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Group:

Aye.

Mario:

Anyone opposed? Anyone abstaining? Okay. Very good. So we're done with the process portions, now we can get into the timeline. So Suzanne, thank you. That was a very good suggestion. Hetal and Ted worked hard to put together a timeline, which I'm hoping gets shared.

Jennifer:

It should be up there. You should see it. I'm trying to increase the size. Okay.

Ted:

Not there yet.

Mario:

Coming through.

Jennifer:

I also have a PDF, but the two pages are not together, they're on separate pages. Do you need them together, Ted?

Mario:

No.

Ted:

We don't need the calendar one.

Jennifer:

Okay. All right. Let me bring up the PDF then.

Ted:

Here we go.

Jennifer:

Here.Okay. Can everybody see that?

Stephen:

Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Jennifer:

All right.[crosstalk 00:03:00]

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Mario:

Can you enlarge that a little bit, Jennifer?

Jennifer:

Let me see. Hold on a minute. A little Bigger.

Mario:

That's good. Now, can just scroll down just a hair.

Jennifer:

Okay.

Mario:

There we go. I think that's perfect.

Jennifer:

Shrunk up again.

Mario:

Yeah, I think that happens when you do that.

Jennifer:

Okay. I'll just leave it like this. Okay.

Mario:

Okay. That should get, think I'll hold it on from there. So, I'm not sure who wants to walk through this Hetal or Ted.

Ted:

Yeah, I'm going to start out. Hetal's going to be back up when I go wrong. Okay?

Mario:

Very good.

Ted:

Doesn't happen very often. So, at the last meeting you remember that we started talking out the procedures and we said that Suzanne's idea made a lot of sense. Let's have some charts. So that's what Hetal and I have been working on a past week, excuse me, past month or so. And have shot this around a little bit. So, on the left-hand side, you see somewhat of a calendar with different starting dates and different week numbers. What we wanted to do was test our processes against various timelines in terms of calendars, because the month's vary depending on where the authority meeting is and where

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the RPB meeting is, it could be very early in a month in terms of the timing, or it could be a little bit later in a month. So we wanted to test that out.

Ted:

That's why those are there. The most important column there is the week call. Week one, two, three, four. Process A is our standard process. We talked about it last time, we won't spend a lot of time here. So, week one, the authority meeting, project submitted. If they approve it to pass it on, if they consider it complete pass it on. Recommendation for approval by the RPB. About three weeks later, it goes to the finance committee for their review for completeness and forwarding to the RPB, to set a public hearing. Typically the week after the finance committee meeting, the RPB has their regular meeting and set a public hearing month out for the project. This could be a Land Use Plan Amendment too depending on what it is.

Ted:

So, if it's the Land Use Plan Amendment instead of finance committee, it will be Land Use Plan. Land Use Committee will be reviewing the application. So, a month out on week number nine is the public hearing typically. And then week 14, a month later is a decision that is made on the project. Now that's the normal process, takes about 13 weeks, instead of 13 to 14. 13 is the quickest, depending on what the calendar looks like. 14 can happen depending also when the meetings are within the month.

Mario:

And Ted, one question. The week one is actually when the authority meets, but you actually start this five to six weeks prior to the authority meeting, correct?

Ted:

That's correct. If not beyond that, depending on the size of the project. Yeah. So this is going on. So week one is really started about the approval process here, but there's a lot of work going on before we even get to a week number one. That's right, Mario. Thank you. So are there any questions on the current process? Seems to work well.

Ted:

Process B, we've added, is the emergency process that was made possible by the changes in the Enabling Legislation that allowed us to go with a seven day notice period for the public hearing. So in this case, requires three special meetings. So a special authority meeting, project submitted to the authority, reviewed and forwarded to special finance meeting, review the application for completeness and forward to the RPB chair to set the public hearing. And so requires only seven days notice, it gives a short window for interrogatories, we've added interrogatories in the processes of B, C and D to show you where they would lay out. And then this special RPB meeting would be the public hearing and decision in the same meeting. Now that would be for an emerging process like the Tunnel or some other catastrophic failure of infrastructure or something that had to happen very quickly. Now that is a four week process right there. It's the fastest we can possibly do it.

Stephen:

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Ted, this is Steve. When we've done this, I know we have too much experience, but is that one week for interrogatories? Has that been sufficient or have we extended that?

