. Just for the record, Harvest Hills, we're not in any serious conversations with them. There is no transmission queue because that's the process they follow. What drives us for new renewable development, we do an integrated resource plan every two years. Both on our electric system and our natural gas system.

So, in that essentially, it is kind of like your (inaudible) but it is a snapshot looking twenty years ahead. We have to do it. We are required to do it every two years to do an integrated resource plan, on electric and gas. So, that changes with technology, with new generation sources, etc., so that will often drive our need for additional resources. While we are projecting, we have seen a lot more population growth than we anticipated, 1.5% versus .8%. So, we are trying to plan out, we are going to need more generation. What is that going to look like?

So, that will often drive us to do a request for proposals, an RFP where we just go after the market. and we say, “Submit a proposal. We don’t really care about the resource type but we need 200 MW of clean renewable generation since we are going to site it in the State of Washington.”

So, it has to comply with all the state laws. So, we will get those proposals. We will get them out and have the conversations. With that, then essentially, how we developed the Rattlesnake Flat project with Clearway Energy out of Washtucna.

Then early on, with Palouse Wind or First Wind at the time, that was also early with the Energy Independence Act in the State of Washington, where we were going to need some qualifying renewable resources by a certain date. So, that project worked and fit within our (inaudible).

Again, we don’t currently have an RFP out on the street. But you can see this kind of project development going on whether it is here in WC but other counties, as well, across the west where there are more aggressive renewable standards, clean energy goals, etc. So, this isn’t, “How come they are picking Whitman County?” They are not just picking WC. There are other counties that they are looking at.

Brian Davies – So, is it safe to say that a lot of this demand from not only Avista, but other utilities to get into potentially green energy or wind and solar storage, is to meet the needs of more customers? More demand, more people moving into the area. There are migration patterns of people moving like to the northwest and that is putting a demand on the system.

Paul Kimmell – You’re right. It is, but it is also driven by some of these clean energy requirements, as well.

Brian Davies – To try and get to that “down the road” goal that we want to get to eventually.

Paul Kimmell – Yes, we are seeing a pretty significant population growth in Kootenai County, for instance. But I’ll show you here on a slide,

**Solving The Resource Puzzle** – Solving the resource puzzle for us is affordable, reliable, clean and now we also have to provide energy Equity. What does that look like? Hold that thought for now.

**Emerging Issues and Trends** – Then some of the other emerging issues you know. Customer expectations, resource adequacy, this energy equity, electrification in our transportation system, as well as some of the clean building code requirements, and building electrification. That is all going to drive more demand for electricity in our system.

Dave Gibney – Is customer participation, my solar panels going to feed back to the grid?

Paul Kimmell – We have those net energy programs,

Dave Gibney – Not that I can do it.

Paul Kimmell – So, there is that, too.

**Clean Energy Goals – State Comparisons** – So, we have clean energy goals for electricity. Where we will be carbon neutral by 2027 and carbon free by 2045. That is in our electric. Then in our natural gas system, we have aspirational goals to reduce that by 30% by 2030 and carbon neutral by 2045. The State of Washington has their clean energy goals in a number of different laws. Climate Commitment Act, Clean Energy Transportation Act and the Clean Energy Implementation Plan, where they say in utilities you can't service with coal after 2025.

So, that is why we are decommissioning our interest in coal, because we can't serve the bulk of our customers anymore. That makes sense for us to discontinue, even though it is a reliable base load but just legally, it is impossible to do. Then they have carbon free by 2045. So again, we are trying to match that as best we can and then around natural gas, the Climate Commitment Act.

There are pretty aggressive goals to reduce carbon in natural gas by 95%. What does that look like? We probably won't be able to serve natural gas in residential and commercial buildings going forward. That is kind of what the building code council is looking at as eliminating natural gas as a fuel source in buildings, and appliances and everything.

Chad Whetzel – They have already done it for new construction.

Paul Kimmell – So, we don't agree with that. We still think the customers should make those choices. Natural gas emissions are roughly half of (inaudible) emissions. So, it is a cleaner fossil fuel. In the State of Oregon, we only have gas customers.

