



Seattle City Council

Central Staff – Divided Report

For consideration at Full Council

Committee: Energy and Environment Committee

Appointment Number: Appt 00291

Full Title: Appointment and Oath of Office of Larry Weis as General Manager and Chief Executive Officer of Seattle City Light, for a term from February 1, 2016 to January 31, 2020.

Full Council Date: March 21, 2016

Analyst: Tony Kilduff

Overview

Appoints Larry Weis as General Manager and Chief Executive Officer of the City Light Department

History of Legislation

On February 25, 2016, the Committee voted to recommend confirmation of the appointment to the Full Council

Yes 3 (Juarez, Gonzalez, Johnson)

No 2 (Sawant, O'Brien)

Majority Position (CMs who voted in the majority at committee)

After careful consideration of candidate's resume, record, written responses to Council questions, and interviews conducted both in private and at three public meetings, we are satisfied that Mr. Weis is well-qualified to take the leadership of Seattle City Light.

Mr. Weis has extensive knowledge and experience of the Pacific Northwest's unique, hydro-dominated electricity grid and the many regional players who influence it.

He is fully committed to public power, having spent his entire career in the public energy sector.

The majority opinion is that with clear guidance and support from the Major and the City Council, Mr. Weis will successfully shepherd Seattle City Light as it adapts to the rapidly changing electricity industry in the Northwest.

Minority Position (CMs who voted in the minority at committee)

When we consider who should lead Seattle City Light, a billion dollar public utility, Council should look for more than just a competent administrator. We are considering someone who has been offered \$340,000/year, by far the highest City executive salary and over 10 times the City's lowest wages. For that position we should be looking for someone who will truly fight for a better future.

We should seek someone who has fought for the environment, fought against fossil fuels, fought for renewable energy. We want leadership that has innovated for municipal broadband, advocated for workers' rights, or been the driving force to make big business pay their fair share of utility rates.

While Mr. Weis has many qualities, his record is not the record of someone who has boldly taken these stands. Particularly, we are not satisfied with his advocacy of a natural gas power plant during his time in Austin, Texas.

If Mr. Weis is confirmed by Council, we will strive to work productively with him to see City Light's powerful resources leveraged to fight climate change, and promote clean energy sources and the electrification of our fossil-fuel based infrastructure. We will work with him to strive for workers' rights, racial and gender justice, and to collaborate with other City departments to promote municipal broadband.

However, we believe that Seattle City Light could find leadership that will take a lead on all of these issues, so we recommend Council vote no on confirming Mr. Weis.