Ted:

Well, Steve, we rarely have done this process, we got close to it when we did the Tunnel. But the seven day period came in after the Tunnel. So, it is a process that we have not tested yet.

Stephen:

Yeah. It really doesn't give a lot of time.

Ted:

It doesn't, but in a case of a tunnel project, you really got to move. So everybody's got to work together on it.

Stephen:

Yeah.

Ted:

Processes-

Mario:

Before you leave the emergency, the other thing that would be critical and it actually gives an extra week for interrogatories to a certain extent, was as soon as the authority approves this to move it forward, the application has to be sent out to all parties. You can't wait until finance sees it and then says, "Okay, now we'll send it to the rest of the RPB."

Ted:

Right. Any other questions on Process B? All right. Processes C and D are proposed expedited processes. They vary a little bit. Now process B, I want to just make note requires three special meetings process A, the normal, does not require any. Process C, starts out with a special authority meeting after their normal meeting, which would be actually the top line and then goes to a Finance Committee for their review, RPB sets a public hearing right after the Finance Committee Review.

Ted:

The following week RPB meeting, public hearing is already set. So you jumped down to the week number eight, which is a special RPB meeting for a public hearing, and then a week later, normal RPB meeting for the decision. So this requires two special meetings. You have a couple of weeks for interrogatories. So this process would be used depending on when management has these four projects that are urgent, but not necessarily emergency projects. This will be used when management has the application ready in between the normal time, So we can't submit it in time for our normal authorities or a regular authority meeting, excuse me.

Ted:

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If you scroll down a little bit you'll see that one, it requires eight weeks to complete and has two special meetings. Authority and then the RPB special meeting, which is a public hearing.

Mario:

So one other piece to that, Ted, that may require another special meeting and I think it's taken care of in the next, and proposal for. I believe that the Enabling Legislation says that the full RPB sets the public hearing. And so, unless it's an emergency where the chair can. So somehow, and we'll all cover it in the next one, but just keep that in mind.

Ted:

Thank you.

Stephen:

To attend the time-saver there is just the ability to have a special meeting, correct?

Ted:

That's correct. That's the case for both C and D Stephen. Yes.

Stephen:

Okay.

Ted:

So moving over to process D, which is another expedited process, authority holds a regular meeting, project submitted to the authority, forwarded to the Finance committee and the RPB. And now this time, a instead of a special authority meeting in C, there's a special finance committee meeting, review the application for completeness and forwarded to the RPB chair to set the public hearing. And that's a 20 day period just like it was in actually C, I didn't mention that. So what we do now is go out 20 days.

Ted:

In this case, it would be a regular meeting down below you have a couple of weeks for interrogatories. In this case, you can actually have some time actually in the week of the public hearing as well. And that's a regular meeting and then, if necessary, that public hearing could be continued if necessary. We don't really have that, I think last time we had it was with AMI. And then a regular meeting for the decision four weeks later. And that is a nine week process. That only requires one special meeting and that's a finance committee meeting, to get that done. And of course the RPB, in terms of setting the public hearing, can still get the call on board.

Mario:

So Ted, in this case, with the current calendar, the way we have it with the authority meeting in the afternoon and the RPB meeting at night, we could put on the RPB agenda if we know in advance that the application's coming, for the same night that the authority, if they approve the project, the RPB could authorize the chair if finance determines it's complete to do the public notice.

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Ted:

Okay. That's great. That that's a good process. But that finance committee and that calling the public hearing would be the next week, right? You're just getting authorization to call a public hearing? Right.

Mario:

Correct. This way, it wouldn't require a change to the Enabling Legislation.

Ted:

Yeah. We don't want to do that. So, now the 20 days in here is fairly tight in order to get that done. Because it really requires about 23 days, talking with Jennifer, roughly 23 days because the paper needs to get the advertisement and then put it in the newspaper and everything. So we did test this, Jennifer and I looked at it, We did test that against the 23 day period and it works in the months that we checked it again. So, I think maybe very rarely it might not work, but that'd be an unusual situation.

Ted:

So, what we'll be doing is looking at projects listed and if we were looking at C versus D, D requires only one special meeting, it's a finance committee meeting, you get to hold three regular meetings, the authority, and then the public hearing and the decision meeting. Decent amount of time between public hearing and decision. And a decent amount of time for a interrogatories, not a whole lot, but enough.