Then in Idaho, we don't have any clean energy goals or requirements. They tell Avista to serve our customers with the lowest cost because energy prices are (inaudible) and we know you are clean already. So, it is a very different regulatory environment for us in Idaho.

Alan Thomson – It would appear that you are going to need some new capacity at some point in the not too distant future. Could you pick up that new capacity with existing capacities such as energy from the Snake River?

Paul Kimmell – So, the way that Energy Independence Act was set up, we couldn't count all of our legacy hydro. Anything built pre-1990, anything hydro built before then wouldn't qualify as a renewable resource. Of course, we (inaudible). But the whole intent of that was to drive more renewable development.

What they do allow is, to do any upgrades on our system, we get to count those. But those are (inaudible). We can improve generation by 5 or 10 MW on a turbine or something. We get to count that. And then we worked hard to get Kettle Falls, because originally woody biomass wasn't included as a renewable resource but we did get them to change that, provided we don't burn (inaudible).

Chad Whetzel – Are you saying that Washington is one of the only states that doesn't consider hydroelectric renewable? I've heard that and I don't know if that is actually true.

Paul Kimmell – That's a good question. I don't know what Washington, Oregon and California how they treat existing hydro. We don't think it is the right thing, but the fact is, so for us as the utility, we've got three states with all these different clean energy requirements, so how do we do that? How do we build

resources we think we can serve customers in Washington? We know we can serve customers in Idaho. But will they qualify in the State of Washington?

Alan Thomson – The reason why hydro was not looked upon as renewable was because if it were, there would be no reason to have wind and solar or any other renewables, because you couldn't compete with that. So, that was a political decision to encourage more renewable energy projects. Otherwise, they wouldn't be able to compete with the dams. Like it or not, agree with it or not.

Chad Whetzel – No, I'm just saying that we are back to the State mandating something to us, not so much that, this is our choice.

Alan Thomson – It is a political decision.

Dave Gibney – Like you were saying, there wouldn't be any of these new projects if they hadn't done what on the face of it sounds like a really stupid thing and saying,

Chad Whetzel – Raise the rates and don't buy resources that we already have, that we were producing at a lower cost.

Paul Kimmell – So, when we negotiate under our power purchasing agreement, Palouse Wind and everything else, we have to make sure the generation cost is in line with our other resources. Idaho is very clear with us, like, "Don't try to attribute any of those costs you are occurring in the State of Washington to Idaho (inaudible)."

Alan Thomson – As far as you know, regarding the Snake River Dam, how much of that that is produced is renewable? They are generating a lot of power. Is it a small percentage?

Paul Kimmell – It is considered renewable. I'm not sure how the Energy Independence Act in the State of Washington is. I don't think impacts the federal hydro system. Those are all federally owned hydro facilities.

Alan Thomson – If Avista wanted to purchase power from the dam, would it be classified as renewable?

Paul Kimmell – So, we do contract. We don't contract with the federal system, but like Chelan PUD, we contract for hydro generation from one of their facilities. So, some of that gets counted as qualified. So, yes, it's like comparing apples to oranges.

**Our Future: A more dynamic power grid** – Again, managing through some of these technology, economic forces, and figure out how we need to decarbonize and still keep the reliability affordability on the environment in balance and energy clean. We are still trying to figure out what that means exactly.

**Avista's Clean Electric Goals** – Our position is we are going to work hard to keep natural gas in our portfolio. We believe that if we were to eliminate natural gas as a generation resource right now, in addition to us eliminating coal, that really puts our system in jeopardy. We need those baseload resources and we need to keep that generation moving. We hope we will see small modular reactors and hope we will see some other kinds of baseload reliable generation in this system. But for now, we are going to push hard for our natural gas generations.

Brian Davies – Is there any more talk about adding more, (inaudible) on the west, the Columbia generating Station (inaudible)?

