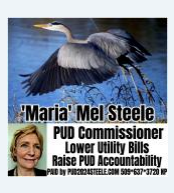


## ← Skamania PUD COMMISSIONER DIST. 1



**Mel Steele (NP)**

### Biographical Information

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### How has your experience prepared you for this position?

The Skamania County Public Utility District Commissioner position is the most important position on the ballot – best of knowledge. I say this because my life has prepared me for regulating the local PUD. Being born into PUD family and retiring from a lifetime of being an United States Public Civil Servant of Natural Resources, and my last 6 years of supporting Skamania County Ratepayer’s homes and businesses has fully qualified me to hit the ground running. With over 3000+ hours of: document requests from Skamania PUD, calculating successfully means to reduce utility bills consistent with PUD’s ORIGINAL MISSION while REDUCING DEBT, overseeing each and every PUD meeting in last six years, presenting dozens of power points for public, newspaper articles, collaborating with PUD, Skamania residents, Washington State departments, United States departments of energy, etc. has all contributed to my experience, knowledge, skills and abilities.

### What do you consider the top three priorities for your PUD district?

- 1) INCREASE PUBLIC DISCLOSURES: Educated Public and Provide Options in Skamania County about PUD Services.
- 2) Revert back to ORIGINAL PUD MISSION: Revert Definitions of BaseRate pre-2019 and therefore Lower currently unfair and unjust Fix Fees and reduce debt by utilizing long-standing standards of tiering thus paying more for non-conservation of power and water uses.
- 3) ADD INCENTIVES: Convert Penalties into Incentives for bill paying and solar-wind Net Metering

### How would you handle them?

- REQUEST AND/OR DRAFT NEW RESOLUTIONS TO BE VOTED BY ALL THREE PUD COMMISSIONERS FOR ADVANCMENT OF PRIORITES. i.e. INCREASE PUBLIC DISCLOSURES: A. The last 6 years I have pushed as ratepayer for PUD to record the PUD Commissioner meetings since the General Manager stopped audio recordings in 2019. Finally this year, Zoom recordings are available for the public. You can now download on PUD website video recordings. B. In the last six years I have pushed to publish key disclosures with each billing statement paper and/or electronic. The PUD did one or two token lines on bills but has not yet included NEWSLETTERS in billings. As PUD Commissioner it will be increased public awareness and cost savings. C. Increase documents on Website agenda packages for public download at least a day in advance of every PUD Meeting. Often they are looking and talking about documents those ratepayers on ZOOM or present cannot see. Otherwise if documents are added at last minute, they can be projected.

### How will you encourage your customers to conserve the resources for which your district is responsible?

- BY IMPLEMENTING PRIORITIES 2 & 3 to ENCOURAGE CONSERVATION for THE PEOPLE: • 2) Revert back to ORIGINAL PUD MISSION TO CONSERVE POWER AND WATER FOR THE PEOPLE. • A. STOP Increasing BASERATES otherwise it is anti-conservation. No matter how much you conserve the utility bills keep going up. • B. The PUD Strategic Plan says rates will be stable. The current PUD Commissioners argued against STABLE saying they want to raise rates. Then PUD General Manager said STABLE means always raise rates. I Maria Mel Steele strongly disagree. • C. I would encourage utilizing long-standing standards of tiering thus paying more for non-conservation of power and water uses. The lowest price rates are for essential power and water for the people. • 3) ADD INCENTIVES: • A. Convert Penalties into Incentives for bill paying and solar-wind Net Metering. • B. Stop taking NET METERING CREDITS away every spring. • C. Give more neighborhood solar/wind opportunities and LOWER PERMIT FEES.

### What part should your district play in your area’s environmental health?

- Skamania County needs to better protect the RURAL COMMUNITY. Environmental Justice, Growth Management Act, NEPA, SEPA fits like a "T". • I advocate DISALLOWING DATECENTERS in Skamania County which are poised to double electrical DEMAND for machines data mining. DataCenters are NOT CONSERVING FOR THE PEOPLE AND HAVE NEGATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS for PEOPLE, LAND, WATER, AIR, and NOISE.

I advocate we Disallow FRACTING down COLUMBIA RIVER and on LAND in Skamania County for a tiny fraction of DEMAND requested by Computer Chip manufacturing – INTEL in Oregon. • As Forest Ecologist, Certified Silviculturist, and as retired NW Regional Planning Forester I understand temperature and moisture interactions over the long-term. I will promote true low impact renewables of Bonneville Dam, solar and wind for all ratepayers. • I do support fossil fuels, natural gas, and other essential needs for the people and essential businesses with proper cost/benefits, & environmental review