Ted:

So what we're thinking about for this kind of process, and we really like this process in terms of expediting projects, we'd love to make it the new normal but that's up to the committee and the RPB. So these would be for non-controversial infrastructure projects, for example, if we needed to replace a set of pumps and something, would be over \$2 million, we'd bring in that kind of thing through this process, or building a tank, treatment upgrades, replacing a generator, not for over 2 million, less than you name in million. five, \$7 million projects.

Ted:

But the larger ones would probably go back to the original process, where if we'll be spending significant amounts of money, tens or more maybe, of millions dollars, might want to go back to the original process and allow the normal amount of time for that to proceed, because those are more important. So, what we're thinking about is our standard infrastructure replacement project that we could drop down from 13 down to nine weeks, savings of a month really right there. And why is that important? Because it's important for us in order to keep projects moving as fast as we can, of course being diligent about what we're doing. So it seems to make a lot of sense for us to propose that as a process that we would use on a regular basis.

Charles:

So there's no reason to close the public hearing the night of the RPB record. We could leave it open. We couldn't leave the record open. We can close the hearing and leave the record open, If there are additional interrogatories or questions that need to be answered.

Ted:

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Yes, that's correct.

Stephen:

Yeah. And that's been done before.

Mario:

Yeah right. Public hearing closes, but the record is open because RPB has asked for some specific information. I think that's how it reads out.

Suzanne:

That's a good point Mario.

Mario:

Comments, questions, thumbs up, thumbs down, sideways, beat up on Rochelle later. So-

Ted:

Another consideration, and Jennifer brought this up, is that if there's an application that has confidential information, that process would have to happen about the same time as special finance meeting was going to take place because that would have to be approved as a confidential package that goes out. Jennifer, maybe you could talk to that in terms of getting confidential information out on a secure basis.

Jennifer:

I think the confidential information, if it's an expedited process, is probably going to have to go out the same time as the application, along with it. And it would go out via email password protected. So we would be covered for that and it would give Charles enough time to review it and okay it, and then the other RPB members can review it depending on how much time they have. I guess would depend on when it would go out. But I think, probably the same time as the application is a good idea.

Mario:

And we're set up for that type of confidential information release?

Jennifer:

Well, I've done password protected, I think with Jeff, right Jeff? On one or two occasions.

Jeff:

That's Right.

Jennifer:

Okay. Yeah. So it's just, I send it out and then I go ahead and send out a password after it's been sent. So I could actually call members, whatever you prefer. I can email it in separate emails, whatever you want.

Mario:

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Okay.

Ted:

And this isn't something D or C really or not something that would spring on the RPB because you actually don't want to do that Number once. We have to give a heads up saying, "We aren't going to be asking for this." in advance. So we don't say at the authority meeting, "Oh, by the way, you need a special meeting on Monday for the finance committee." So we have to figure out some way to give the right amount of notice and heads up there, and a reason for it.

Mario:

Jeff, you're the one that has most of the comments in the interrogatories, and we greatly appreciate that. I've heard that from many members of the RPB. What do you think?

Jeff:

Well, obviously the only scenario that poses a challenge is the Emergency Approval Process. And, Ted indicated that when you have a project, like the Tunnel Project, you really don't have the, I won't say luxury, but you don't have the opportunity to have a reasonable timeframe. When you look at four weeks, you say, "Well, look, it's an emergency four weeks ought to be enough time." But from the OCA's perspective, I not only need to get that application on day one of week one so that I could get interrogatories out. Not in week three but in week two, and then get responses in week three. Because the responses can be interrogatories are necessary for me to be able to finalize the RPB. It's not just getting interrogatories and getting responses, sometimes those responses may impact what I recommend in my memo to the RPB and impact my testimony. So, I really would need the application very early on and not wait until week three to submit the interrogatories.

Mario:

Right.

Suzanne:

So Ted, why don't we put that in the chart that that step is required.

Ted:

It's a good idea.

Mario:

Yeah. Of the two alternate options, C and D . I'm liking the D better. I think it gives us a little more flexibility and it kind of fits in our schedule other than a special finance meeting.

Stephen:

Mario. I was going to say the opposite because of the special finance meeting. It's easier to get the authority together than it is the finance committee. And I don't know how the finance committee feels about special meetings or how easy it would be to do that for them.

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Mario:

But then you have a special RPB meeting also for the end of C.

