



MEMORANDUM

EUGENE WATER & ELECTRIC BOARD

Rely on us.

TO: Commissioners Simpson, Brown, Helgeson, Manning and Mital
FROM: Mark Freeman, Customer Service and EMS Manager; Tina McAlexander, Customer Service Supervisor
DATE: April 26, 2013
SUBJECT: Update to Board Policy SD4, Public Use of Meeting Rooms Policy
OBJECTIVE: Board Action

Issue:

EWEB is actively seeking to lease the North Building and some additional space in the Headquarters Building to potential tenants. If EWEB is successful in finding a tenant, the North Building will no longer be available affecting access to the public meeting rooms.

Background:

Like other public agencies, EWEB is working hard to find ways to reduce our operating costs in tough economic times. We have reduced budgets, and in 2012 eliminated 50 positions from the utility's work force. That reduction, plus the relocation of about 200 employees to the Roosevelt Operations center in west Eugene in 2010, resulted in the underutilization of the North Building at EWEB's main headquarters. The main Headquarters Building is also underutilized.

As a service to the community, EWEB has historically made two meeting rooms in the North Building available to the public, free of charge, with some exceptions. Though this space has been found to be underutilized, some long-term users of these rooms have made reservations up to a year in advance and will need to be notified of potential changes.

Discussion:

In an effort to seek operational efficiency and offset on-going costs, EWEB is seeking potential tenants to lease space in the North Building and some additional space in the Headquarters Building. We anticipate that we will have a tenant in place by January 1, 2014. EWEB will require adequate time beforehand to allow for tenant improvement work and to notify room users in a timely manner. EWEB would like to begin this process as of October 1, 2013.

On February 5, 2013, Board Policy SD4 Public Use of Meeting Rooms Policy was revised to allow daytime use. We wish to further modify the policy with the following statement: "Please be aware that as of October 1, 2013 the meeting rooms in the North Headquarters Building will no longer be available. Exceptions to this policy must be granted by the General Manager or Leadership Team.

EWEB reserves the right to make adjustments should conditions change.” This will allow for the time required to conduct improvement work as well as notify room users. EWEB suggests notifying users by formal letter followed by a courtesy call one month prior to the original reservation date. For users who have already made reservations later than October 1, 2013 the reservations will remain on the calendar and honored in the event EWEB is unsuccessful in finding a tenant. New requests for rooms on or after October 1, 2013 will be kept on file, and users will be informed should the rooms be available. Below is a list of outside users who will need to be notified. The formal letter is attached.

Art Quilters Group	Lane County Mounted Sheriff’s Mounted Posse
Camarilla	Lane County Soccer Referee Association
Cascade Family Fly Fishers	McKenzie Fly Fishers
Cascade Hospice/Volunteer Training	McKenzie A’s Model A Ford Club
Cascade Stitches	McKenzie Watershed Council
CDC Holiday program	Mysticians
Clay Fest Steering Committee	Native Plant Society
Creswell RC Flyers	North American Butterfly Association
Democratic Party of Lane County	OHSET South Valley
Emerald Empire Gun Club	Oregon Country Fair
Emerald Empire Vintage Auto Club	Oregon Fiber Artists
Emerald Valley Resources	Oregon Genealogical Society
Eugene Astronomical Society	OSU Extension Service Lane County
Eugene Birders Night	South Valley 4X4
Eugene City Quilters	Stone River Community
Eugene RC Aeronautics	Track City
Friday Friends	Water Color Society of Oregon
Health Care for all Oregon	Willamette Ang Needle Point
Izaak Walton League of America	Willamette Cascade Model RR Club
Know Thyself as Soul Foundation, Northwest	

Recommendation:

Management recommends adding the suggested language above to the current Board Policy SD4 to address the leasing of the North Building meeting rooms. If approved, this additional language will also be posted on the EWEB internet page regarding meeting rooms. This will allow the time needed for tenant improvement work, notifying users, and make the space available for leasing as of January 1, 2014. The added language will also leave room for exceptions with approval.

Requested Board Action:

Approve changes to Board Policy SD4 Public Use of Meeting Rooms Policy.

Dear EWEB Community Room User,

As one of a number of groups who regularly use the community meeting rooms at the EWEB riverfront property, I am writing to notify you of potential changes that could affect the availability of these rooms in the future.

Like other public agencies, EWEB is working hard to find ways to reduce our operating costs in tough economic times. We have reduced our budgets, and in 2012 eliminated 50 positions from the utility's work force. That reduction, plus the relocation of about 200 employees to the Roosevelt Operations Center in west Eugene in 2010, resulted in the underutilization of the North Building at EWEB's main headquarters along the Willamette River. The main headquarters building is also underutilized.

In an effort to seek operational efficiency and offset on-going costs, EWEB is seeking potential tenants for the North Building and some additional space in the headquarters building to lease. We do not have a lease agreement in hand, but there is a high likelihood that we may have a tenant within the next few months.

I am writing to alert you that the North Building meeting rooms likely will not be available after Oct. 1, 2013. We are providing you with this notice now so that you have ample time to make alternate arrangements for meeting space. If you've already made a reservation for later than Oct. 1, it will remain on the calendar and honored in the event EWEB is unsuccessful in finding a tenant. New requests for rooms on or after Oct. 1 will be kept on file, and users will be informed should the rooms be available. I understand there are limited options for free public meeting space, but the McNail-Riley house is one alternative that may suit groups smaller than 40 people (reservations are through the City of Eugene @ 682-5444.)

I appreciate your flexibility and understanding of this situation. This reflects one of a number of tough decisions and changes we are undergoing in an effort to manage costs and stabilize rates for our customers. Please let us know if you have made other arrangements for your meetings so we can keep track of any reservation changes.

Sincerely,

Tina McAlexander
Customer Service Supervisor
541-685-7591

Policy Number: SD4
Policy Type: Strategic Direction
Policy Title: Public Use of Meeting Rooms Policy
Effective Date: May 7, 2013

As a service to the community, the Eugene Water & Electric Board makes the meeting rooms in the North Headquarters Building available to community organizations, public bodies, and any recognized non-profit, non-discriminatory organization with open membership.

The rooms are available during evening hours and weekends, when not required for utility purposes, and are free of charge with the following exceptions:

Meeting Rooms: A trash disposal and cleanup fee is charged if food is to be served.

Furthermore, two rooms are available Monday through Friday, during business hours, when not required for utility purposes. The meeting organizer must have an EWEB sponsor who will complete the meeting room application and also be available for the needs of the group during the meeting. Reservations which occur during business hours will be approved on a first-come, first-served basis and will not be accepted more than 30 days in advance.

Please be aware that as of October 1, 2013 the meeting rooms in the North Headquarters Building will no longer be available. Exceptions to this policy must be granted by the General Manager or Leadership Team. EWEB reserves the right to make adjustments should conditions change.

Groups using the facilities will be subject to the following guidelines:

No admission fee can be charged.

No commercial activities that result in monetary gain or that will invite public participation are allowed.

No alcoholic beverages are allowed.

No smoking is allowed.

Rooms are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Source: Board Approved 05/09/1988, Revised 04/20/2004, Ratified 04/19/2005, Revised 02/05/2013, Revised 05/07/2013