

**State of Texas
County of Bexar
City of San Antonio**



**Meeting Minutes
City Council Special Meeting**

Thursday, June 24, 2021

2:00 PM

Municipal Plaza Building

ROLL CALL

The City Council convened in a Special Meeting. City Clerk Tina J. Flores took the Roll Call noting a quorum with the following Councilmembers present:

PRESENT: 11 - Mayor Nirenberg, Bravo, McKee-Rodriguez, Viagran, Rocha Garcia, Castillo, Cabello Havrda, Sandoval, Pelaez, Courage, and Perry

Once a quorum was established, the City Council considered the following:

1. **Briefing and Final Report from the Committee on Emergency Preparedness.** [Chair Reed Williams, Committee on Emergency Preparedness; Ben Gorzell Jr., Chief Financial Officer]

Reed Williams stated that the Committee on Emergency Preparedness (CEP) held its first meeting over 100 days ago and was a very public process. He reported that first and foremost, the CEP received and processed input from the general public and triaged over 400 comments and questions received into three categories: Before, during, and after the winter storm. He explained that the triaged questions identified the need to develop three subcommittees groups to investigate the preparedness and response of CPS Energy, the San Antonio Water System (SAWS), and the San Antonio Emergency Operations Center (EOC). He presented a list of the members of the subcommittees, as follows:

- CPS Energy Subcommittee Members: Reed Williams and Councilmember Sandoval
- San Antonio Water System Subcommittee Members: Councilmember Pelaez and Councilmember Perry
- San Antonio Emergency Operations Center Subcommittee Members: Gen. Edward Rice,

Mr. Williams noted that although each subcommittee began their work independently, all questions and responses were ultimately reviewed and analyzed by all Committee members and all analyses and recommendations were a product of the entire Committee's deliberations.

Mr. Williams presented a timeline of Electric Reliability Council on Texas (ERCOT) events which indicated that at approximately 1:22 AM on February 15, 2021, electrical power frequencies dropped below electric grid capacity levels. He indicated that this was a massive outage which caused 30,000 megawatts of power to be out of service and quickly peaked at a massive outage of 50,000 megawatts, and CPS Energy's load shedding, or actively switching off power to groups of customers, was almost immediate. He noted that over the past 20 years, the regulatory environment in place never incentivized any energy organization to build an excess generation reserve capacity.

Mr. Williams stated that a critical event called for an analysis of real-time market prices and presented a graph that depicted CPS Energy's real-time ERCOT prices during the winter storm. He indicated that on the first day of the load shed occurrence, CPS Energy's price fluctuated and was under \$2,000 by noon on February 15, 2021. He explained that the Public Utility Commission of Texas (PUC) was the governing body that provided state-wide regulation of rates and services of electric utilities and added that at 10:15 PM on February 15, 2021, the PUC made a determination that CPS Energy's real-time ERCOT price did not reflect scarcity, so it directly raised the price to \$9,000, and continued to keep CPS Energy's price at \$9,000 through February 19, 2021. Mr. Williams emphasized that the sudden elevation in pricing was extremely damaging to many communities and caused many municipal bankruptcies.

Mr. Williams reported that as the cold temperatures plummeted, the equipment was under heavy pressure with no time to warm up over the first four consecutive days of freezing conditions. He noted that once the weather began to warm up, the available generation capacity immediately increased. He highlighted that if the same weather situation reoccurred, the same state-wide problems would reoccur. He called for the assistance of the City, CPS Energy, and utility partners to develop proposed regulation that would allow for the transition of an energy-only market back to a capacity-level market, with Legislation-approved backing that would require organizations on the ERCOT grid to use their own independent reserve capacities, whether by ownership or contract. He added that in addition to requiring all generators and marketers to hold their own reserve capacities, and with the support of the Federal or State government for bonding and loaning, another alternative was to allow for the ability to connect to other reliable grids. Mr. Williams highlighted that by diversifying risks as much as possible, and by building as much capacity as possible, the problem could be solved.

Mr. Williams observed that the second problem was the PUC's interference in the free market. He stated that when the PUC drastically increased CPS Energy's price to \$9,000 above the \$2,000 commodity market price, its actions did nothing to increase capacity and instead had a severe, negative impact on the entire market which created an increase of \$685 million in natural gas prices and total charges for CPS Energy from February 9-19, 2021. He added that ERCOT was in the business of providing services, charging for services, and paying entities for providing energy, and should not be setting market prices.