Stephen:

Well, you're going to have that either case, either scenario, right?

Mario:

Not necessarily, you don't need to. If the public hearing needs to be, you would have a special. But you don't necessarily need.

David:

I would venture to say that the authority would be willing to have a special meeting. If the way the calendar fell, it would be helpful. So we'd be willing to do whatever works best, but Huddle and Ted worked out the calendar and it seemed to be best that there might be a special finance meeting. But if it worked out, that having a special authority meeting would speed things up and we're the ones requesting the quicker service, then we would certainly be open to that and willing to do. And it doesn't preclude it. If you folks decide you want to go with D it doesn't preclude their being a special authority meeting if it's helpful.

Charles:

Right. The only problem is you need to get authorization from the RPB to the chair to schedule the public hearing, should finance find it acceptable and complete.

David:

Right? So it may not always work, but I'm making that offer that if the calendar-wise it happened to work out that we could do that. And that way they're not meeting all the same night, we approve it and then we're expecting that special meeting because we can't do it the same night. So, there's options and we're willing to do it even if you decide to pick up D. So I guess I'm saying to Steve, we're willing to do that if it becomes helpful and working out. We've had a good relationship between the two bodies where we can work things out like that.

Stephen:

Well, I don't know. This may help Jeff with the interrogatories or later in the process for C. So that may give him more time.

Jeff:

Well, again, it's not usually within a few days, as long as I don't have some trial going on or something. Usually within a few days of when I get an application, if I know that there's an urgency of the project in terms of the schedule, I can get my interrogatories in but then the authority has to have time to be able to get me the responses.

Stephen:

That's true too. Yeah.

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Ted:

And I think if the management is going to ask the authority to put this kind of thing through, we have to be able to be ready to react quickly to your interrogatories, Jeff, and get them done. If you're going to be taking part on putting some skin in the game, we're going to have skin in the game certainly as well.

David:

Mm-hmm (affirmative) Yup.

Jeff:

Look, the bottom line is we'll make whatever you do.

Charles:

Yeah. With the interrogatories D almost seems to make more sense because they start earlier. And like you said, part of the issue with interrogatories is the reaction time after you make your statements.[crosstalk 00:25:07]

Mario:

And we could still hold the record open Charles, after the public hearing.

Charles:

Yeah. In the special meeting issue, now that we're all experienced with these remote meetings and everything, I don't think the special meeting is as much of an issue as it might have been. and also having a special meeting of finance, it's a smaller group, should be easier to coordinate schedules.

Mario:

Right.

Suzanne:

That's true [inaudible 00:25:42]

Ted:

And that's why we like D better because it only had one special meeting. Yes. It is the finance committee. But it disrupts people's lives and schedules one less time.

Charles:

And it's less people.

Ted:

Basically the same amount of time, eight weeks versus nine weeks is not going to break any project.

David:

Yeah.

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Charles:

Yeah. But a week can make a difference sometimes, especially with the interrogatories, be it early in the process so we have time to react. And that, to Mario's point, there have been instances where their interrogatories change the outcome of the decision.

Mario:

Yep. So that gives Jeff more time to finalize his recommendation because that can be part of the record that's still open.

Charles:

Right. So what's the next step? Do we do a motion to pick one of these or what would be the process here?

Mario:

I think we want to get a sense from everyone, and if everyone agrees in one or the other, or is in favor of one versus the other-

Charles:

All right. I'm leaning towards D. Charles Havrda.

Ted:

May I suggest something?

Charles:

Yes.

Ted:

That we leave both processes on the table and like [inaudible], as you said, depending on where we are in a month with a project that's important, we might run it through, see if we're not ready right before an authority meeting to submit something to them. So, C is the case where we have not been able to submit at a regular authority meeting. We need to call a special authority meeting.

Mario:

Well, Ted, I was thinking that we would take whichever process was preferred and RPB says, "Just make that our regular process." But-

Ted:

That would be great.

Mario:

in lieu of A, the current process. Okay. But then we would have to codify that in the rules. So I wouldn't want to codify all four processes.

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Stephen:

Why couldn't we have all the options, Mario? I mean, there's some really big projects that might require that A. I'm not so anxious to give up that entirely, but I don't see why we couldn't have all the options.

Ted:

Why would you determine which option you use?

Charles:

Yeah.

Stephen:

The authority would make that decision based on the need of the project.

