

I. Meeting Packet



State of Florida
Public Service Commission
INTERNAL AFFAIRS AGENDA
Tuesday – March 26, 2024
9:30 AM
Room 105 – Gerald L. Gunter Building

1. Legislative Update
2. General Counsel's Report
3. Executive Director's report
4. Other Matters

BB/aml

OUTSIDE PERSONS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE COMMISSION ON
ANY OF THE AGENDAED ITEMS SHOULD CONTACT THE
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AT (850) 413-6463.

II. Outside Persons Who Wish to Address the Commission at Internal Affairs

Note: The records reflect that no outside persons addressed the Commission at this Internal Affairs meeting.

III. Supplemental Materials for Internal Affairs

Note: The records reflect that there were no supplemental materials provided to the Commission during this Internal Affairs meeting.

IV. Transcript

BEFORE THE
FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

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PROCEEDINGS: INTERNAL AFFAIRS

COMMISSIONERS PARTICIPATING: CHAIRMAN MIKE LA ROSA
COMMISSIONER ART GRAHAM
COMMISSIONER GARY F. CLARK
COMMISSIONER ANDREW GILES FAY
COMMISSIONER GABRIELLA PASSIDOMO

DATE: Tuesday, March 26, 2024

TIME: Commenced: 9:30 a.m.
Concluded: 9:44 a.m.

PLACE: Betty Easley Conference Center
Room 148
4075 Esplanade Way
Tallahassee, Florida

REPORTED BY: DEBRA R. KRICK
Court Reporter and
Notary Public in and for
the State of Florida at Large

PREMIER REPORTING
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA
(850) 894-0828

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: All right. Welcome this
3 morning to our Internal Affairs meeting. Today is
4 March 26th.

5 I love how automatically at the room, at 9:30
6 everything just went shush, right?

7 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Training.

8 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: So, yeah, I guess -- I
9 guess so, right? This is supposed to be a casual
10 room, right? It got very serious.

11 So just a quick reminder. Today's Internal
12 Affairs agenda a little bit short maybe than normal
13 of what we've had the last couple -- the last
14 couple of months. Of course, we have a hearing
15 afterwards, and, you know, we wanted to make sure
16 we have time for that as we are planning.

17 First, maybe and foremost, one of the most
18 important things we do here in Internal Affairs is
19 our Employee of the Month. So I will tell you my
20 office -- and, Andrew, I don't know how you worked
21 it, but I always felt we were behind. Like, we are
22 picking, and we are trying to choose. So I
23 actually have two Employees of the Month, but not
24 for the same month. We are going to have
25 February's Employee of the Month and March's

1 Employee of the Month. So I think we're -- I
2 always get confused. I didn't know which month it
3 was, so I wanted to make sure we recognize the
4 employee during that month, so I think we are
5 there.

6 So our Employee of the Month for February is
7 Wendi Denison with Engineering, Wendi -- oh, there
8 she is.

9 (Applause from the audience.)

10 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: As an Administrative
11 Assistant for the Safety section, obviously a very
12 important role, Wendi not only coordinates data
13 submissions for several inspections, but also
14 processes travel and other records associated to
15 the telework employees in the Miami and Tampa
16 regions, which obviously is a little bit new to us
17 with making those operations work.

18 Regardless of the task, Wendi always provides
19 thorough results, combined with a smile and bright
20 attitude. Of course, very important, her knowledge
21 and records of procedures is also assistive to the
22 Commission in obtaining high marks during the
23 annual PHMSA evaluations of the pipeline safety
24 program.

25 While she may not be in the limelight, which

1 is a good thing for the safety section, of course,
2 she's a shining star in the division. So, Wendi,
3 congratulations for Employee of the Month for
4 February.

5 MS. DENISON: Thank you.

6 (Applause from the audience.)

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1 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: So our Employee of the
2 Month for March is Yen Ngo. Yen is with the CAO.
3 She's actually in -- down in Miami. She works
4 remotely. So, of course, she could not be with us
5 today. But I did talk to her and, of course, let
6 her know that she had won the Employee of the Month
7 for March.

8 She started her career with the PSC in the
9 Bureau of Auditing in 1995 as a staff auditor, and
10 what was formally, of course, the Miami district
11 office. After the closure of the office, Yen began
12 a working remotely. As a 29-year staff member, she
13 has worked on numerous audits during her tenure at
14 the Commission.

15 Yen's dedication to her audits and attention
16 to detail plays a significant role in the timely
17 release of professional quality and audit reports
18 issued following, of course, a completed audit in
19 our investigations, if there are any.

