

REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS *Meeting Notes*

December 10, 2018

Possible Action to Approve a Contract for the Snook to Steele Store 138kV Transmission Line

Mr. Randy Trimble, BTU's Executive Director of Energy Delivery, presented bid sheets for the Snook to Steele Store 138kV Transmission Line project. This new line will source the Steele Store Substation from the existing Snook Substation, and will be the first section to, eventually, serve the RELLIS, Smetana, and Leonard Road substations. The Board unanimously approved a contract with Sayers Construction, LLC for the construction of the transmission line.

Presentation Regarding a Distribution Service Center

Mr. Gary Miller, General Manager of BTU, presented plans to the Board for the construction of a Distribution Service Center. Mr. Miller explained that the state-leading growth in Bryan and Brazos County has led to a need for larger and more modern facilities to provide an efficient and productive work environment. BTU staff have budgeted for an expansion and modernization of facilities in support of the Distribution Division. Mr. Miller stated that responses have been received from a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for an architectural firm to assist BTU with the design and construction of a combined Distribution Service Center, part of which would also serve as BTU's Warehouse.

American Public Power Association 2018 Excellence in Public Power Communications Award

Mr. Miller presented the video for which BTU won an Excellence in Public Power Communications Award from APPA. Mr. Miller thanked the City of Bryan Marketing and Communications staff for their excellent work in putting this video together.



SOCIAL MEDIA



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BRYAN TEXAS UTILITIES

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www.btutilities.com

Hours of Operation

Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mr. David Bairrington, Chairman
Mr. Flynn Adcock, Vice Chairman
Mr. Carl L. Benner
Mr. Pete J. Bienski, Jr.
Mr. A. Bentley Nettles
Ms. Rosemarie Selman
Mr. Paul Turney
Mr. Buppy Simank, Ex-Officio
Mr. Jason Bienski, Ex-Officio

GENERAL MANAGER

Gary Miller

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

Randy Trimble
David Werley

DIVISION MANAGERS

James Bodine
Shawndra Curry
Ken Lindberg
Clay Lindstrom
David McIntyre
Kristi Nash
Vicki Reim

Doug Lyles, Chief Risk Officer
Wes Williams, Regulatory Compliance Officer

CITY OF BRYAN

Kean Register, City Manager
Joe Hegwood, Chief Financial Officer
Bernie Acre, Chief Information Officer

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Billing/Collections/Connects
(979) 821-5700

Electrical Outage/Lines Down
(979) 822-3777

Distribution/Line Design
(979) 821-5770

WARNING:

BEWARE OF DOWNED POWER LINES



Weather and car accidents are the main causes of downed power lines. Bryan Texas Utilities warns customers to use extreme caution should they encounter a downed power line, which can carry an electric current strong enough to cause serious injury or death.

Assume that any downed line you see is energized and report it immediately to the police, fire department and BTU.

Here are some tips to help you stay safe around downed power lines:

- If you see a downed power line, move away from it and anything touching it.
- The proper way to move away from the line is to shuffle away with small steps, keeping your feet together and on the ground at all times. This will minimize the chance for a human path of electric current and minimize the hazards of electric shock. Electricity moves from zones of high voltage to zones of low voltage—and it could do that through your body.
- Do not drive over downed power lines.
- If you see someone who is in direct or indirect contact with a downed power line, do not touch the person. You could become the next victim. Call 911 instead.
- Do not attempt to move a downed power line or anything in contact with the line by using another object, such as a broom or stick. Even typically nonconductive materials such as wood can conduct electricity and electrocute you.
- Be careful not to put your feet near water where a downed power line is located.
- If you are in your car and it is in contact with a downed line, stay in your car. Honk your horn and call 911 for help. Tell others to stay away from your vehicle.
- If you must leave your car because it's on fire, jump out of the vehicle with both feet together to avoid simultaneous contact with the live car and the ground, then use small shuffling steps to get away from the car. This way, you reduce the risk of becoming part of the path of electricity.