Mr. Williams added that the PUC's \$9,000 pricing also cost nuclear power plants an estimated \$550 million in opportunity costs, as with CPS Energy's STP 1 Generation from nuclear power. He

explained that freezing temperatures caused the stoppage of water flow at the suction sites of pumps that fed steam generators, which necessitated the shutdown of the nuclear plant for the duration of the winter storm and resulted in the generation loss of 40,711 megawatt hours of nuclear energy.

Mr. Williams explained that gas plants did not perform well during the winter storm and utilization capacity could not get above 63% due to multiple contributing factors such as problems with controls, mechanics, and maintenance. He noted that traditionally, and even during non-events, power plants would not rely on renewable energy from solar or wind production for a crucial weather event and renewable energy should not be relied upon in the future for such events.

Mr. Williams presented a map that illustrated CPS Energy's total load shed duration during the winter storm from February 9 -19, 2021, per circuit and by zip code, which demonstrated that hardest hit areas of the City were the north and northwest. He stated that overall load shed outages were attributed to how the grids were set up and noted that there were more lower frequency circuits in the north and northwest areas, due to faster growth in those areas. He recognized that all areas of the City were greatly impacted, and pointed out that the more vulnerable areas of the City had housing stock that was not well insulated, and vulnerable populations did not have enough resources to take care of infrastructural problems, and more young and elderly people resided in those areas. Mr. Williams reported that CPS Energy was in the process of upgrading their reconnecting system, re-examine all critical circuits, and develop a system that would re-engage more quickly with interruptible circuit additions.

Mr. Williams stated that effective communication was crucial during an unforeseeable event such as the winter storm. He noted that in its communications before the event, CPS Energy did not prepare customers for the potential outages nor the duration of the outages. He stated that the EPC recommended the implementation of a cohesive, comprehensive, and clear emergency communication protocol in collaboration with CPS Energy, the EOC, and with input from community professionals. Mr. Williams stated that EPC's CPS Recommendation 9 would implement an emergency readiness year-round campaign in concert with the City and other local agencies that was built on the framework of the ReadySouthTexas app with the aim to let residents know how to prepare for an emergency and to be familiarized with calling 9-1-1.

Lisa Tatum reported that in the year prior to the winter storm, SAWS had taken steps regarding general emergency preparedness and conducted a Resilience and Risk Assessment (RRA), which was an all-hazards risk assessment of relevant threats and hazards to mission critical facilities and assets. She stated by August 2020, SAWS had developed its Emergency Response Plan (ERP) which was similar to that of the EOC. She indicated that SAWS' ERP would ensure that there was minimum interruption to service delivery, protection for people and pipes, and that operations could be maintained.

Ms. Tatum reported that SAWS operations and water services were impeded as a result of the power reliability issues that arose from ERCOT's load shedding requirement, and CPS Energy's automatic load shedding program. She stated that on February 16, 2021, SAWS had to move from automatic to manual operation in order to function; however, SAWS was unable to maintain regulated water pressure threshold levels and on February 17, 2021, issued a system-wide boil water notice (BWN) in compliance with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). She reported that by February 18, 2021, water delivery was back up for some residents and by February 19, 2021, bulk water and bottled water distribution sites were in operation. Ms. Tatum added that remaining water issues after that time were not due to problems with SAWS infrastructure, but rather primarily due to

frozen or burst pipes or pipelines.

Ms. Tatum observed that SAWS' ERP did not contemplate a widespread grid outage, only local outages, and was not fully effective without power. She explained that heat tracing of small diameter pipes to prevent their freezing and to control above groundwater drainage was not possible; additionally, all SAWS tools were inoperable during frozen conditions.

Ms. Tatum reported that SAWS was extremely proactive to address future potential winter storm conditions and contracted with Black & Veatch Engineering Consulting Experts to prepare a report that provided guidance and future recommendations. She stated that their recommendations for resiliency acknowledged that the water system was dependent upon power and called for the need of CPS Energy and SAWS to work closely and collaboratively together to determine structural modifications that could avoid similar occurrences in the future. Ms. Tatum stated that the report concurred that effective communication and situational awareness were vital to the operations of all aspects of the City, with special attention to ensure that decision makers had adequate, cohesive situational awareness to avoid cascading emergent events as much as possible.

