

Electric League Code Committee Meeting Notes from 12/16/2009 Submitted by Greg Batie

Attendance:

Allan Toole	Power Plus	Linda Howell	Electric League
Greg Batie	Sparling	Dick Becker	EEL
Bop Fuhr	Power Studies	Mark Gibbs	City of Seattle
Bruce Colony	Affiliated Engineers	Len Whalen	Holmes Electric (via phone)
Tim Hingtgen	Dept. of Labor & Ind.	Dan Steinert	SASCO
Christine Porter	Intertek	Gary Lydum	Hozack, Inc.
Murray McKinney	McKinney & Assoc.	Al Hewitt	Bussmann
Bob Lloyd	City of Bellevue	Bob Johnson	City of Bellevue
Bob Eugene	UL (via phone)	Joe Andre	NEMA
Uzma Siddiqi	SCL	Syd France	PSE
Rich Adams	PSE	Bob Schneider	D.Hittle & Assoc. Inc.
Jim McDougal	Snohomish PUD (via phone)		
Rick Allen	Snohomish PUD (via phone)		
James Hellman	City of Tacoma (via phone)		

Opening:

The meeting was opened at 7:30 AM by Chairman Allan Toole and introductions were made.

Previous Minutes:

- Minutes from the November 18, 2009 meeting were approved with the following clarification under IAEI changed to read "The [Eastern Washington](#) IAEI meeting in February will be looking at fuel cells."

Reports:

State of Washington - Tim Hingtgen

- Plan review backlog is no longer than 2 weeks on average. New plan submittals are fewer and are more in line of what was happening a couple of years ago.
- They have been developing an electrical response manual for the potential flooding in the Green River Valley.
- The WAC rule for replacement of flood damaged electrical equipment attempted to follow the NEMA guidelines to replace circuit breakers, receptacles and switches.
- UL recommends that NM cable be replaced if it gets wet.
- Al Hewitt commented that he flew over the Howard Hanson dam last weekend and the lake is empty.
- The Chief Electrical Inspector will convene a full WAC Rule technical committee after the next legislative session, perhaps in March, 2010.

City of Seattle - Mark Gibbs

- They are getting closer to their target of 2 weeks or less turnaround for plan review.
- They are also still chasing down expired permits.
- They had an internal meeting to look at the cable bus product.

City of Bellevue - Bob Lloyd

- They are down two inspectors. One plumbing inspector is retiring and that position will not be replaced.
- Plan review is staying busy with a 2 week turnaround. Lots of small plans are being submitted.
- Tower cranes went up last week for the Overlake MOB project and for the Avalon project.
- Bellevue Electrical Code amendments are going through the legislature in January. Hope to adopt the Washington Cities Electrical Code.
- The City of Bellevue is reviewing the building code IBC amendments.
- They are starting to review photovoltaic (PV) systems. The first ones are for residential systems. They review all electrical components and a structural analysis. They have seen 3 PV projects so far.

City of Tacoma - James Hellman

- Things are a little slow, but some larger plans are coming in. They will be training another person to do plan review.
- City of Tacoma is still working with the 2005 code; hope to adopt the 2008 NEC in January. They did not adopt the exceptions in the WAC for arc fault circuit interrupters.

Puget Sound Energy - Syd France

- They are filing the energy efficiency programs with the state commission. These programs propose to save 30 MW which is 1% of the average system load.
- Their load growth last year was slightly lower than previous years.
- 4900 MW what the historical peak demand. They hit 4700 MW on December 7th.
- The gas usage peak was realized last week. Seattle Steam and U of W were on gas curtailment.

Seattle City Light - Uzma Siddiqi

- Seattle City Light has updated their construction guidelines and are now calling them Construction Standards. They changed the numbering system and grouped standards together by association with the Seattle Building and Electrical Codes.
- Overall goal was not to change anything, but rather to consolidate standards and get rid of conflicts.
- See <http://www.seattle.gov/light/engstd/>

Snohomish County PUD - Rick Allen

- For the last 4 or 5 months they have been working with Jim Henrich (local L & I inspector) and Ron Fuller on permitting energy conservation projects. They are trying to find a way for these projects to be properly permitted.
- Per Tim Hingtgen they have seen a number of energy conservation projects across the state that have been performed by out of state contractors that are unlicensed and not-permitted.
- The utility pays an incentive to the owner to do the project and the customer is responsible for having the contractor get the proper permits. SnoPud is planning on submitting a list of conservation projects to L & I with the contractor's name that have been accepted by Snohomish County.