FOOD FOR FAMILIES FOOD DRIVE

For the 23rd year in a row, Bryan Texas Utilities staff members worked the first shift at the annual KBTX Food for Families Food Drive on December 5, 2018. The drive, benefitting the Brazos Valley Food Bank, brought in a total of more than 177,000 pounds of non-perishable food, and over \$144,000 in donations from businesses and community members.

More than 25 BTU employees worked the drive, unloading deliveries, sorting items, and greeting the community. The staff also presented the Food Bank with a \$1000 check to assist in their efforts to end hunger in the Brazos Valley.

This tradition of giving is a wonderful way for our staff to begin their holiday season, and we appreciate all who came out to help make this event a success for our community!





BTU'S **VICKI REIM** TAKES HELM AT CHAMBER

She is the quintessential "people person."

Anyone who knows her would agree. So it is

appropriate that Vicki Reim is the Division Manager for Customer Operations at BTU—and just as logical that she has taken the helm as chairperson of the Bryan-College Station Chamber of Commerce. Chambers of commerce unite, enhance and promote businesses for communities, but really C of C's are all about people.

"What I most enjoy about being with the Chamber is meeting people, talking with them about their new businesses, seeing those entrepreneurial efforts take off and do well," says Reim. "There's nothing more exciting than that." Since taking over as Chair of the chamber in October, Reim has been attending on average two ribbon cuttings a week—new businesses in the burgeoning economy of the Brazos Valley.

Reim joined BTU in 1986, and she held the energy auditor position where she focused on energy efficiency and managed several incentive programs. In that position, she came to know customers quite well, talking through individual needs with them, resolving issues, advising on energy efficiency and consumer options. In her current role, her focus remains on the residential and commercial sides. (Reim began her studies at A&M as an architecture major, but graduated with a B.S. degree in Industrial Distribution—"In a short description it's half engineering, half business," she says.)

She's been with BTU for over three decades. "It has been exciting at BTU. There have been so many technological advances, all for the good of our customers," she says. "Now, customers have a real 'hands-on' management of their accounts and usage on-line; they can monitor their daily energy consumption, for instance."

Reim is a Leadership Brazos graduate and has served in leadership roles on several organizations including the Junior League, Scotty's House, PTO, church committees, Women's Leadership Council and the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Brazos Valley.

She's been active in the Chamber for many years, first as a volunteer on committees and then as a Board member. "I am especially pleased to be ushering in the Chamber's 101st year," says Reim. "And I want to give special recognition to our Ambassador Program—our volunteers who promote the Chamber to potential new members and spread the word about current members."

Her priorities as chairperson for this coming year? "We want to look at our events, our committees, make sure our focus is clear. We will update the Chamber's Strategic Plan for the next decade, and we need to consider our future office expansion needs." The Chamber has a paid staff of 10 dedicated employees, in too small an office.

"I am christening this year as 'Chamber 101' to celebrate our hundred and first year," says Reim. "And to also acknowledge the importance of higher education here in the Brazos Valley. This chamber has been so fortunate to have had great leadership. Just look at the past year: 1,550 members, nearly 200 special events, over 150 committee meetings, more than 15,000 volunteer hours... It's a great time to be living and doing business in the Brazos Valley, but then it's always been, hasn't it? And the Chamber is a very big part of that."

What does a chamber of commerce offer its members?

- opportunities for networking, cross-promoting businesses
- sponsorship and advertising opportunities
- supports Shop Local Campaign
- represents local business community to local, county, state and national elected officials
- sponsors events such as ground breakings, ribbon cuttings, events that promote local businesses

For more information about the Bryan-College Station Chamber of Commerce, go to:

www.bcschamber.org



The Bienski Family, Pete Bienski in middle.

BTU'S NEWEST BOARD MEMBER

PETE BIENSKI, *Educator, Administrator Joins Board*

He's an early bird. You could say he's a workaholic, first there, last to leave. Certainly you could say Pete J. Bienski, Jr. has devoted his career to helping kids make the most of themselves through the schools he has administered.

And now he brings his administrative, financial and personnel skills to BTU as its newest Board member.