General Edward Rice, USAF (Ret.) reported that the EOC was activated at the direction of Mayor Nirenberg or City Manager Erik Walsh to manage the events of an emergency. He observed that the first responsibility of the EOC was to assemble accurate information that allowed for informed decisions. He acknowledged that it was challenging for the EOC to obtain information from the Utilities which hampered its ability to disperse emergency services in a timely manner to areas that needed help most.

General Rice stated that the EOC had a defined process to determine which contingencies to be prepared for as a community and utilized an established set of focused plans: 1) the Emergency Management Basic Plan; and 2) the Hazard Mitigation Action Plan. He acknowledged that the intensity level and duration of the winter storm that the City and State experienced was not included in the 13 sets of hazards contained in the Hazard Plan, but was associated with the identified "winter storm" detailed risk assessment contained therein. He noted that the combination of emergencies the City experienced far exceeded what was anticipated locally and statewide, and future recommendations would focus on a dynamic plan based on an accurate set of identified objectives. General Rice observed that the ability of the EOC to operate in a dynamic environment would be directly related to a regularly-scheduled, structured training and exercise program.

General Rice reported that the EOC was a coordination center, and a command and control center which required the proper authority to execute its responsibilities and to exercise effective command and control. He stated that CPS Energy operated independently and provided only general information about which circuits would be powered down and when, and it was a challenge for the EOC and other parties involved to anticipate and deploy coordinated resources to targeted areas based on CPS Energy's unilateral decision making. He noted that SAWS' decision-making was similarly disconnected and the EOC was unable to pre-position water in areas when water was shutoff by SAWS.

General Rice stated that in future contingencies, mis-alignment of responsibilities and authority could have even more severe consequences, and it was recommended that all City departments communicate to the public through a Joint Information Center (JIC) to ensure consistency in messaging. He added that a JIC was a best practice, common tool utilized by EOCs to ensure coordinated communication by

and between the City, County Officials, CPS and SAWS, and would improve situational awareness for all entities involved and provide consistent messaging to the community.

Mayor Nirenberg stated that many residents suffered tremendously during the winter storm and their experiences and frustrations called for accountability which was the reason for this Special Meeting. He thanked the City's first responders, linemen, electricians, workers, crews, community organizers, and all neighbors and friends who came together in inspiring ways to lift residents out of the deep freeze during an unprecedented time when the community was working hard to overcome the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Mayor Nirenberg acknowledged that extreme weather events were likely to occur again and it was the City's responsibility to ensure that San Antonio was better prepared next time. He stated that the EPC started its work on emergency preparedness in March 2021 with a simple charge: Find out what happened and recommend how the City could be better prepared in the future, with clear expectations in place. He added that the City should create mechanisms for accountability in all emergency preparedness implementation plans, including regular updates to City Council that would hold up to public scrutiny.

City Manager Erik Walsh reported that the City was in complete agreement with the EPC's recommendations. He recommended that the City take the lead in a coordinated review of the recommendations and develop the EPC plans with CPS Energy and SAWS; thereafter and in short order, final recommendations would be presented to the City Council for approval. He stated that it was important to note that after the winter storm, CPS Energy, SAWS, and the City achieved a better level of communication and had discussions about coordinated decision making that ensured accurate, reliable, and actionable information was available and shared. He acknowledged that there was still much work to do organizationally and a fair amount of alignment needed to occur when an emergency was declared locally and how the City and its municipal agencies communicated and operated.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda stated that communications were important and could be a matter of life and death in emergency situations. She emphasized that residents needed to trust that the City, CPS Energy, and SAWS were prepared for the next emergency, and the best way to establish trust was through everyday responsiveness. She noted that the many calls received by Council Districts from constituents subsequent to the winter storm concerned the lack of responsiveness, and many community organizations had called to request meetings to discuss issues with CPS Energy. She asked what portion of CPS Energy's emergency preparedness plan was dedicated to trust and responsiveness. She asked if CPS Energy would increase its number of staff and its budget dedicated to responding to resident concerns. Councilmember Cabello Havrda reported that she recently sent out a survey regarding service responses and received more responses than she had on any other survey she circulated. She invited Ms. Gold-Williams to set up a district-wide conversation to discuss responsiveness and engagement.