Charles:

But isn't that given the authority...

Mario:

Almost rather it would be the-

Charles:

Can be problematic.

Stephen:

They already have that to declare something an emergency.

Mario:

No, they can't unilaterally do that.

Stephen:

[crosstalk 00:28:59] an emergency in the standard process while we're saying is we're going to propose the existence of three standard processes. If we kept all of them on the plate.

Ted:

Depending on the circumstances, I believe that's the right way to go. We're not going to run a \$20 million AMI type project through a nine week process. I don't think that's tolerable for the authority and or the RPB. I think the standard process needs to be maintained. Emergency process should be on the books. Right? And then you want to go with one or the other, we go with C or D.

Mario:

So let me make this as a suggestion to everyone. If we keep A, we have B and we take either C or D. And we can codify either C or D. And then the committee who it is sent to either Land Use or Finance would then, other than the emergency, which has already got its method. So when finance, let's say

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determines, it's it is complete, they would recommend which of the processes. But really we need the special meeting under D. So I don't know, that just threw my theory away.

Stephen:

I've been convinced about D. So I'm okay with that if everybody wants D.

Ted:

Well, I think within your rules of practice, couldn't you make? Since this is a new argument for everybody going to make the determination of the process of pre-decision by RPB.

Mario:

Under D we could. Yeah. We could under, under A or D.

Charles:

Or we'd be making this decision after the process is started.

Stephen:

Yeah. We'll after.

Mario:

I think you'd have to make the request, Ted.

Ted:

Yes.

Mario:

The authority would have to request a process. And part of it is communications and I think we've done a better job with communications since Cliff became chair, not saying anything against David, but David started it let's say. And there was better communications between the authority and the RPB, so we had a little better knowledge of what was coming down the pipe. So, if we have a heads up then we can at least be prepared for a special finance meeting and to put it on the agenda for the RPB meeting.

Stephen:

Mario another option, it's not perfect, but you could set a dollar limit on it so that we have an option for say something between two and \$10 million.

Mario:

We could. I'm not sure how that would fit into the bundling of projects.

Stephen:

Well, that process could be used if it was within that money frame.

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Mario:

Right.

Stephen:

No one would have to make a decision, the attorney could just select to use that.

Mario:

Okay.

Stephen:

Just a thought.[crosstalk 00:32:43]

Mario:

Sorry, go ahead.

David:

No, I was going to say here's the other thought that I had was that even if you do decide to pick C or D and that's what was requested, doesn't mean that if it is a more complex project or a larger project that you may end up taking more time, just by its nature. It may be something that interrogatories may require from the RPB or the OCA to hire outside consultants. And that's going to take some time to get them in. So we may have the goal of trying to do an expedited process and it just may not work. So just because we're requesting that, and of course, I'm not meaning to cut my own side here, but it doesn't mean that it's going to happen if it's not right for the project where the RPB is satisfied that they have the information they need at the time to deliberate.

Mario:

Right. I believe there's a timeframe that we have for the decision typically.

David:

Yeah. I think it's 150 days from the application.

Mario:

Okay. Receive the application.

David:

Right.

Mario:

Okay.

David:

We can extend it. And that has been done. All you have to do is request it.

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Mario:

I know we did that with AMI, I believe.

David:

Yeah, probably. Yeah.

Mario:

And SAP before that.

David:

Mm-hmm (affirmative) The complicated projects. Absolutely.

Mario:

Right. Just trying to scare Prem off.

Stephen:

Sorry to say. This is not technology projects.

Mario:

Giving you a fair warning Prem. Any other comments on this? Sounds like you're comfortable with D. Mr.,[crosstalk 00:34:32] Okay. Then we'll try to put something together for D as an option.

Clifford:

Thank you Ted, Mario.

Ted:

Thank you.

Clifford:

Good work, Ted. A lot of work.

Ted:

Hetal was the main chart person here and a heavy thought leader.

Clifford:

Okay.

David:

Well you thought to give her the job so, good work all.

Mario:

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We will tell them and work something out on that before the next meeting. Jennifer and Ted. All right. Discuss rate application process. I believe there was an attachment that was sent out with what the current process is. Okay.