20 Yen's self-motivation and work ethic makes her
21 a valued employee of the Commission. So I reminded
22 her, I said, even though that she's, you know,
23 she's not here, she's thought of, of course. And
24 her work is an important part of what we do, so
25 help me in congratulating Yen Ngo, Employee of the

1 Month.

2 (Applause from the audience.)

3 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: All right. So on main
4 stage is our legislative update, so I will toss it
5 over to Lance.

6 MR. WATSON: All right. Chairman,
7 Commissioners, good morning.

8 Florida's 2024 legislative session ended on
9 March 8th, and the Governor has until June 30th to
10 sign bills into law. Just a couple of stats. This
11 year, 1,487 bills were filed with 325 of those
12 passing both chambers. And of those bills that
13 passed, from our A list we had four bills specific
14 that passed both chambers, and I will go through
15 those real quick and kind of what that impact is on
16 the PSC.

17 The first one, of cures, being our agency
18 bill, Senate Bill 364. This is a RAF bill. This
19 did pass. It ended up with passing with one
20 caveat, there is a Sunset on it, and that Sunset
21 expires July 1st, 2028. So four-year Sunset before
22 we have to take additional action on it.

23 The second bill, Senate Bill 366, the gas
24 safety bill. This, of course, raises the per
25 violation civil penalty to a certain amount until

1 June 30th, 2025, and then after that, assigns the
2 PSC the responsibility to establish those maximum
3 penalties, and that's based on the Consumer Price
4 Index Federal Pipeline Safety Penalties and
5 Legislative Intent to maintain certification with
6 the pipeline and hazardous materials safety
7 administration. This requires the PSC to annually
8 review this and, if necessary, to revise it, and to
9 adopt rules implementing these provisions. That
10 takes effect July 1, 2024.

11 The next bill, Senate Bill 478, the
12 designation of eligible telecommunication carriers.
13 This bill authorizes the PSC to designate entities
14 upon petition as eligible telecommunication
15 carriers for lifeline services provided they are
16 telecommunications companies or commercial mobile
17 radio service providers.

18 And the last bill, of course, House Bill 1645,
19 the energy resources bill. This is an omnibus
20 bill. It contains numerous provisions related to
21 energy, but really the four areas that impact the
22 PSC. The first being requires the PSC to determine
23 upon notice by a public utility whether an
24 off-scheduled power plant retirement is prudent and
25 consistent with the state's energy policy goals.

1 The second requires the PSC to develop a plan
2 to conduct an assessment of the security and
3 resiliency of the state's electric grid and natural
4 gas facilities against both physical threats and
5 cyber threats.

6 The third allows the PSC to approve utility
7 programs for electric vehicle charging under
8 certain conditions.

9 And then lastly, the fourth requires the PSC
10 to study and evaluate the technical and economic
11 feasibility of using advanced nuclear power
12 technologies, and to submit a report of its
13 findings and recommendations.

14 I will note that as of this morning, those
15 four bills I mentioned have not been presented to
16 the Governor yet do approval. But once they are,
17 he will have 15 days to make a determination on
18 those.

19 Any questions on the bills?

20 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Yeah. Back up to that
21 last bill.

22 MR. WATSON: Okay.

23 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Go over that cyber
24 threat part again.

25 MR. WATSON: Okay. This -- this -- it says

1 that it requires the PSC to develop a plan to
2 conduct an assessment of the security and
3 resiliency of the state's electric grid and natural
4 gas facilities against both physical threats and
5 cyber threats.

6 COMMISSIONER GRAHAM: Okay. Thank you.

7 MR. WATSON: Any other questions?

8 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Lance, none of these have
9 been signed by the Governor, right?

10 MR. WATSON: No, sir. Not yet.

11 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Probably not even sent to
12 him yet.

13 1645, that's very comprehensive, like you
14 noted. Is there a way, maybe we can, in the fall,
15 or at some point later this year, we can maybe do a
16 follow-up, especially with the reporting and kind
17 of the uniqueness of things that we have got to do
18 as an agency?

19 MR. WATSON: Sure.

20 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Just kind of highlight what
21 we've done. I know some of these -- some of the
22 other bills have rulemaking, some of the things
23 that we will make adjustments to, which is pretty
24 standard and we're pretty good at, but that one is
25 a little bit unique, right, where we are kind of

1 maybe taking on some things that we --

2 MR. WATSON: Yes, sir.

3 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: -- haven't done, really
4 hadn't done in a long time, so I would kind of like
5 to see that just maybe to update us and see we are
6 and thoughts and inputs.