UL - Bob Eugene (www.ul.com)

- UL 8750 Safety Standard for LED Lighting Equipment was published Nov. 30th.
- There is a new UL mark for Europe. The first transcontinental mark.

IEEE - Dick Becker (<http://www.ieee-seattle.org>)

- NEC code making panel 2 met last week. One proposal was to allow AFCI receptacles which appeared to be passed by the panel, but the directed voting did not pass, which means that only circuit breakers will be allowed to provide AFCI protection. There was a motion to "hold discussion" because the vote was deadlocked 5 to 5 with 1 absention.
- NEMA's official position has not been established yet. The Standards Committee meets in January.
- Dick's concerns is that we have lost focus. AFCI's do not protect for overheated contacts.
- There was also a new proposal for a smart receptacle that would require the insertion of a smart plug to activate the receptacle.

NEMA - Joe Andre (www.nema.org)

- Joe is on code making panel 1 responsible for NEC articles 90, 100, 110.
- 90.2 discussion about what is included in the NEC. The utilities were upset that "or other agreements" was taken out. The panel put some of the language that was deleted back into the code.
- Issue has more to do with property access to allow utilities access i.e. Indian Reservations and military installations. The NEC needs to be applied to properties that have public access.
- There was a requirement to post and date the Arc Fault current on electrical equipment (except residential equipment).
- Article 110 will still require arc flash circuit interrupters.
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IAEI - Christine Porter (www.psiae.com)

- The 2010 Tri Chapter Meeting will be held at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Tuckwila on March 12th & 13th. On Friday they will have two educational sessions covering electrical requirements of the State Energy Code and how they will impact installations and enforcement (to be presented by Joe Andre and Kristyn Clayton). The afternoon session will be about the installations and inspections of Wind Generator Systems and PV Systems. The Saturday session will cover the electrical requirements for swimming pools, spas and hot tubs, fountains, and hydro-massage tubs. The afternoon session will be a preview of the 2011 NEC and how the upcoming changes may impact the electrical design and installations as well as enforcement of the code.
- Christine is on code panel 5 for grounding. The proposed code will still allow building steel as a ground electrode. They eliminated the defination of grounding electrode in article 100.

Washington State Energy Code - (sent via e-mail by Kristyn Clayton)

- On Nov 20 the State Building Code Council voted to adopt the package of energy code changes that were recommended by the technical advisory group. This was a vote of 2 to 1 that indicated to the opposition that it is important for our state to continue with the improvement on energy codes for new construction. The opposition felt that adding cost (although a good bit of the cost was adding man hours) would keep the housing market from rebounding. This was also in direct rebuttal to a Joint Committee of the Legislature which requested that we not adopt codes since we had not completely satisfied the requirements of a

small business impact statement to estimate the amount of jobs won or lost due to the 97 changes. The Council sent a letter stating that we felt we had met our obligations. The Governor's office backed our assessment.

- The short story is this action will probably go to court at the behest of the Building Industry Association of WA who was the major opponent with the findings of the Legislative committee to back them up. The code changes will go into affect on July 1, 2010 if there is no further action.
- The changes are extensive and would increase stringency in our state for both commercial and residential construction by an estimated energy savings of 20%. Of particular interest to the Electric League is a new chapter on metering for commercial buildings, new lighting fixture requirements for residences, tighter controls for mechanical systems for both residential and electrical and more stringent Lighting Power Allowances for almost all commercial spaces. There also was a redefinition of High Rise Residential construction to be commercial in nature and not residential. This will change all of the criteria for those structures.
- Please don't hesitate to contact me for any further detail. It will be another year of extreme controversy and conflict with a new Council (1/3 are not returning). So stay tuned!

Electric League - Linda Howell

www.electricleague.net

- There is a new Electric League membership directory on the website which can be searched by individual member and industry categories. The primary representative for each company can edit the information on the site.
- Phase II will be coming in the new year with room for additional search fields.
- January luncheon will be "Utility Energy Efficiency Programs and Related Federal Stimulus Projects" Presented by Puget Sound Energy, Seattle City Light, Snohomish County PUD, and Tacoma Public Utilities on Thursday, January 21, 11:30 - 1:00, at Puget Sound Energy in Bellevue.
- February luncheon will be Jim Herbert for the state of the economy.

New Business

Next Meeting: January 20, 2010 at Puget Sound Energy in Bellevue.

Adjournment