

Public Participation Case Study: Docket LC 48 Portland General Electric

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Docket LC 48

- Oregon utilities are required to file integrated resource plans (IRP) every two years
- In November 2009, Portland General Electric Company (PGE) filed its 2009/2010 IRP for PUC review
- Filing included planned treatment of Boardman Coal Plant, a 550MW facility



Boardman Coal Plant

- Plant accounts for 65% of SO₂ emissions, 35% of NO_x emissions, and 7% of CO₂ emissions in Oregon
 - Environmentalist wanted plant closed by 2014
- Plant is one of PGE's largest power stations, producing 15% of PGE's electricity
 - PGE wanted to upgrade plant and run to 2040



Public Participation

- ❑ Public process to review IRP and Boardman treatment occurred in two phases:
 1. Public outreach by PGE during drafting of IRP
 2. Formal review process by PUC



Public Comment Principles

- Accept and involve public as legitimate partner
- Plan carefully and coordinate with other credible sources
- Listen to public's specific concerns
- Be honest, frank, and open
- Meet the needs of the media
- Speak clearly and with compassion



Public Comment Principles

- Perception = Reality
- Communication = Skill
- Goals
 - Educate – produce informed audience
 - Learn – listen to concerns and issues
 - Create environment of trust and credibility
 - Enhance dialogue to resolve disagreements

PGE Public Outreach

■ IRP Requirements – PUC Guideline #2

➤ The public must be given significant involvement in the preparation of the IRP

- Obtain information from utility
- Contribute ideas

■ PGE's Public Outreach took two forms:

- Public Workshops
- Participation in Regional Planning Forums



PGE Public Workshops

- PGE hosted 7 public workshops in service area
- Invited stakeholders from PUC hearings and other known affected groups:
 - Customer groups
 - Environmental organizations
 - Government representatives
 - PUC staff



PGE Public Workshops

- Technical presentations on key issues:
 - Future resource needs
 - Forecasting
 - Resource options
 - Boardman issues
- Q & A Format
- All materials posted to PGE's website



Regional Planning

- PGE participated in various planning forums to better identify and influence emerging issues and policy developments
- Forums addressed following issues:
 - Transmission assessment and planning
 - Global warming
 - Wind integration
 - Renewable energy



Benefits of Public Outreach

- Developed working dialogue among stakeholders with conflicting interests
- Identified key issues of controversy
- Obtained useful information that was used in development and drafting of IRP
 - Helped develop compromise solution of making limited upgrades and operating Boardman to 2020

PUC Formal Review

- Filing of IRP triggered formal PUC review process
- PUC provides public notice of filing
 - Sent to mailing lists and parties to PUC cases
 - Gives date and time of initial scheduling meeting to identify parties, interested persons, and to adopt a procedural schedule
- Schedule includes numerous opportunities for public participation

LC 48 Proceedings

- Over 70 organizations and individuals participated as parties to docket
 - Customer groups
 - Environmental organizations
 - Other utilities
 - Individual customers
 - Government officials

LC 48 Schedule

- Preliminary presentation by PGE to PUC Commissioners
 - Open to public with opportunity to comment
- Written comments by parties on IRP
- Technical workshops on Boardman and other issues
- Additional rounds of written comments by both PGE and other parties

LC 48 Public Comment Hearings

- PUC also held two off-site public comment hearings to address Boardman
 - City of Portland
 - Over 300 people attended; over 100 testified
 - City of Boardman
 - Over 100 people attended; 40 testified



Public Comment Meetings

■ Format Considerations:

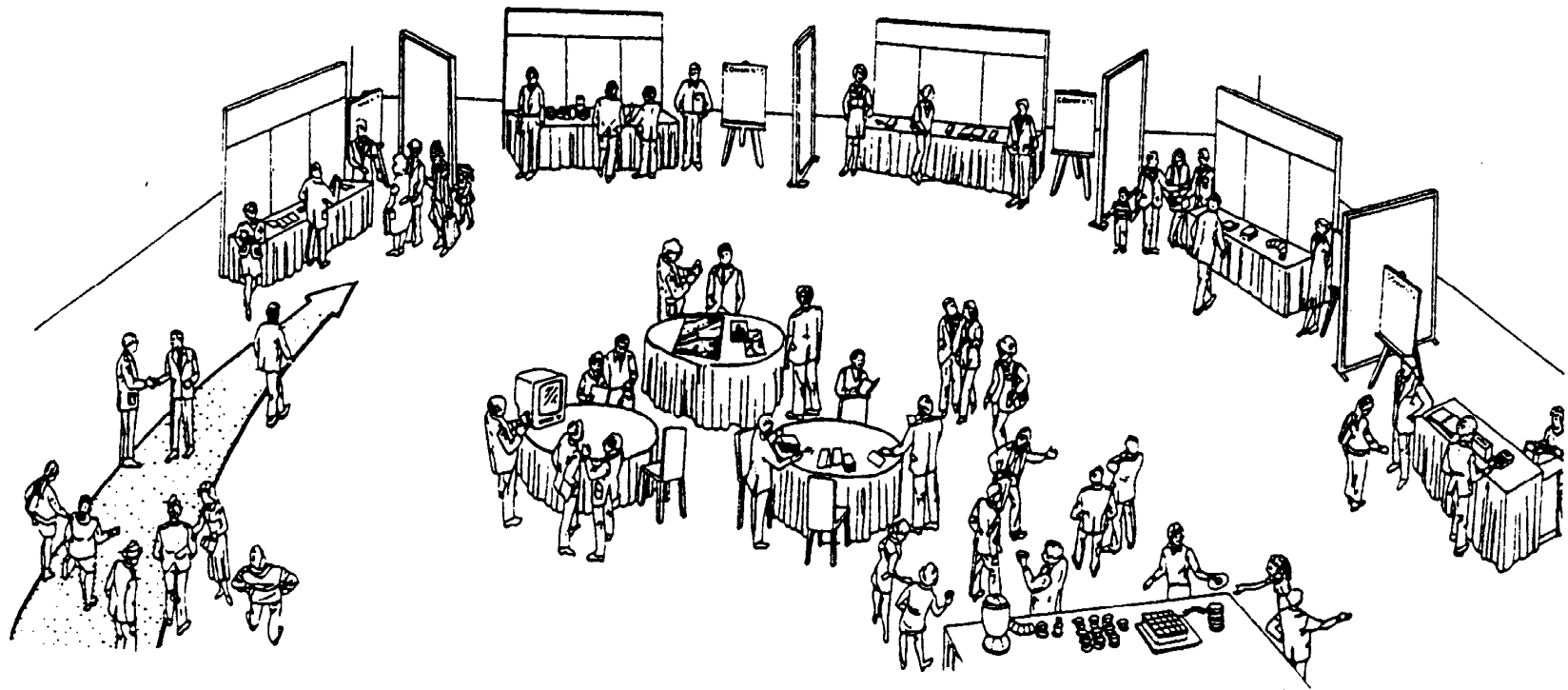
- Town Hall Meeting – formal presentation to audience with opportunity for public comment
 - Ability to present information to large group
 - Sets up an “us vs them” perception
 - Many with concerns may be unwilling or unable to speak



Public Comment Meetings

- Open House Meeting – individual information exchange in more relaxed setting
 - Allows individuals to raise concerns in more intimate setting
 - Establishes personal relationship with public
 - Provides targeted response to individual concerns
 - Requires more individuals to staff meetings

Public Exhibit and Discussion (Poster Exhibits / Public Availability Session)



Open House Meeting



PUC Decision

- PUC Staff prepared recommended order on IRP
- Order circulated to parties for review and comment
- Presented to PUC Commissioners at a public meeting
- Commissioners issue order acknowledging IRP with certain requirements
 - IRP includes closure of Boardman in 2020

Summary – Public Participation

■ Pre-filing:

- 7 public meetings
- Regional forums

■ Post-filing:

- 3 Commissioner Meetings
- Multiple Rounds of comments
- 2 off-site Public Comment Meetings