Mr. Bienski is locally born and bred. He is a '68 A&M graduate, with a B.S. in Agriculture Education; he also has a Master's in Education from Sam Houston State University. After Army

service at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, he taught briefly in Cleveland, Texas, and then, somewhat fortuitously, became principal of his alma mater, St. Joseph's School, where he served for six years. At the tender age of 29, he was asked to take on the superintendent duties of Mumford ISD, located northwest of Bryan. At that time, the small district was comprised of only 90 students and one building. Under Bienski's leadership, it has grown to 625 students, four buildings (all built within the past decade), and the new Pete J. Bienski Sports Complex (which has attracted school sports teams in baseball, softball and tennis from across the state because of its features).

Mumford also has two recent Blue Ribbon Awards from the U.S. Department of Education, an award earned by just 12 high performing campuses in the state this year and only 349 schools in the United States - keep in mind that is campuses, not independent districts. This terrific honor went to the elementary school campus. In fact, Mumford ISD has two campus schools, elementary (pre-K through 7th grade), and the high school (8-12 grade), both are so highly sought after that around a hundred students each year are turned away from transferring into the district.

Bienski retired from his full-time responsibilities at Mumford in June 2018, but he continues to consult and advise the district a couple days a week. Over the years he has served on numerous church, community, school and youth organizations, boards and committees.

"The Mumford ISD has a very small tax base—over 70 percent of the students are economically disadvantaged—so every year had its financial challenges," says Bienski. "That's good training for a future board member. As stewards of a non-corporate board, responsible to the citizens, you need to be creative and always looking for the most efficient use of funds and ways of finding non-tax revenue."

Bienski says he has no agenda in his BTU Board service. "There's really nothing wrong, no need for change. BTU has great management, terrific personnel, excellent safety record, outstanding customer service, enviable credit rating," he says. "So, as a board member, you continue looking out for the best interests of the community—in our case, both city and rural—ensure it's all being done as efficiently as possible and that things continue to move in the right direction."

The BTU board works closely with the Bryan City Council, the body that appoints the board and approves the annual BTU budget. (Jason Bienski, Pete's son, is an ex-officio BTU board member, and has served two terms as Bryan's mayor. Incidentally, Pete and his wife of 50 years, Carol, have four sons, all A&M graduates, "and four terrific daughters-in-law, seven grandchildren and one on the way" Pete adds.)

"Our area is growing quite rapidly, so that brings challenges," says Bienski. "We need to think long range. For example, there is real interest in more underground construction, versus additional overhead distribution. Underground is more costly, for obvious reasons, and repairs can be tricky. But, clearly, in our newer areas, underground is preferred. Yes, we can replace some overhead with underground in our established and older areas, but that's a big decision. So we look forward to working with City Council and citizens' groups as we go forward on that and other issues."

In what areas must the Board seek approval from the City Council?

- Setting of rates
- Actual purchase or lease of property
- Condemnations
- Matters related to the Texas Municipal Power Authority
- Approval of the annual BTU budget

You can learn more about the BTU Board members at: **btutilities.com**

The BTU Board meets on the second Monday of each month at the BTU administration building, 28th St. @ Main.



BTU SPOTLIGHT: ENGINEERS

Engineers play a vital role in many industries in our world, including the electric utility industry. From the construction and design of new facilities to the generation of power and the administrative departments, Bryan Texas Utilities employs approximately 20 engineers in many aspects of the electric business. These employees specialize in a variety of disciplines including mechanical, electrical, and civil engineering that each lend their skills to energy production and delivery. As valuable assets of BTU, this group of employees spends much of their time solving real world problems utilizing technical expertise and creative thinking, blending both methodical and innovative strategies.

Beginning with the calculation of needed capacity and then the design and construction of distribution and transmission power lines and substations, BTU's engineers aid in the expansion and growth of BTU's electric system. Particularly with regard to our expanding community of Bryan, College Station, and the surrounding rural areas, engineers are fundamental assets of (as the name

indicates) the Engineering and System Planning Division of BTU. These specialists are responsible for a wide variety of technical functions, including completing long term electric system studies to identify the need for and timing the implementation of additional electric infrastructure inside the 640-square mile service territory.