Paul Kimmell – Yes, we are seeing a lot of research and investment in what they call the small modular reactor. You can site those and distribute those out in your system. I think they have a lot of (inaudible) instead of one big central generation. You can site these outside of Moscow/Pullman to pick up a lot of that generation (inaudible).

Brian Davies – Are there smaller fuel requirements (inaudible)

Paul Kimmell – A lot safer. (inaudible).

**Providing Cleaner Natural Gas** – So, what does that look like for us? We are eliminating our coal and some of our contracting natural gas generations. For this decade we are in right now, we've added some new wind. We are looking at potentially pumped hydro which is siting projects above, let's say the Snake River, lifting water up when power is not needed, and pull that water up on a big reservoir on top. Then when you need that generation, then you put that water back down. It is pretty efficient but it is not cheap.

We have looked at a couple of sites over at Grand Coulee with a number of other utilities and it is just a lot of zeros. But we may see hydro, in fact, we may see pumped hydro as a more economical resource. Certainly, it could be reliable, because we have the water and the fuel there. So, we may see that more in the future, but at this point it isn't quite there.

**Parts of our forward path** - They are working with customers around with demand response and voluntary programs. With electric vehicle, can we use your battery to store generation for a few hours a day? We will pay you to do that. Again, it would take a lot of electric vehicles for that to actually happen. So, things like that. Next decade, we will look at some additional renewables, and then going forward more storage. Battery storage.

Alan Thomson – I see in there, the 2021-2030 column, you don't have any solar space. Is that a possibility? Solar?

Paul Kimmell – Yes, absolutely. Again, that will be driven by our integrated resource plan. Certainly, in the State of Washington, (inaudible).

Alan Thomson – And then there is a stand-alone battery storage, not associated with solar or wind, but a stand-alone. We've actually had an inquiry about it. Is that something that is a possibility?

Paul Kimmell – Yes, and that is in 2031-2040. As we go forward, we are going to need a lot of storage. The storage renewable intermittent energy is like at two in the morning, when the wind is blowing, you have to park that electricity somewhere.

Chad Whetzel – Is Washington State going to consider a digester a renewable resource?



Paul Kimmell – A biodigester? Yes, so in fact, we are working with some renewable what we call it, (inaudible) bio fuels and fuels. In fact, we have a couple of investments with several companies. Whether it is (inaudible) waste, or we are looking at potato waste.

Again, it is not cheap and we are trying to figure out the technology. Because our position is that we have this natural gas infrastructure in the ground. And as we are transitioning and introducing a renewable natural gas in our system, we blend it, we reduce the natural gas, and add some renewable gas to it to make sure its compatible, so we are testing it right now.

Brian Davies – What about hydrogen?

Paul Kimmell – Yes, we also have some investment in that as well.

Brian Davies – I noticed over the holidays that DP is introduced some non-carbon jet fuel and they are testing it out right now and Virgin Airlines is getting the first trans-oceanic test with non-carbon jet fuel.

**We are making progress on our clean energy goals** – Some of our other investments. We have two people dedicated to grant writing. We have always had R&D, but never formalized with all this federal money from the Department of Energy, Defense, and Commerce, and others. We need to be more engaged in that. So, we are making progress on our goals.

We entered into this, what we called the Western Energy Imbalance Market. It provides us more resources and purchase in the market, so we can take advantage of our low-cost generation source in Wyoming (inaudible) for a few hours. It is a very active market. It is working very well. I can't remember how much money we have already saved in 2023. There are renewable natural gas development agreements and then some longer duration energy storage and natural gas technology, and battery storage as well. So, we are putting some money in some of these emerging technologies.

**...and it's not just about new generation DOE Connected Communities Grant** - This is the Department of Energy Connected Community Grant where we actually work with our customers in our communities to improve efficiency, do some load shedding, and balancing shifting around with that. So, it is pretty interesting work and we have a couple feeders up in Spokane (inaudible.) That is a nice project.