7 MR. WATSON: Sure. Yeah, that sounds good.
8 Any other questions on bills?

9 I will quickly go over the budget real quick.

10 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Sure. That's important.

11 MR. WATSON: In total, the budget came out to
12 117.5 billion. Florida's reserve total 16.3
13 billion. And in that budget includes a
14 three-percent pay raise for State employees, and
15 pays off \$500 million of outstanding state debt.

16 The retirement system also saw a change for
17 reemploying retirees. Retiring employees may
18 return to work six months after DROP ends, and they
19 will not have to defer their retirement for another
20 six months after that.

21 Our budget, the PSC was fully funded at
22 \$30,737,974 and all 272 positions per our LBR. And
23 then in an effort to reduce Floridians' tax burden,
24 the budget also includes tax relief efforts
25 totaling up to 1.5 billion. 450 million of that is

1 a total rebate program for drivers with more than
2 35 toll transactions a month, a credit for
3 homeowners insurers who lower premiums, and a slew
4 of tax holidays, which includes a two-week back to
5 school sales tax holiday, a 30-day freedom month
6 sales tax holiday, a one-week tool time sales tax
7 holidays, and two separate disaster preparedness
8 tax holidays.

9 And then lastly, not that we are counting the
10 days, but the 2025 legislative session will convene
11 on March 4th and then gavel out on May 2nd.

12 And with that, that's a -- that's all I have
13 for you all today, other than I would note two
14 other bills that we were tracking that did not
15 pass, House Bill 1277, the -- what we called the
16 muni bill. This year, it died on second reading in
17 the House. And then lastly, the RNG bill, Senate
18 Bill 480, passed the full Senate, but dies in House
19 messages, and then its companion, House Bill 683,
20 died in its last committee stop commerce.

21 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Gotcha. Seemed like that
22 certainly had some movement on, it didn't cross the
23 finish.

24 MR. WATSON: Yeah.

25 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Awesome.

1 COMMISSIONER FAY: Thanks for all your work.
2 I know you were downtown a lot.

3 MR. WATSON: Sure.

4 COMMISSIONER FAY: I appreciate it.

5 MR. WATSON: Yeah. Thank you all.

6 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Yeah, certainly a busier
7 session maybe than --

8 MR. WATSON: Than last year for sure, yeah, it
9 was. That it was.

10 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Awesome. Well, thank you
11 for the update, and, yeah, certainly look forward
12 to the follow-ups, of course, as time goes on, and
13 like you said, before you know it, we will be back
14 in the swing of things.

15 All right. Let's move on to the General
16 Counsel's report.

17 MR. HETRICK: Thank you, Chairman. Good
18 morning, Members. I have no report, sir.

19 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Move on to the Executive
20 Director.

21 MR. BAEZ: Thank you, Chairman. Good morning,
22 Commissioners. A couple of housekeeping issues.

23 First, the agency -- the PSC normally
24 regularly participates in career fairs, certainly
25 the nearer ones here at FSU and FAMU. And this

1 year, we have identified and brought onboard a
2 couple of interns and I wanted to welcome them,
3 Brianna York is a FAMU Business Administration
4 major, and Scott Quigley is an FSU Finance major.
5 Both started on March 18th, and they are both
6 detailed to AFAB, so they will have -- they will
7 have their hands full soon enough by the calendar.

8 We want to welcome them and wish them well.
9 They will be with us, I think I said eight weeks,
10 and we are always on the lookout for new young
11 talent, and hopefully future full-time employees.
12 So welcome to them.

13 Secondly, just to tack on regarding House Bill
14 1645, and, Chairman, I know that you want to have
15 an update in terms of the implementation. And even
16 though we -- as Lance said, they haven't been
17 presented to the -- certainly, that one hasn't been
18 presented to the Governor for signature. We have
19 every high confidence that that should be
20 forthcoming.

21 We are starting to reach out to not just
22 interested stakeholders, kind of forming
23 participation rosters, as one would call it, and
24 also reaching out to the liaisons for the different
25 agencies that are listed in terms of consultation

1 under the different sections, both for the --
2 specifically for the nuclear feasibility study, and
3 then the cybersecurity piece as well. So we will
4 be keeping you up-to-date on how that's
5 progressing. Certainly, you said fall. It may be
6 some time sooner than that, one would hope. So
7 stay tuned.

8 And lastly, I know you mentioned the hearing
9 immediately following, and our next Agenda is on
10 April 2nd, which is next Tuesday.