Paula Gold-Williams stated that as CEO of CPS Energy, the buck stopped with her, and she was accountable and responsible for CPS Energy. She apologized for any contributions that CPS Energy had toward the experiences endured by many residents. She recognized many of the approximately 3,000 employees of CPS Energy that left their families during the winter storm event to work remotely and even slept in their cars to an effort to maintain communications with customers. Ms. Gold-Williams reported that from the very beginning of the winter storm, CPS Energy tried to stabilize its systems while trying to handle the large financial impact created by ERCOT pricing issues.

Ms. Gold-Williams explained that CPS Energy did invest in weatherization, but it was not sustainable for a winter storm with such a long duration. She added that CPS Energy did have an action plan and appreciated the leadership demonstrated by the EPC and the City Council. She added that CPS Energy had contracted Burns & McDonnell for a grid and network modernization plan that would go forward in July 2021 to enable an automated system that would isolate and automate transformer and energy failures. She indicated that CPS Energy teams had begun the process of reverifying and updating its critical circuit list which would provide a broader view of interruptible circuits with the ability to rotate efficiently, once old indications were removed. She explained that in addition to equipment failures, the demand for energy was so very high that CPS Energy could not rotate interruptible circuits. Ms. Gold-Williams stated that CPS Energy was already allocating some of its internal resources to install more heaters and insulation around the plant, improve coiling, and tightening up seals around water lines. She added that CPS Energy would be working with the State to increase higher levels of weatherization. She noted that more improvements were to come and updates would be shared with the City.

Ms. Gold-Williams reported that CPS Energy was testing a beta communication system and had increased its text messaging, alerts, and notifications with links to outages to better explain outage situations. She highlighted that due to economic issues created by the COVID-19 Pandemic, CPS Energy did not have the extra budget to increase communications, but would reprioritize some of its positions to deploy them into the corporate communication group.

Councilmember Cabello Havrda asked what portion of SAWS's emergency preparedness plan was dedicated to trust and responsiveness. She asked if SAWS would increase its number of staff and its budget dedicated to responding to resident concerns.

Robert Puente, President and CEO of SAWS, stated that SAWS was committed to ensuring that coordinated communication efforts were made to keep residents informed of issues as they arose, and how and when emergency issues would be rectified. He explained that EPC's COSA Recommendation 13 may require an ordinance that would grant the City the authority to exercise effective command and control during certain contingencies; and noted that when SAWS was created, exclusive command and control was given to the SAWS Board of Trustees. He clarified that SAWS' Budget was based on a calendar year system and was currently not deep enough to address adequate staffing issues. Mr. Puente added that SAWS would begin its budget pre-planning and would consider its staffing levels and assess if there was a need for more expert-level staffing to address issues that occurred with the winter storm.

City Manager Walsh referenced EPC's COSA Recommendation 20 which called for City 3-1-1, CPS Energy, and SAWS Service Call Centers to enhance the customer experience for the community, including extended hours. He highlighted that the average resident did not make a distinction between the City, CPS Energy, and SAWS and regarded all the entities singularly as 'The City' when they placed calls to 3-1-1. He stated that continued conversations were needed between all the entities to implement an enhanced call center plan so that in times of an emergency, residents could call 3-1-1 and be transferred directly to the utilities they needed assistance with and speak with one of their dedicated, live representatives.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia expressed concern that the City's current Risk Mitigation Plan did not focus adequately on vulnerable populations. She stated that EPC members held several discussions

about proposed recommendations that included the formation of a joint subcommittee formed within the City Council to ensure that the EPC's COSA recommendations would be followed. She added that sole ownership of the City's costly Risk Mitigation Plan or of multiple plans would ensure that the plan(s) would be readily accessible to update and activate, as needed. She noted that technology allowed for extreme weather patterns to be anticipated and planned for, and recommended that Special Sessions could be pre-scheduled for the City Council and all joint partners to meet and collaborate together during the emergency, and emergency transportation plans could be arranged for in advance. She added that another recommendation was to allow for residents who required critical medical care to submit a letter every two years from their physician attesting that the patient required critical circuit support for a prescribed medical condition; however, HIPPA laws needed to be considered and a regularly maintained database system needed to be created and implemented.