**We still have work to do!** We have lots of work to do. Again, in the State of Washington the Climate Commitment Act, Clean Energy Transformation Act, Climate Protection Plan in Oregon, and the Washington Building Code Council requirements, we have just a lot ahead of us in the State of Washington. Part of what you are seeing is renewable energy developers who want to take advantage of the current regulatory climate in the State of Washington. Whether or not we contract with them, if it fits affordable, reliable, and clean, absolutely.

Then this whole energy equity thing, some of us talked about the population with limited income restrain, unemployed. About 35% of our customer base is considered the working poor, that struggles to make monthly payments on energy, transportation, child care and housing, all of that. So, in the State of Washington, that clean energy implementation we have to figure out ways to reduce energy burns especially with our low-income population. That is where this energy equity looks like and those rules are still being written. We are trained to figure out what that looks like, beyond just the programs we provide now through energy systems. How do we get them out of the cycle? (inaudible), Work force training. Those kind of things. That is a big area.

**Serving our Customers into the Future** – Then, more clean generation as you can see. This is, so if you have been to Spokane, that building to the right there is their (inaudible) center where we do real testing around controllable generation and storage. Lots of really cool stuff. Then, electric transportation, you can see that is our Rosalia site but we are building more of that charging infrastructure.

We have programs, where we essentially offer trouble free charging in communities for free. We are trying to really push that infrastructure out because we see electric transportation coming. Whether you agree with it or not. It is coming.

There are lots of moving parts, but for us it is keeping customers and the communities in the center, so never be afraid to pick up the phone and call us. We can answer questions that you have. I started out my political career on the planning and zoning commission in Latah County. I spent six years while I was farming. It was really fun. It is kind of the first time I actually had to say, “No,” when you get into politics and serve on the school board or planning and zoning commission. It is kind of where you earn your stripes. Build that up and move on to the town council. I was a county commissioner. It was rewarding. I learned so much. Sitting right where you are. Not easy, especially when you have to say, “No” to somebody’s property rights.

Brian Davies – Are you going to get a charging station in Uniontown?

Paul Kimmell – Yes. I haven’t heard lately. We had a couple of sites.

Brian Davies – But that least that will give more coverage on 195.

Paul Kimmell – I would like to put one in Washtucna.

Alan Thomson – Are you still looking at the rest area on 195 north, where the wind farm is?

Paul Kimmell – That was originally where I wanted to site it but actually that rest area is served by Lind Power, and I approached them and asked if they wanted to partner? (inaudible) Okay, let’s put it in Rosalia, then. It just so happened that we have that old Texaco, even before it was a Texaco, it was a stable. So, the stage coach stopped there. It is really cool, some of the old pictures. This is a perfect site because we can look at the transition of all these different transportation modes and now, we are doing twenty-first century stuff. Then we put some money in there, painting, etc. We don’t get a ton of use on our electric charging but at WSU at the visitor’s center, down here on the Palouse, that’s probably where we get the most use. That’s a level 2. There is always somebody parked in there.

Chad Whetzel – So, off of wind and solar, did I understand you correctly when you said if you have somebody that is building a facility, wind or solar, they are tying into your substation?

Paul Kimmell – Sometime we will need to build an interconnection site at a substation.

Chad Whetzel – It is going to be at a substation. They may have to do their own substation further on but they are going to tie at a substation?

Paul Kimmell – Yes right. This is not uncommon to see this sort of activity. Just kind of had a couple of fake ones come at you.

Brian Davies – I know there will be a lot of questions for all of us going forward with constituents, people out in the county wondering why are we doing this? We have been pushed.

Paul Kimmell – It is interesting, too. I know Alan, the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC). You know how I'm kind of a local control guy myself, being a former county commissioner and planning and zoning. I would rather those kinds of decisions be made locally as much as possible. You guys know your community properties, etc.

Alan Thomson – That's why we have the ordinances, the solar ordinance.

Paul Kimmell – So, again, get those ordinances out there. First Wind followed through with the wind ordinance. What we are seeing is those counties that have ordinances but they are workable ordinances, they protect property rights, they also facilitate some economic opportunity. I'm not sure the State EFSEC process is quite as warm and fuzzy that way.