11 And if you don't have questions, that's the
12 end of my report.

13 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Awesome. Thank you.

14 Commissioners?

15 Well, I am excited for the interns. That was
16 a big part -- I wanted to, of course, get folks --
17 young folks involved, and hopefully they do maybe
18 end up becoming future employees.

19 MR. BAEZ: Oh, absolutely. We consider
20 ourselves lucky when we can find, you know, folks
21 that take an interest in public service that early
22 on --

23 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Sure.

24 MR. BAEZ: -- and certainly catching them
25 before they have bigger choices, we can sink our

1 claws into them, and I think -- I think we have
2 been pretty well successful --

3 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Gotcha.

4 MR. BAEZ: -- in getting some good keepers.

5 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: You have got the Kool-Aid
6 that you can --

7 MR. BAEZ: Well, Kool-Aid is calories and
8 sugars and oils and A1C kind of things you don't
9 want to be dealing with, but, yes, your point is
10 taken, and that's sort of the strategy.

11 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Yeah. In eight weeks,
12 there is -- although it seems like a small window,
13 there's a lot that happens here.

14 MR. BAEZ: A lot happens -- a lot can happen.
15 In the right eight weeks, there is a lifetime,
16 so --

17 COMMISSIONER PASSIDOMO: I will definitely
18 make a plug is that I started here as a legal
19 intern.

20 MR. BAEZ: There you go.

21 COMMISSIONER PASSIDOMO: Yeah, so definitely.
22 And the Kool-Aid -- I mean, everyone knows, GCL has
23 some of the best home table buffets going on, so
24 that didn't hurt coming back for full --

25 MR. BAEZ: It was legendary, Commissioner.

1 Absolutely.

2 I -- I walk heavier nowadays because of that
3 oak table over the years.

4 COMMISSIONER PASSIDOMO: Yeah.

5 MR. BAEZ: Good luck to our interns, and
6 hopefully many more to come.

7 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: Thank you.

8 Anybody else?

9 All right. So any other matters? Anything
10 we've got before us?

11 No one has asked me about what the song of the
12 month was. Man, I skipped right through it?

13 MR. BAEZ: It's telephone, Mr. Telephone Man.

14 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: So Telephone Man by New
15 Addition. I do have to research some of these
16 songs, by the way. So don't think I know all of
17 these, and I certainly don't. Submitted by Clayton
18 Lewis of Engineering.

19 So that was an original, as in, we've had some
20 duplicate submissions. That was a one and only so
21 far. So I don't necessarily have a grading scale,
22 but creativity does go into it. So when we have
23 some creativity, it certainly stands out to me, so
24 thanks, Clayton, for submitting that and getting us
25 going this morning as we walked in.

1 So besides that, I know we've got a hearing in
2 the hearing room. Is 20 minutes okay? That's an
3 odd time to start. That would be 10:05. We will
4 try to get that going at 10:05.

5 MR. BAEZ: I would -- I would just jump in and
6 say, with the lawyers, that's fine. I don't know
7 what it was noticed for, so --

8 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: It was immediately after.

9 MR. FUTRELL: Immediately following.

10 MR. BAEZ: Immediately following. If it was
11 immediately following, then, yeah. Sorry, I didn't
12 mean to interject.

13 CHAIRMAN LA ROSA: So we will make it a point
14 to try to get over there, because we are changing
15 rooms, at 10:05, cool? Awesome.

16 Besides that, see that this meeting is
17 adjourned, and we will see everybody soon.

18 Thank you.

19 (Proceedings concluded.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

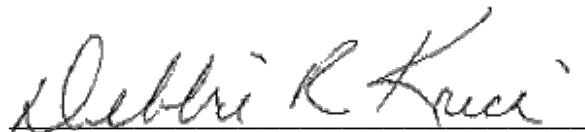
STATE OF FLORIDA)
COUNTY OF LEON)

I, DEBRA KRICK, Court Reporter, do hereby certify that the foregoing proceeding was heard at the time and place herein stated.

IT IS FURTHER CERTIFIED that I stenographically reported the said proceedings; that the same has been transcribed under my direct supervision; and that this transcript constitutes a true transcription of my notes of said proceedings.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am not a relative, employee, attorney or counsel of any of the parties, nor am I a relative or employee of any of the parties' attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor am I financially interested in the action.

DATED this 8th day of April, 2024.



DEBRA R. KRICK
NOTARY PUBLIC
COMMISSION #HH31926
EXPIRES AUGUST 13, 2024