Working in conjunction with BTU's Engineering and System Planning Division, the Transmission Division is responsible for the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of nearly 30 high voltage substations and more than 150 miles of high voltage transmission lines. The transmission system is the backbone of BTU's electrical grid. "There is no typical day for these engineers as they could spend some time behind a desk monitoring the digital logic of the microprocessor relays, sensors that monitor the performance of the power lines, or they may be out in the field at a substation working with technicians to improve reliability or identify maintenance needs," according to Randy Trimble, Executive Director of Energy Delivery, who

earned a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Louisiana Tech University and a Master of Science degree in Electrical Engineering from Texas A&M University.

The Production Division generates power at the Roland C. Dansby Power Plant located in Brazos County at Lake Bryan and the Atkins Power Plant in central Bryan. Engineers in the Production Division are responsible for the maintenance and operation of BTU's four electric generators that provide power to the electrical grid.

BTU's Qualified Scheduling Entity (QSE) operates within the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) system to most efficiently serve the BTU customer load by buying and/or selling power generated at BTU's power plants and others around the state. Engineers in this department study the patterned impact of weather and daily schedules to predict the energy needs of BTU's more than 58,000 customers. Using this data, they make long term generation build decisions, secure long term energy deals, and buy and sell power in the shorter-term markets. All of these activities benefit BTU's customers by providing reasonable and predictable rates. "The QSE Division activity is designed and managed to help stabilize rates for our customers," said Ken Lindberg, Division Manager of QSE and Power Marketing, who holds both a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering and a finance degree from Texas A&M University.

The Energy Management Department supports the utility by serving as a contact for large commercial customers, administering residential and commercial energy efficiency programs, and consulting customers about ways to reduce their energy usage. "As an Energy Accounts Manager, most of my customer contacts are plant managers and engineers. Having a degree in electrical engineering helps me to understand their processes and how they use electricity. It also helps me to interface with BTU engineering and design personnel when discussing technical issues related to my accounts such as facility expansions," indicated Mike Connor, Senior Energy Accounts Manager, who holds a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Texas A&M University.

Administration is an all-encompassing department. Engineers in this department include BTU General Manager, Gary Miller, and Wes Williams, BTU's Regulatory Compliance Officer. Mr. Miller earned an Electrical Engineering degree from Lamar University and Mr. Williams earned his Mechanical Engineering degree from Texas A&M University. The Regulatory Compliance Officer ensures that BTU fulfills all state and federal regulations and guidelines. As General Manager, Gary Miller oversees all operations of BTU and consults with the BTU Board of Directors to make decisions to ensure adequate reliability and reasonable rates for our customers. "BTU's Board of Directors have a variety of professional expertise, including engineers, which can be helpful in making decisions regarding technical improvements and investments," Gary Miller said.

Throughout these departments, engineers have been heavily involved in many technological advancement programs undertaken by BTU. Some of these include moving from analog relays, sensors that monitor the performance of the power lines and substations, to more powerful microprocessor based relays to make BTU's electrical grid more secure and robust. Engineers throughout the utility also played a vital role in the implementation of an Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI). "This infrastructure allows us to see real time performance and load levels of the electrical grid, which provides us with data to plan for the future," Randy Trimble said. AMI also allowed an Outage Management System (OMS) to be utilized to help pinpoint the causes and locations of outages, improving reliability and outage response times.

"The future of engineering looks bright," Randy Trimble said. "Technology is advancing faster than ever before and there will always be a need for engineering whether it be for public infrastructure, military equipment, fuel for our vehicles, or the electrical grids that power our nation's homes and industries."

NATIONAL ENGINEERS WEEK: FEBRUARY 17-23, 2019

Since 1951, the National Society of Professional Engineers hosts National Engineers Week to help ensure a diverse, well-educated engineering workforce through increased understanding of and interest in engineering and technology careers. Visit nspe.org to learn how this organization promotes engineering through school, business, and community partnerships.