Alan Thomson – They have revamped it and there is a fast track. It could be more efficient than going through an EIS. It could be. I've been told from reliable sources, from attorneys that work on these projects, that they will consult with local sources.

Paul Kimmell – Yes, in fact they have to put a local on their,

Alan Thomson – Yes, so they won't bypass us completely, but it is driven by the State and they will consult with the local people.

Paul Kimmell – And then that study that just came out from WASAC about property tax and renewable projects. It was an interesting read. I thought they did a good job on that. I'm not here to commit or criticize these projects. You have a process with these projects.

Brian Davies – One of the smart things for us to do, is to try and get as much information as we possibly can so that we can, in our minds collectively know, what is driving this. What is driving this whole thing, and I'm hearing greater demand. My boss of 24 years is preaching about more and more generation. We need more generation. We are not building enough generation. Pretty soon we will see things like we have already seen in the summer time some significant issues where there has been load shedding and things like that.

Paul Kimmell – That is more a function of distribution. Some of our feeders just get overloaded. There is just more stuff plugged in now and so that's what we discovered a few years ago when we had a few outages. In the last two years we have made up for it with upgrades. We haven't had those issues. Sometimes it can creep up on you. Our load growth is around 1% generally, but there are other places where that's,

Brian Davies – I want to be able to answer questions from concerned people out there that are just, "We don't want this stuff here. Why are they building this here when they can build it down in Nevada where the sun shines all the time?" Because the demand here, I can see is the issue driving this. Not the demand today but the demand,

Chad Whetzel – But the State is pushing it. There are other resources but the State is really pushing it.

Brian Davies – With the renewable stuff, yes.

Paul Kimmell – You can kind of see our future in Washington. Eliminating coal, which is a reliable baseline, and then potentially natural gas. So, what's left? Hydro is stable and woody biomass, but then,

Chad Whetzel – WSU has been removing the natural gas. They have to and they are trying to figure out how they are going to switch to electric and that will drive that even higher.

Brian Davies – The whole country is going to have to do that and that's why, isn't it easy to make hydrogen?

(Everyone is talking at once!)

Paul Kimmell – We are seriously looking at it. We've had estimates in fuel cells for a number of years.

Dave Gibney – Variations on natural gas whether it is bio or whatever, to getting it to hydrogen, that's a fairly short pathway.

Paul Kimmell – We hope so.

Dave Gibney – What is currently somewhat driving this is the potential plan and the reason of the siting is the proximity to one of the Avista substations?

Paul Kimmell – Ideally siting these projects close to existing transmission, that is pretty much how that works.

Dave Gibney – Right, so how much more expensive is it for every 5 miles we push them further into the scaB lands?

Paul Kimmell – I'll get you a number. I'll get you a transmission cost plan. But it certainly is a cost driver.

Dave Gibney – I understand it is like another 15-20 miles and they are over in the outside of the ag land and one of the driving forces in WC is the protection of the agricultural land.

Chad Whetzel – I know you are from Avista but I've heard a lot about Avista, is Inland getting any of this to tie into or not?

Paul Kimmell – They get treated a little differently, again. They are starting to see some challenges. I would say more of their challenges are around what the customers want but also the federal system in reaching the lower Snake River Dams, what does that do to their power contract costs? Because to purchase that generation, so what is their future look like. They have had a relatively stable energy source and cost for many years from Bonneville, from the federal system.

Dave Gibney – Who would we ask to get a similar map of the other transmission lines in WC?

Paul Kimmell – I can see if we have that.

Brian Davies – I know Clearwater and Inland?

Paul Kimmell – Yes, Clearwater and Inland. I don't think we have Big Bend. And then there are some federal down on the southern end.

Chad Whetzel – We might actually talk to Emergency Management, Bill Tensfield. I know, through the Fire Department we used to have maps of Inland and Avista in our district and how old and accurate they are, I could not speak to that.

Weston Kane – That map only has the biggest of stuff. Like Endicott and Lacrosse are both on (inaudible) and that map doesn't show them.

Paul Kimmell – Those aren't transmission. Those are distribution feeders.

