

"Placerville, a unique historical past forging into a golden future."

City Manager's Report
October 23, 2018, City Council Meeting
Prepared by: Cleve Morris, City Manager
Item #: 12.1



Subject: Adopt a resolution condemning the actions and procedures of PG&E to shut off power to residents, businesses and public facilities in the City of Placerville.

Purpose: On October 14, 2018 PG&E de-energized power to a portion of the City of Placerville jeopardizing public safety and welfare. The proposed resolution condemns those actions by PG&E.

Background:

On October 14, 2018 PG&E de-energized power to a portion of the City of Placerville jeopardizing public safety and welfare. Public Facilities that were affected include Town Hall, Police Station and Fire Station 26, City Hall and the Water Reclamation Facility. In addition, power was shut off to traffic signals on Highway 50 and other areas in town. Public Works and Public Safety Staff responded appropriately, however due to poor communication from PG&E, responding to the power outages was made more difficult. Power was out to some facilities until Monday at approximately 11:00 AM. The City's Water Reclamation Facility did not have power restored until Monday afternoon after 3:00 and other wastewater facilities were not restored until after 6:00 on Monday evening. One of these facilities, a lift station, encountered additional problems due to the outage and required manual pumping every 6 hours until Wednesday when repairs could be completed. The Highway 50 traffic congestion was not relieved until the final signal at Bedford Ave. was restored at 6:15 PM Monday evening.

Discussion:

City Officials received no direct communication from PG&E confirming their plans to shut off power in the City. The City learned of the problem through personal emails to individual employees from PG&E. In addition, once we had preliminary information, it was difficult to verify and get additional information from PG&E. In fact, Acting City Manager Pierre Rivas called the PG&E customer service line and was told they had no information regarding the planned shut off. Fortunately, Vice Mayor Acuna had a contact he was able to communicate with and obtain some information that assisted staff in responding.

The City's backup systems performed well. The Police Department, Town Hall and the Water Reclamation Facility all ran on back-up power. However at one point obtaining fuel became a

problem as our normal fueling stations were without power and unable to pump fuel. Staff was resourceful and resolved this situation.

The attached resolution condemns the actions of PG&E for the following reasons:

1. Wind speeds in the areas where these important facilities are located never reached the 40 mph threshold established by PG&E.
2. The Main Street area where our Police Station, Fire Station 26 and Town Hall are located are not in an Extreme Fire Danger Zone.
3. The Water Reclamation Facility is also in an area away from the Extreme Fire Danger Zone and did not experience sustained winds above the 40 mph threshold.
4. Lack of proper notification to public officials increased the risk to the public.

Staff recommends the attached resolution be forwarded to PG&E, the Public Utilities Commission, and our State Representatives expressing our disagreement with the procedures and process used by PG&E to shut off power to Placerville.

Options:

1. Adopt the Resolution as recommended.
2. Revise the Resolution and adopt.
3. Do not adopt the Resolution.

Cost: There is only minimal cost at this time associated with preparing and distributing the resolution.

Budget Impact: None. Any costs can be absorbed in the current year budget.

Recommendation: Adopt a resolution condemning the actions and procedures of PG&E to shut off power to residents businesses and public facilities in the City of Power.



M. Cleve Morris, City Manager