



OFFICE OF THE
CITY CLERK

CITY OF EL PASO DE ROBLES

"The Pass of the Oaks"

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

ADJOURNED REGULAR MEETING

PG&E WORKSHOP

WEDNESDAY, JULY 21, 1999 - 7:00 PM

MEETING LOCATION: PASO ROBLES LIBRARY/CITY HALL
CONFERENCE CENTER, 1000 SPRING STREET

CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 PM

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL Council members Tom Baron, Walt Macklin, Frank Mecham, Lee Swanson and Mayor Duane Picanco were all present.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Bob Wilcox complimented the City Council on the July 20, 1999 meeting.

DISCUSSION

1. **PG&E Power Line**

George Finigan of PG&E provided background information on the purpose and intent of the workshop, indicating that the focus would be a discussion regarding power line and electrical supply upgrade, as well as alternative alignments for new electric transmission lines.

Bob Masuka of PG&E presented an overview of how PG&E would apply for new facilities through the State Public Utilities Commission (PUC).

John Hagen of PG&E described the two sources of electric power to Paso Robles (from San Luis Obispo and Coalinga) and noted that the current 70kV transmission line is overloaded. He explained the need to reinforce (reconstruct) the current 70 kV line and to add a second 70 kV line.

Galen Raymond of PG&E explained the different alternative alignments for the new 70 kV line that is under study.

Councilman Baron asked for further information on the Charolais Road alignment alternative, which was provided by PG&E.

Mayor Picanco noted that PG&E should consider undergrounding existing lines.

Councilman Baron asked the cost of undergrounding transmission lines; PG&E representatives responded that costs of undergrounding a 70 kV line are typically 15 to 16 times the cost of installing an overhead transmission line.

Councilman Swanson commented that all new lines should be undergrounded, even if the process is expensive, and that PG&E should make every effort to underground both new and old lines.

Councilman Baron asked about the reliability factor of underground lines versus overhead (about the same) and the useful life (differences have not been identified).

Councilman Mecham asked for information on who pays for undergrounding, and noted that transmission lines should be located so as not to impact residential areas. PG&E responded that there are two basic sources for funding of undergrounding of existing lines: Rule 20A funds, which are allocated to each community by PG&E per direction of the PUC, and Rule 20B funds (through which local communities pay about 70 percent of the cost of undergrounding - - PG&E rate payers cover the balance of the costs). It was noted that the approximate cost of undergrounding a 70 kV line is about \$1600. per lineal foot.

Councilman Baron asked if there is a difference in Electrical Magnetic Fields (EMF) for overhead versus underground lines. PG&E responded that EMF magnitude is a function of distance - - the further the line is away from the point of measurement, the lower the reading - - regardless of whether or not it is underground or overhead. Hence, overhead lines, being perhaps further away, could result in lower EMF readings.

Mayor Picanco expressed concerns about neighborhood impacts and noted that installation of new transmission lines overhead along Niblick Road would be inconsistent with past Rule 20 investments to underground the previously existing lines.

Councilman Macklin asked a series of questions regarding the status of the existing 70 kV line (PG&E proposes to reconstruct the line in the current location), the new line (different location alternatives are under study), and EMF implications of having two lines. PG&E noted that having two transmission lines on the same pole results in the EMF from each line partially canceling out the EMF from the other line.

Mayor Picanco asked if having two lines would increase reliability of service to the PG&E substation (yes).

Councilman Mecham asked if PG&E could move the substation to another location, so that the supply lines would not have the same impacts. PG&E responded that they are looking at the need for new substation locations, but that the investigations would not include relocation of the existing substation since the substation needs to be located so as to serve the existing and project electrical service loads.

In response to a question from Councilman Swanson as to whether or not there are any real choices, PG&E responded that they are willing to consider all options.

Mayor Picanco asked about the need for an easement for PG&E to install new transmission lines along the Union Pacific Rail corridor; PG&E noted that they would need to acquire easements.

At 8:00 the City Council took a break, reconvening at 8:10. Following the break, the public was invited to pose questions and provide comments on the alternatives.

Bob Wilcox expressed concerns about high metal poles and EMF, and recommended use of the Union Pacific Railroad corridor.

Bob Findlay noted that wooden poles are not as obtrusive as steel poles.

Jerry Greene asked a series of questions regarding environmental review, EMF, the cost of undergrounding, impacts on swimming pools, and why both the existing and new 70kV lines could not be consolidated into a single transmission corridor along the west side of the Salinas River. PG&E responded that the PUC would determine the environmental review process, that new facilities are designed to minimize EMF, and that there are no restrictions about installing a swimming pool under a PG&E easement; they indicated they would consider Mr. Green's comments.

Rob Miller asked why PG&E avoids installing transmission lines near schools (based on public concerns) and asked PG&E to consider the density of a residential subdivision versus school sites that are often setback far from public streets where the transmission lines are located. He supported the consolidation of both the existing and new 70kV lines into a single transmission corridor along the west side of the Salinas River

Bill Hawks expressed concerns regarding increased Health & Safety hazards and EMF.

Lisa Martinez of Templeton asked about how long the proposed project would be able to serve the growth in the North County area (a function of the rate of growth) and noise from overhead lines (reconstruction of the existing line and installation of a new line would each substantially reduce current noise).

Sharon Hyde asked about having more EMF testing and advocated undergrounding of the transmission lines along South River Road.

Dale Gustin expressed concerns regarding the need for a safe environment and indicated support for consolidation of both the existing and new 70kV lines into a single transmission corridor along the west side of the Salinas River.

Howard Hyde discussed his concerns regarding increased EMF from the current 70 kV line and also supported the consolidation of both the existing and new 70kV lines into a single transmission corridor along the west side of the Salinas River.

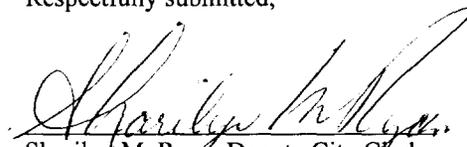
Steven Hall requested a copy of any future Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on the PG&E project and sought further clarification regarding Rule 20A and 20B funding (which PG&E provided). He also favored a west of the Salinas consolidation of the existing and new transmission lines.

Nick Ferravanti pointed out the need for new electrical service to the area, safety concerns about having transmission lines along a rail transportation corridor, sought more information on the cost of undergrounding and suggested funding for undergrounding via a monthly per meter charge to all Paso Robles residents. He noted that whichever the location, there would likely be concerns from nearby property owners.

On behalf of the City Council, Mayor Picanco thanked PG&E and the public for their participation in the Workshop and concluded that the undergrounding and consolidation on the west side of the Salinas were the alternatives that should be given further evaluation, including consideration of any impacts on the west side of the Salinas. PG&E confirmed that they would take into consideration all of the comments received from the City Council and members of the public as they prepare their applications for consideration by the PUC, and that a summary of their findings will be prepared and provided to the City before the applications are filed with the PUC.

ADJOURNMENT: 9:30 PM to THE REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 3, 1999,
7:30 PM AT THE LIBRARY/CITY HALL CONFERENCE CENTER, 1000 SPRING STREET

Respectfully submitted,


Sharilyn M. Ryan, Deputy City Clerk