Weston Kane – Inland has this little pocket by my house.

Dave Gibney – Unless it is coming in from Adams County, it's a fairly long one to get to Lacrosse.

Paul Kimmell – No, it feeds off of, comes out of Endicott,

Weston Kane – Endicott goes down south of the County.

(Everyone is talking again!)

Dave Gibney – The reason I asked for it is because this is the first glance, the more economic places for renewables to site. They want to be by Shawne or Boardman.

Paul Kimmell – I would say, generally speaking, yes.

Alan Thomson – So, tying into that thought Dave, about protecting prime ag land. We can do that. We can write something into the code on that one and we have the ability to identify what is prime ag land in WC. So, that is one of the things I think we should consider and talk about and put it in the code.

Chad Whetzel – Along those lines, something that I thought of was, obviously we are going to be faced with this one way or the other, and granted it is probably the circle around in the (inaudible). Nobody that I have talked to is happy with solar deal. It's coming whether we like it or not.

But is it a possibility that we can do something similar like what we did with the cluster housing? Where you more or less say, these are the areas we are going to identify as possibilities for wind or solar. Then one of the things I was looking at with Rosalia, where they have all these overlapping, if that is solar and I may be wrong on this, but it seems like with solar you actually have to fence things off, because you don't want deer and cattle in there.

But now, you are also limiting the movement of wild life. Your small animals are going to be fine. But the deer, elk and the moose that come down out of Idaho and into the Palouse area. If we end up with

all this fenced off now, you're going to mess up migrator systems. I know F&WL from Washington State is going to tell us that is not an issue but, this is what the Governor wants so they are going to tell us what the Governor wants. We can't have massive chunks of ground and completely eliminate large game movements.

Alan Thomson – We can control that with the ordinance and through the environmental review. The SEPA review. We can write things out that we don't want and also in the conditional use permit process. For instance, if we have an avian pathway through WC or bats that have congregated in such and such an area, we are not going to allow windmills up there. We have that possibility. We have that same with solar. We identify the prime farm land and we write into the code Category I Farmland, which we have map of, you can't build there.

Chad Whetzel – So, that's great for farm ground. Now you push them all out into that scab grounds of St. John/ Lamont area. That's where a lot of your wildlife also live because there is less, they are not being disturbed by the people. We don't want to, I don't know if we can limit by a percentage,

Alan Thomson – No, there will be studies done in the environmental process. The SEPA will require that you do environmental studies, so wildlife corridors, for instance, need to be identified. We put a condition in the CUP, saying that you have to allow some area here for wildlife passage.

Dave Gibney – As long as it is defensible from science and whatever, and isn't just flat-out nimby.

Chad Whetzel – They don't consider deer a migratory animal. They move but they are not considered a migratory animal.

Alan Thomson – We can still review that and look into that. We know where the deer go. The locals know where the deer go, so the review period we can look into that. Then if we see an issue, we can try and steer it away from those areas. That would be before the project is built, obviously. So, that we can cover. Both in the ordinance and in the environmental review.

Paul Kimmell – If you want to get an idea, I would encourage you to drive out to Lind and look at that a 24 MW solar project, just above town. So, you kind of get a feel of how 200 acres of solar panels look like.

Mark Tolman – Does Avista have any friends left in that town? Just checking.

Paul Kimmell – We worked with the local community.

Mark Tolman – You would have to.

Brian Davies – Here again, if somebody's got 1,000 acres of ground and they want to lease it to these guys to build a solar farm, there is a certain amount of private property rights there that we will have to,

Alan Thomson – We have to balance that, too.

Brian Davies – And who is to say they are in the wrong. So, the communities all got to talk about this.

Chad Whetzel – There will be a number of people, from what I understand those contracts are not that great. They are basically they are barely making an average year of cost. That is just talking to a lawyer that has drawn up a lot of these. It's not like the landowner is making a ton of money.

Brian Davies – It's not like a mineral, like an oil well on your ground.