Rochelle:

And this is just an example from our last rate application. So our last rate application, the process actually started in November and ended at the very beginning of July, based on our expected timeframe for our next rate application, following the same timeline it would actually start in May and end at the very beginning of January. And just background from a management perspective, while you were talking about capital projects, it actually occurred to us is, well, that there could be some reduction in the time associated with rate applications, depending on what you're comfortable with. And I'll just point out some of the starting the key time frames and where there could potentially be some opportunity. So actually the process starts with the schedule being discussed with the authority, which is basically the schedule that you're looking at.

Rochelle:

Of course, it would be updated for who was involved and the proposed timing. So we do review the schedule with the authority. I'll also mention, and we did this, not in the last rate application, but in the application prior, that if there's something maybe more controversial or needs discussion we would do that in advance of when this process actually starts. So you might recall we had some meetings are relative to fire service, both with the authority and then with the RPB. So anything that was more controversial, we would do that prior. So this really starts... In theory, controversial issues have been discussed and hopefully we're aligned on that. And it will start with the schedule being reviewed with the authority. Then the following authority meeting, which in the example they are looking at would be the December 20th meeting, where the rate application would actually be presented to the authority.

Rochelle:

In our prior process it would go about a week before now it would be slightly revised, it's probably like four or five days before the authority meeting. What we do is we do pre-prepare the... nevermind take that back. So that goes to the authority, if a special meeting is actually needed, which since I've been here, we have not needed to do a special meeting of the authority, we were able to go right from the authority meeting, the application was presented to go to the next step. So the next step in the process, we do allow time and you can see between December 20th and January 4th, we do allow some time in the process in case the authority does have changes that they would like us to make, that actually did happen one time that I'm familiar with, and that just leaves us a little bit of time to make any changes to actual application and get the application out to the RPB.

Rochelle:

What we then have is, it goes to the finance committee. And the whole application will go out, then including the OCA, it will then go to the finance committee for them to make the determination based on the completeness. What we've tended to do, and this is one of the places where there could possibly be a reduction in time, is we tended not to have the finance committee make their decision too close to the time when the application actually goes out. We usually wait until the following month. So, for example, in this example here, even though the application actually got sent out on the January 4th, we don't have the finance committee making the decision on the completeness until February 11th.

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Rochelle:

And you can actually see in the notes off to the side that technically we could have moved this up a month based on how the calendar were, but it would have been only a short period of time between when the finance committee received the application and when they would have to opine on the completeness. So we purposely have a lot more time there. So, that's definitely an opportunity depending on what you're comfortable with. And then the next step would be basically that Thursday, February 21st, that would be the regular RPB meeting. And that would be where the finance committee makes their that decision known to the full RPB regarding the completeness. That's also when the RPB would approve the publishing of the notice.

Rochelle:

What we have done is we do pre-prepare the notice, so it's all set to go with an understanding that if it needs to be pulled, we can pull it. So, our practice has been the notice goes in that Saturday following Thursday approval to publish the notice. Moving to the second page here. So this is set up where we more than meet the 20 day timeframe off for the public hearing. We have followed the practice not creating special meetings, although based on the discussion that you just had on the capital project, that could be an option. But if we just follow the standard meeting schedule, the RPB would hold that public hearing in the following month, after their regularly scheduled on meeting. And then we would also allow the full month for the decision. In the case of a rate application, we do need to publish that final decision because there's an appeal period.

Rochelle:

And that, I believe is unique to the rate application. So again, we pre pre-prepare what we can, as far as what that notice is going into the paper, that would go on the Saturday then we start counting the days to make sure that we do not actually price the bonds and we don't actually publish the final official statement until after that appeal period is over. So in this particular example, the appeal period ended Wednesday, June 5th, we distributed the preliminary official statement, the notice of the sale of the financing that was done on June 10th. We actually priced on June 12th the authority chair is involved in the pricing decision for our financing. They participate in that. And then the final next steps have to do with getting the final pricing, getting the final pricing incorporated into the official statement.

Rochelle:

You also know that, for those that are familiar with our rate application, there's a pre-prepared schedule that indicates, based on what the final interest rates are, what the final rates will be. So right after we do pricing, management calculates what the changes based on the final interest rate, we get all that into the final rates and then we print and distribute the final OS, and then we have to get all the documents signed and then we close on the financing at the same day, we implement the new rates. So where we thought there could be potential time-savings would be the period between when we release the full application to the RPB and when the finance committee makes their decision on the completeness, because potentially we can probably take up to a month out of that, depending on how the schedule falls, and then if there's any appetite for doing special meetings, that would be another opportunity. So I know that was a lot to follow.