Councilmember Perry stated that it was key for SAWS to proactively prepare for emergency events in advance. He added that CPS Energy should not plan for load shedding during an emergency, but rather should plan for continued power for residents and asked what would such a plan entail, rather than just conserving power during emergencies. He referenced a Council Consideration Request (CCR) he submitted in May 2021 that called for establishing a single point of oversight by the City over City-owned utilities during declared emergency situations. He pointed out that greater Bexar County areas needed to be included in emergency plans as well. Councilmember Perry concurred with City Manager Walsh's recommendation to formulate a tabulated analysis of the EPC recommendations with estimated budget costs and implementation plans. He added that the analysis should be provided to the ratepayers for their input and called for individual briefings on the analysis to the Councilmembers.

Councilmember Sandoval thanked the many concerned residents and community leaders that organized emergency relief efforts to protect the most vulnerable during the winter storm. She noted that many times they were the first to respond to emergency situations involving the elderly. She stated that hot meals and blankets were delivered to senior living communities and many families were even provided direct cash assistance through mutual aid programs. She commended CPS Energy for its extreme reliability during normal times and noted that the issue was its lack of resilience during unplanned, unprecedented emergency events that called for emergency protocols, not normal protocols. Councilmember Sandoval observed the need for unified and coordinated communication that came from directly the full leadership of the City during community-wide disasters. She stated that a vulnerability analysis would identify vulnerabilities in the City's utility infrastructure systems, health systems, and telecom systems for mitigation planning. She asked that a vulnerability analysis be considered in advance of the City's Budget Goal Setting Session.

Councilmember Pelaez stated that it was necessary for the City to hire a full-time Resiliency Officer that was a subject matter expert. He highlighted that CPS Energy and SAWS collectively had approximately 5,000 employees and the City had approximately 12,000; and many had to leave their families to respond to the emergency and were to be honored for putting the residents first. He added that he was proud of the EPC Report that the Committee produced, and the thorough analysis and high-caliber investigation involved. He asked Ms. Gold-Williams if the City experienced the emergency crisis due to CPS Energy closing down a coal plant. Ms. Gold-Williams confirmed that it shut down the coal-fired Deely Plant in 2018, and had it been in operation, it probably could have been helpful, but would not have stopped what was experienced at a state level, as tens of thousands of megawatts of capacity were not available during the emergency. He asked if the emergency was caused by CPS outsourcing its energy from wind and solar generators. Ms. Gold-Williams stated that the generation

of renewable energy was only optimal during the summer months when the skies were clear, and not much was generated in the winter. She confirmed that outsourcing renewable energy was not a contributing factor.

Councilmember Pelaez asked if the emergency would have occurred if CPS Energy had relied on coal, gas, or nuclear sources. Ms. Gold-Williams explained that the winter storm affected not only the energy systems, but the sourcing of natural gas, the communication systems, and the fuel transportation systems. She clarified that neither gas, coal, nor nuclear energy systems could have handled the event. He asked if the north side and the more affluent neighborhoods were given preferential treatment by the utilities and if their power was back on first. Ms. Gold-Williams reported that developers had installed more circuited systems in the north side over the past few decades of faster growth in that area and when demand was high, CPS Energy load shed in those areas with bigger circuits. She confirmed that CPS Energy did not track circuit systems by census data, nor economic data, but assessed what was most important to keep the grid from completely failing. She pointed out that if the grid had completely failed, the power outage could have been down for weeks, or maybe months.

Councilmember Pelaez asked if neighborhoods on the southside and eastside in Council Districts 1, 2, 3, and 4 were given less priority and if they were less important to CPS Energy than neighborhoods on the northside. Ms. Gold-Williams reported that CPS Energy's goal was to keep power on for everyone and did not regard any geographic areas over another. She added that CPS Energy was challenged with figuring out a way to communicate with residents during massive power outages and recognized that advance preparations and messaging could optimize communications before an emergency.

Councilmember Pelaez asked Mr. Puente if SAWS gave less priority to poor neighborhoods than it did to wealthy neighborhoods. Mr. Puente explained that geographically, northside neighborhoods were on a higher ground elevation which made it more difficult for water delivery in that area. He confirmed that SAWS would have encountered the same problems had CPS Energy not relied on wind and solar renewable energies.