Chad Whetzel – But when you look at what you need to exist, you've got to have food and energy. Without those two things we don't have an economy. But if you convert all your food ground into energy ground now, we got a problem. So, we could protect, like Alan said, we can protect some of our farm ground,

Brian Davies – Through smart siting these projects, we can protect more.

Alan Thomson – So, there are some landowners who don't want to farm anymore, and it is their land, their choice, to get into any contract they want, their choice. So, we have to keep that in mind. That is the balance. Private property rights, versus I don't want a bunch of windmills and I don't want solar panels all over the place.

Chad Whetzel – On the private property rights, so when I know when the utility company goes through and they decide that you need a new power line, how does that work if your power line has to go through my property? Do you have to, is that an easement? Is it a lease, or how does that work?

Paul Kimmell – We've purchased right-of-way. As a last resort we have the ability to eminent domain but it is rare. We will work and agree, hopefully, a fair market price but we want to ensure those property owners being on a,

Chad Whetzel – What I've heard from individuals, different projects where they've gone through and, granted the power line only takes up a very small area, but it is situated where they ended up almost losing 30, because you can't get the equipment through anymore. So, these energies are going to be different than the utility companies. But if you have landowner A and says, "I want to do a solar project, but we have to go over Landowner B's property." And landowner B is saying, "I don't want that." How do you balance those property rights?

Alan Thomson – Landowner B trumps it. It wins. You know you can't go through somebody's property without their permission.

Brian Davies – I have a friend in Asotin County who happens to be up over Feola Flat. He is sitting on that land that they want to do that proposed solar on. There are two or three property owners between the Avista substation down on Feola Road by the landfill, which is a perfect connection, a corridor up to Brian's property, which is towards Asotin Creek that flows that direction. All the neighbors are talking with the engineers. At this point it is only preliminary, but there is a lot of negotiations going on right now.

Paul Kimmell – Transmission siting is probably just as hard if not harder, than actually siting generation. Some of the things we see in southern Idaho and some of the big wind projects down there, putting transmission lines through federal property with sage grouse and invasive species and then landowners with pivot irrigation systems. It is not easy.

Brian Davies – Do you know anything about that big project on public land? Is it stalled?

Paul Kimmell – Yes, it is stalled. I don't think there is anybody supporting them, the developers. From the governor to federal delegation to the county commissioners. That is a big.

Chad Whetzel – The 47 Hills one, I understand they have been told they have to remove a bunch of windmills from a while back. If people really don't like it and they have enough political strength you can get anything done.

Alan Thomson – That's probably not going to fly in Washington. I'm talking about local stuff here, stopping local stuff here. If people don't like it.

Dave Gibney – We don't have too much native sovereign land in WC.

Chad Whetzel – It's not even that. It's part of it was tribal but that Horse Heaven Hills one south of Othello, I don't know what all the issues were down there, it wasn't all tribal ground down there. There was an arbitrator that came through and they decided to rectify part of their issues that they would reduce the windmill numbers by at least 160.

Paul Kimmell – It is just a big project. Well, thank you very much. Thank you for the opportunity.

Alan Thomson – Thank you for coming, Paul. Can you send us a copy of your PowerPoint?

Paul Kimmell – Yes, I'll send map and a pdf of the PowerPoint.

Dave Gibney – And maybe some thoughts on the existing grid that is not yours. Thank you.

Alan Thomson – Thank you.

Paul Kimmell – Yes, best wishes. You guys will figure it out.

Mark Tolman – I'm moving to Idaho.

Alan Thomson – Do you have anything else you want to talk about?

Dave Gibney – You said you might have fire people here?

Alan Thomson – They decided, I guess they decided not to because we didn't have Vespers. They wanted to ask particular questions about fire safety. I reached out to the Rosalia Fire District and two, I talked with them and they were really interested in getting involved in this and they still will. Since Vespers was not here tonight, they opted out.

I sent them the information that I received today on these batteries. So hopefully, that helps them understand because when I talked to them on the phone, they were really concerned about data that they had read with Li-ion batteries that it took a bunch of water to put out the fire. So, with the information we received today, seems like they are self-contained.

