

Ratepayers Advocate Qualifications

1 message

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Tony, Blanca, Chuck, Elva, and Mac,

Over the last twelve years, I have become very familiar with the affairs of the Department of Water and Power. I was the first person to call for a Ratepayers Advocate in January 2008. The Ratepayers Advocate was approved by 78% of the voters in February 2011. I have reviewed and analyzed the Departments financial statements and numerous rate increases. I have served on a number of DWP related committees, including the Recycled Water Advisory Group, One Water 2040, and the 100% Renewables Advisory Group. I have also visited many DWP facilities including Owens Valley, solar and wind farms, and gas fired facilities. I am the chair of the DWP Advocacy Committee that is affiliated with the Neighborhood Councils. I have also written over 250 columns involving the Department.

The creation of the Ratepayers Advocate has significantly increased the transparency of the Department, in large part because of the Ratepayers Advocate strong working knowledge of utilities and the very complicated rate making process.

In reviewing candidates, it is paramount that the Ratepayer Advocate have a strong working knowledge of the utility industry and the ratemaking process. Lawyers, accountants, business executives, and other candidates must have this experience to be even considered.

As I mentioned when I was a member of your committee, I believe Fred Pickel has done an excellent job. He has developed an institutional memory as he has worked constructively with the Department, the City Council, and the Neighborhood Councils. He also did an excellent job on the last rate action, helping lower the rate request by almost half. A new Ratepayers Advocate, even assuming a strong working knowledge of the utility industry, would take at least a year or two to develop this level of knowledge. We cannot afford this delay as the Department is in transition, whether it is developing more renewables and sources of recycled water, updating its physical infrastructure, or updating its IT infrastructure such as its Customer Information System or its Enterprise Reporting System.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Jack Humphreville