Councilmember Viagran state that many southern sector residents felt a great deal of mistrust and believed that the northside's power stayed on while they lost theirs. She referenced EPC's CPS Recommendation 4 and recommended an increase in its Board Members from five to seven, similar to SAWS. She referenced EPC's CPS Recommendation 6 and recommended that parameters be established to identify and reduce the size of non-interruptible circuits, and to update and identify non-critical customers and interruptible circuits. She concurred that communication was key and recommended that landline users be identified and a phone tree established so that identified neighbors could knock on doors to spread emergency messages. Councilmember Viagran encouraged the use of the ReadySouthTexas app for CPS Energy emergency messaging for outreach to seniors that were already familiar with using the app during the COVID-19 Pandemic. City Attorney Andy Segovia clarified that two State statutes required State laws to be changed in order to increase the number of CPS Board Members. Rudy Garza with CPS Energy replied that it wanted to add to its communication tools to include vulnerable populations in hard to reach areas and looked forward to collaborating with the City in joint communication efforts.

Councilmember Viagran asked if emergency plans for the San Antonio Housing Authority (SAHA) were considered within the EPC report. City Manager Walsh reported that a number of SAHA facilities did not have power during the winter storm and needed to be included in future emergency

plans. He noted the quick coordination between VIA, the Northside Independent School District, the City, and the City 3-1-1 Call Center to transport impacted residents to the Convention Center during the winter storm.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez stated that a huge opportunity to include the voices of community members in the EPC was lost. He referenced EPC COSA Recommendation 5 which called for key City facilities to maintain an appropriate inventory of food and water supply for extended emergency events, and stated that long-term plans were needed to address food deserts and the lack of food quality that existed in some local communities. He asked which facilities would be prioritized for the purchase of generators in reference to EPC COSA Recommendation 3. Deputy City Manager Maria Villagómez reported that City staff was in the process of analyzing all City facilities to determine those that were critical for the purchase of generators. She reported that Priority 1 Facilities included public safety services: Fire Stations, Police Substations, and Animal Care Services Facilities; and Priority 2 Facilities included Libraries, Community Centers, and Senior Centers, to serve as warming or cooling centers, depending upon the emergency. He recommended that generators be purchased for community centers, school and churches as those were common areas that residents looked to for shelter. He requested further analysis of an improved communication plan for residents that had no power, internet, and limited mobility during an emergency. Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez recommended that a wellness check protocol be established for emergency events, and requested emergency response training for community leaders and faith-based organizations so that they could provide resource information to residents.

Councilmember Courage stated that the winter storm was a state-wide catastrophe and an Act of God that did not occur due to bad planning or bad actions, but certainly better planning and actions could have been taken. He commended the EPC for providing over 60 recommendations that outlined solutions to many unanswered questions and added that it was the job of the City Council to ensure all 60 recommendations were put in place for the future. He concurred that integrated communication was key and part of communication was to improve emergency education for residents on what to do and what not to do during an emergency.

Councilmember Courage stated that he received many calls from constituents reporting that SAWS informed them that broken pipes were the problem of the residents. He asked if SAWS could develop a process for such extreme emergencies to help thousands of residents to cut off their water supply so that pressure is not lost City-wide. Mr. Puente concurred that educating residents during water emergencies was important and reported that SAWS had created a community funding program that received a large amount of private sector donations for residential plumbing repairs. Steve Clouse, SAWS Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, reported that SAWS implemented an emergency plan informed by the 2011 El Paso winter storm event when all the pipes in pier and beam housing structures burst after El Paso started to thaw out from a winter freeze. He reported that SAWS immediately immobilized an internal team to search for houses that had water spillage running down their driveways. He stated that SAWS provided public messaging to inform residents how to turn off their water valves at the curb and provided instructional videos on its website on how to do so. He added that SAWS was collaborating with other Texas utilities to assess their different approaches to find out further ways to recover faster after an emergency event.

Councilmember Courage asked if CPS and SAWS had their own emergency operations facilities and if they had lost power. Ms. Gold-Williams confirmed that CPS Energy had an emergency management center on the eastside that tracked downed powerlines and transformers; monitored cybersecurity

issues on the connected grid(s); maintained contact with ERCOT; and had a dedicated staff member that was assigned to the City. She added that CPS Energy would increase communications to better improve its emergency system. She noted that CPS Energy had power and ran on a redundant energy feed during the winter storm, but did not have water during the event. Mr. Clouse reported that SAWS had an emergency operation center with teams that answered phone calls for emergency events and teams that ran computer systems. He added that additional special operational teams, and distribution and collection teams were deployed for backflow prevention and infrastructure breaks. He stated that the emergency center ran on a generator and SAWS headquarters did not have water during the winter storm.