Chad Whetzel – They are self-contained until they burn. Yes, but is the self-containment simply a 20 x 10 x 10 Onyx box or is it a 2 x 2 square within that Onyx box?



Alan Thomson – Well, that we will find out. But the situation seems to, that as long as you build it properly and you don't have anything that can catch fire within range of the batteries, and you protect the land, then it is contained within these boxes. It is very rare that a fire even occurs. But if one does, you don't need a bunch of water to put it out.

Dave Gibney - No, the gist of this is, you let it burn. You don't try and put it out, you let it use up the fuel.

Alan Thomson – You let it burn. But read the stuff, you might not have been able to get to the email, Chad, but there's a UL study on that and you have that in the email. They let them burn. They burn for a long time.

Chad Whetzel – If that is going to be the case, who is in charge of it once it catches fire? How long are you going to commit a volunteer fire fighter to stand there and watch something burn?

Alan Thomson – There is an operation safety plan and again, read that data you received today. We will put that in the CUP. They need to have a fire prevention plan. Then there is a whole bunch of steps that you take and it is their responsibility, Vesper's responsibility, the applicant, the fire department might not have much to do. But people like Vesper will train the local fire department at their expense how to deal with this.

Dave Gibney – In some ways, it would also be like they handled the gas leak. If they don't have somebody to watch that for the next year while it is going to be on to bring somebody in, but they are the ones responsible for it.

Alan Thomson - Yes, so the data suggests, and we need to flush this out even more, we will get Vesper on the hook here and make sure we understand it. But the data seems to suggest that if a fire occurs, if it is built properly and placed properly, it won't spread.

Dave Gibney – We are still very likely to end up with proposals for batteries without new generation, just the flat-out storage. I'm sure sometime soon, there will be a proposal to plant a bunch of batteries right up there next to that,

Alan Thomson – As I said already, we have already had somebody reach out to us and asked about a battery storage area. Not associated with a wind farm or a solar farm. Just storage. Right now, it is just a reach out but there's nothing concrete.

Dave Gibney – Avista a few years ago was talking about battery and natural gas generators to stabilize that wind farm right up there by,

Chad Whetzel – It almost sounds to me that really what we need to be working on is two separate codes.

Alan Thomson – We can combine the codes so, this is storage, we can put something in this potential code right here as well. I have seen combinations like that.

Dave Gibney – Or a chapter on energy.

Chad Whetzel – I guess that is what I mean. We have the solar and then we will have storage and they could either be solar and wind or by itself.

Dave Gibney – Storage gets complicated, because he mentioned the pumped hydro, you could do a lot of pumped hydro out of the Snake River up to the top and flood some land.

Weston Kane – Better not be prime farmland.

Dave Gibney – You pump it up with cheap electricity when there is no demand and then you generate. You don't beat any laws of thermodynamics but you get some economic variation. There is a proposal like that in Klickitat County and the locals are against it.

Brian Davies – I think with these new projects there is going to be a lot of push back for projects, so we have to be ready for that.

Dave Gibney – Whatever we do has to be defensible.

Alan Thomson – What we have to understand, and also what the public has to understand, is that we have a comprehensive plan that encourages renewables and we have a wind ordinance code. We have already determined in WC that we want renewables, government-wise. The BOCC have agreed to this. Once we have the solar ordinance in place, it is legitimate for us to receive applications to build solar and wind. We just have to make sure that we are mitigating potential impacts as best as possible.

Dave Gibney – And identifying the potential impacts as best as possible.

Alan Thomson – Yes, and that is what the EIS will do. The check-list whatever it is, will identify all of the potential impacts, evaluate them, and hopefully mitigate them.

Dave Gibney – So, can you turn on those wind mills up there and blow all the fog away between here and Pullman?

Alan Thomson – I know, are we ready to quit? We should close the meeting.

**MOTION** by Brian Davies and seconded by Weston Kane to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.

The next meeting will be **February 7, 2024**, and hopefully, we will have Vesper here with us.

**Adjourned - 8:47 p.m.**