Mario:

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It is. And there's a lot on the form, which I understand the reasoning for it. I'm just curious how difficult it might be to take the format that we just saw with the capital project and do something very similar so that it's easier blocks than all these lines.

Rochelle:

We could do that. We're probably hopeful if you're ready to make some suggestions on the appetite to condense that period for the finance committee and any appetite to consider doing special meetings.

Mario:

Well, you've got two months of authority meetings that probably before we even see anything, that I'm guessing could include a special meeting in there, and that would take a month off. If the authority has that appetite.

Rochelle:

Or actually Mario, to your point. What we could do is, we could always move up the sharing of the schedule with the authority.

Mario:

Yeah. So you give them some time between December 20th, when they take action and the beginning of the year, or a couple of weeks, just in case they decide that they want to change.

Rochelle:

It allows for the authority to have changes and allows management short period of time to get the changes into the application.

Mario:

Okay. Revise the packet. Right. That makes sense. If all we're asking finance to do is look at the completeness of the packet, which is pretty well prescribed as far as rate application has to have A, B, C, D, E, F, G.

Rochelle:

Right.

Mario:

And then the RPB is only being asked to schedule a public hearing, I don't know if that's a big lift, but I'm going to defer to people on finance and [crosstalk 00:48:24]

Charles:

Well, especially with the familiarity with these zoom meetings and everything, to your point, I'm not saying it's rubber stamping, but it is very straight forward. It's not a lot of philosophical decisions at that point, it's checking off some boxes. So I would think that a special meeting for that... But how much time do you really cut at that point?

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Rochelle:

We could potentially cut a month. Like in this particular example, we could have moved up the schedule, so the RPB makes the decision not in February, but in January.

Charles:

Well, a month certainly worth it then. Yeah. Okay.

Mario:

Yeah. So Charles, basically January 4th, they would have sent out the packet, the finance committee would have met January 10th or whatever it was, and then January say 20th, the RPB would schedule a public hearing.

Rochelle:

Right.

Mario:

So that would take off a month.

Stephen:

Rochelle, is the need to shorten this considerable enough to go through this? It's a very long process anyway, and it's kind of a standard thing that you know is going to happen. Would it be helpful to shorten it a month or two? Significantly.

Rochelle:

I think potentially it would give us some additional flexibility, especially one of the things that we do at the end of the schedule, is we try to pick, within the timeframe, the best time to go to market. We would have, probably more flexibility at the end to try to time the market.

Stephen:

Yeah. That could be very relevant.

Mario:

The other [crosstalk 00:50:42]

David:

Sorry Mario.

Mario:

Go ahead, Dave.

David:

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Well, some of it is also when you pick the historical period of the 12 months and then they're constantly updating that. It gives you more relevant, close, updated information. By having the more compressed time period you're not using old data. You're always getting updates with this. Where the RPB is.

Mario:

Right. The other thing is, if we're looking at a schedule like this, the earlier that the authority knows what the rate increases, if there is an increase, then at least they can notify the towns so that the towns could include it in their budget to whatever extent that works. It doesn't always work in all the cycles, but[crosstalk 00:51:32]

David:

Rochelle, this is Steve again. Are you tempt to sync this with the budget so that you have that information going into a rate application or would a to yearly budget impact when you did this?

Rochelle:

Well, this particular discussion isn't really about whether the interval is 18 months or 12 months. It's just looking at the overall current schedule. It takes about six months. Obviously if it takes six months to get through the process that does come into play if you're trying to do annual increases and it takes six months. But that wasn't the focus here. Here the focus was just to see what the appetite would be to take some time out of the schedule. I mentioned the flexibility on the pricing at the end, even if we kept the rate increase at the same date, of course, if we shortened the period, we could also potentially get the rate increasing earlier.

Mario:

Mm-hmm (affirmative) I think you set the date of when the rate increase will take effect. Right?

Rochelle:

We do say on or about, and we have some time, depending on the timing done, at the very end of December versus the first week of January.

Mario:

Right. But you're not going to change that by two months.

Rochelle:

Not by two months, potentially could change it by one month by moving this up a bit. But like I said, you could still keep the effective date the same and just give you more flexibility on the pricing.