Councilmember Castillo acknowledged City workers, linemen, pole workers, and SAWS employees that were on call during the winter storm and were tasked to navigate dangerous, icy road to assist residents, many of whom experienced outages and loss of water as well. She noted that many of her questions were answered through the presentation or questions posed by other Councilmembers. She stated that there was a shared responsibility to ensure that when studies were conducted that follow through was made on the recommendations and proposals. She concurred that residents should not be burdened with an added hike on their rates for emergency protocols assessments and plans. She called for the need to further explore and fully invest in weatherization programs, and for the execution of plans before an emergency disaster occurred.

Councilmember Bravo noted that during the five-day winter storm, Austin Energy (AE) earned \$54 million in profits for their city, whereas San Antonio incurred a loss. He asked if AE's electric generation assets performed better or if they had been weatherized to a greater extent. He referenced the 2011 winter storm and observed that there was no regulation and a better job should have been done to weatherize and insulate assets at that time; he asked what Ms. Gold-Williams's role with CPS Energy was in 2011. Ms. Gold-Williams stated that the biggest differences between AE and CPS Energy was that AE did not operate gas systems and solely had an electrical component; and San Antonio had a large gas component, along with electric generation. She reported that preliminary research indicated that AE had similar winter storm challenges as CPS Energy and that AE owned 16% of the SUP unit; whereas, CPS Energy owned 40%. She stated that she would provide further information. Ms. Gold-Williams confirmed that she was the Chief Financial Officer in 2011 in charge of financials, not operations at the time.

Councilmember Bravo asked what the peak demand for CPS Energy was and how many megawatts of energy were not available through ERCOT during the winter storm. He asked if future power outages could be prevented if five more coal power plants were built to the size of the current largest and most modern one. He asked what the cost would be to weatherize and insulate the Spruce 1 Plant. Councilmember Bravo asked to what extent would it make sense for San Antonio ratepayers to invest in increasing energy generation capacity. Ms. Gold-Williams reported that the peak demand projected for CPS Energy was approximately 1,000 megawatts; tens of thousands of megawatts were unavailable through ERCOT; and the building of more coal plants would not have prevented the winter storm emergency events. She confirmed that all plants were weatherized and more quality control checks were needed for proper sealing, insulation and coiling; and clarified that the issue was not that there was no weatherization, but that there was not enough to withstand the duration of the five-day winter storm. Ms. Gold-Williams explained that CPS Energy has always kept more capacity than what was needed to self-supply backup power at its own cost without having to pay extreme market prices, which has helped keep local rates low. She confirmed that when the local community did not need surplus amounts, CPS Energy sold it on the wholesale market to offset the need for rate cases.

Councilmember Sandoval stated that decisions were needed to determine at what point the community should be alerted to prepare for potential required rolling outages. She proposed an expansion of the ReadySouthTexas app to educate residents how to deal with power outages and noted that other cities provided 72-hour or week-long preparation kits for their residents. She noted that the EPC report contained findings that the southern or eastsides of town were greatly impacted due to the older housing stock in those areas that were not properly insulated, and vulnerable populations having less access to resources.

Councilmember Pelaez reported that EPC members contacted every Council District during the process of preparing their report and requested that each submit questions, comments, concerns, and ideas regarding the cascading emergency events that occurred during the winter storm. He reported that each office sent the same amount of vitriol, worry, concern, confusion, and fears reported by their constituents, in ubiquity. He described the winter event as the great equalizer as every resident in household, regardless of age, on every side of town was vulnerable. He stated that it was the job of the EPC and to ask uncomfortable questions and have difficult conversations about resiliency City-wide and it was important to have trustworthy, transparent tools to prevent misperceptions. He recognized that disparities created in the past continued to exist and it was the responsibility of the City and its utilities and partners to own them and address them equally across all areas of the City.

Councilmember Courage asked how CPS Energy provided communication and energy services for those with medical equipment requiring energy during emergency situations. He asked if circuits could be reconfigured for their homes to ensure continued power. Ms. Gold-Williams reported that CPS Energy established an outreach program in 2010-2015 and provided a caseworker type of arrangement for residents with medical equipment needs. She explained that a community response unit deployed staff to help such residents relocate, and provide water and resources as needed. She added that regular telephone check-ins were placed to keep the residents informed and to provide relocation information. Ms. Gold-Williams stated that CPS Energy did not have the exact technology to pinpoint individual homes, but was working with vendors to create a solution for emergency events.

Councilmember Viagran asked if there was a timeline to establish cooling stations for the summer months ahead. She requested that funding be made available to provide emergency utility assistance funds to residents prior to the lifting of eviction moratoriums and to prepare for the hot summer months. City Manager Walsh reported that several cooling stations had been in operation for the past several weeks. He stated that he would propose to set aside a significant budget to address some of the EPC recommendations in the City's Trial Budget, or to be included within the City's next bond program.

Councilmember McKee-Rodriguez highlighted that the City placed a high priority on equity and acknowledged that residents across the City equally felt the pain of the winter storm. He emphasized that on a regular basis, the residents of Council District 2 had to leave their District in order buy food and supplies. He recognized that the digital communications were a huge part of the City's communication plan and the digital divide greatly impacted the residents of Council District 2. He asked of any changes that CPS Energy or SAWS would recommend to the Unified Development Code (UDC) to weatherproof future infrastructure. Ms. Gold-Williams stated that CPS Energy did not have the level of expertise to do that, but stood ready to partner with the City and SAWS to contribute to in the areas of weatherization, housing standards, and funding recommendations. Mr. Clouse stated that the UDC and the City's Plumbing Code could go a long way to address some of the residential pipe

failures that occurred in older homes. He observed that establishing stricter codes for new homes was another starting point.

Mayor Nirenberg reminded City Council that the UDC review process occurred very five years and did not take place last year due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and would occur in Fall 2021.

Councilmember Bravo observed that more checks and balances were needed to ensure that the community's values were reflected in the City-owned utilities and to ensure that the utilities were operating in ways that were transparent and accountable to the City and ratepayers. He asked if the EPC had conversations regarding climate change and if more extreme weather going forward was anticipated. He referenced the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster that occurred in March 2011 where it was not acceptable corporate culture for staff engineers to question or challenge senior engineers regarding tsunami safeguard concerns. He asked if the EPC held conversations around corporate culture concerns with the utilities or the EPC. Mr. Williams confirmed that the EPC had discussions on climate change and recognized that such extreme events would occur again as the climate was getting hotter. He noted several mentions of generators in today's discussions and in lieu, recommended the use of solar panels and the new iron LFP batteries that were the batteries of the future and could serve larger installations such as the Fire Department because they were heavier. Mr. Williams reported that specific corporate culture conversations were not held, but he certainly endorsed them.

Councilmember Rocha Garcia observed that COVID-19 was the greatest equalizer and noted that due to COVID-19 restrictions, only a limited amount of personnel staffed the EOC during the winter storm. She asked how to access and sign up for the free EOC emergency alert registry either via 2-1-1 or on the EOC website, and noted the great opportunity to promote the registry to the residents. She encouraged local Chambers of Commerce to work with local businesses to prepare emergency readiness plans for their employees. Assistant City Manager Villagómez stated she would provide registry information.

Councilmember Perry highlighted that the UDC could be updated to create stricter building and plumbing standards, but it would also raise local housing prices when more affordable housing was needed. He asked if CPS Energy would consider building a pipeline and installing a direct gas supply for the City. Ms. Gold-Williams reported that CPS Energy did receive gas supply from the Eagle Ford Shale pipeline but did not own extraction rights. She concurred that CPS Energy should further diversify, augment and invest in its supply systems and looked forward to future discussions with the City on those issues.

Mayor Nirenberg thank the City Council, leadership from the utilities and the EOC, and the public that weighed in to help inform the EPC Report. He noted that the final EPC Report was not the end, but the beginning of its implementation. He added that full reports, timelines, and public demonstrations of the planning strategies would be forthcoming with full accountability.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Nirenberg recessed the meeting at 2:36 PM to discuss the following items:

- A. The purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.072 (real property).

- C. Legal issues related to collective bargaining pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with attorney).
- D. Legal issues related to litigation involving the City pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with attorney).
- E. Legal issues relating to COVID-19 preparedness pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with attorney).
- F. Legal update and analysis on CPS litigation and investigations related to the Winter Storm pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with attorney).

Mayor Nirenberg reconvened the meeting at 3:53 PM and announced that no action was taken.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further discussion, Mayor Nirenberg recessed the meeting at 4:10 PM.

APPROVED

RON NIRENBERG

Mayor

Attest:

TINA J. FLORES

City Clerk