Mario:

Right. That would make sense to have that flexibility. That's almost two months you could save if you went over the schedule with the authority and then have them take action. That could happen in one month instead of two. And we could possibly receive the application and finance could forward it to the RPB within one month. I'm guessing.

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Rochelle:

We actually do so on the fourth on this schedule, we don't wait for the finance meeting to send it to the full RPB. So we send it out.

Mario:

Right.

Rochelle:

Yeah.

Mario:

Jeff, comments?

Jeff:

No, I agree with the discussion. We can definitely cut some time out. Really, from the OCA's perspective, the interrogatories that I submit, part of it is updating the 12 month period selected. Sometimes if there's a cost of service study that forms the basis of the proposed rates, then I'll have questions about the cost of service study, because the first time I'm seeing that is in conjunction with the issuance that's rate application. But by and large, it's a lot easier to get through a rate application.

Jeff:

Now that my questions are early in the process. The last few rate applications, the OCA hasn't met with management, I haven't found it necessary to go through the applications like I used to with management. I'm able to do it on my own. So, I'm never going to really need an expert, I'm 99% sure that I'm not going to need an expert in most rate applications. So, I think this is something that we can definitely cut some time off.

Jeff:

There's so much information that's shared on an ongoing basis and the budget making process and throughout the 18 months in between rate Applications anyway. So there really shouldn't be a lot of shocks and a lot of supply in terms of what we see or we get a rate application.

Mario:

Right. Okay. So Rochelle, can you bring back something for the next meeting?

Rochelle:

Yeah. So this is hopeful, So I'll take what was shared and I'll redo the schedule.

Mario:

Talk to Hetal. she's really good at putting this thing together.

Rochelle:

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I might.

Mario:

And she'd like some more exposure. Right?

Rochelle:

Right. Is that okay, Ted?

Ted:

It's okay with me.

Mario:

Okay. Good. Our next steps then we could look at that. I'd like to, at some point, try and look at the overall of the rules just to try and make sure we're still operating in sync with what we have. And I don't know whether we want to do it a chunk at a time or how the best way would be to do that. So I'll let people think about that, and then schedule the next meeting. I don't know if people have your calendars, but you need about a day Rochelle to get that together?

David:

Hey, if it's shortened something to timeframe, she'll get it done by tomorrow morning.

Mario:

Right.

Ted:

Hetal doesn't need to sleep.

Mario:

Okay. We're in November, get through our meeting, the following week is Thanksgiving. So, I suggest we don't do the 26th, although I'm not traveling anywhere that I know of. But I won't be interrupted watching football.

Ted:

Change of priorities.

Rochelle:

Exactly. Food and football. We could maybe do the first week of December? That sound okay to people?

Stephen:

Sure.

Ted:

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That's good with me.

Rochelle:
sure.

Mario:
Ted, you still hanging in there?

Ted:
I'm good.

Mario:
All right. Very good. We appreciate it. We like having you around.

Charles:
Okay. When you say first week, what day are you thinking?

Mario:
I'm open. So either November 30th, December 1st, 2nd.

Charles:
2nd.

Mario:
You want to do the 2nd?

Charles:
2nd works. [inaudible 00:58:48]

Mario:
Yap. Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Stephen:
What day is that Mario?

Mario:
Wednesday Steve.

Stephen:
Wednesday?

Mario:

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First Wednesday of the month.

Stephen:

That sounds okay for me.

Mario:

Okay. If anyone has an issue, let Jennifer know. Super. Thank you very much. Jennifer, we'll get together on putting that together.

Jennifer:

Okay.

Mario:

Okay?

Jennifer:

All right. That sounds good.

Rochelle:

Thank you for the input. That was very helpful.

Jennifer:

Excellent. And Prem, you've been quiet, that's not like you

Prem:

Listening. And I was just listening because I was one of the ones that backed up this whole counting of these number of weeks, and it's nice to see that you're putting all of the effort towards that. So it is good.

Mario:

[crosstalk 00:59:38]

Stephen:

Yeah.

Ted:

Prem's will be processed number G. It's not developed yet.

Stephen:

Thank you.

Mario:

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Well, thank you all. I think we've been adjourn.

Tom:

Thanks Mario.

Mario:

We kept it to an hour.

Stephen:

I'll make the motion.

Mario:

Okay.

David:

I'll second.

Mario:

All in favor?

Group:

Aye.

Mario:

Have a great evening. And we'll see you in the next couple of weeks.