

## Complaint Description

Andrew Saturn reported via the portal Fri, 21, 2019 at 10:58AM

I've attached the formal complaint which contains additional evidence embedded within.  
Summary: Linda Oosterman and the Thurston County PUD misused public funds to pay for Linda Oosterman's attendance at private business events where she promoted her 2018 re-election campaign. These events served no legitimate PUD or otherwise public purpose. Linda Oosterman is on video promoting her campaign and handed out campaign literature. According to their own records, the PUD delegates certain commissioners to continuously attend these private business events. The PUD may have violated RCW in prior election seasons by paying for their commissioners to attend these events while running for re-election, and therefore this may be an additional complaint against the PUD itself, and the general manager, John Weidenfeller.

Screen Shot 2019-06-21 at 10.57.15 AM.png  
180.47 KB

PUD Expenses.xlsx  
20.48 KB

Oosterman .555 complaint (2019).pdf  
127.19 KB

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Tabatha Blacksmith replied Mon, June 24, 2019 at 4:29PM  
to: [saturn@gmail.com](mailto:saturn@gmail.com)

Hi Andrew,

We are in receipt of your complaint regarding Linda Oosterman and John Weidenfeller. By way of evidence, you provided links to nearly three hours' worth of videos.

For each of the three videos, please kindly indicate at which point activities occur that potentially violate RCW 42.17A.555. Please be as specific as you can and provide the minute mark(s) where alleged violations occur in each video.

Please reply directly to this email with the requested information so that it is routed to me in our system.

Thank you.

Tabatha Blacksmith  
Compliance Coordinator  
360.586.8929



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*Washington State law established email as the PDC's official means of communication as of June 7th, 2018 (RCW 42.17A.055). Filers have a duty to amend their reports within 10 days of any material changes, such as new e-mail addresses. Please ensure your e-mail address is up to date.*

To respond, please reply to this email.

Washington Public Disclosure Commission  
<http://www.pdc.wa.gov>  
1.360.753.1111

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Andrew Saturn replied Wed, June 26, 2019 at 12:59PM  
to: "PDC Support" [pdc@pdc.wa.gov](mailto:pdc@pdc.wa.gov)

Hello,

The video evidence shows that...

- (1) Linda Oosterman was not a featured speaker or invited as a public official at any of the events
- (2) Linda Oosterman was not attending on behalf of the PUD (the events were not on any PUD-related or even public-related topics—in fact, the events were all about private business tips—tips which do not apply to public agencies)
- (3) Linda Oosterman momentarily spoke at the Thurston County Chamber Candidates' Forum in October, 2018 and introduced herself as a candidate (during the candidate introductions portion of the forum) and not there on behalf of the PUD. A shortened version of this video evidence can be found here: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4\\_Dbkeyh67Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4_Dbkeyh67Q)

Linda Oosterman's attendance at these events in itself is not illegal, but having the PUD pay for her membership dues to attend these meetings makes as much sense as her having the PUD pay for her attendance at a monthly Thurston County Democrats meeting. It would be a very clear violation of 42.17A.555 considering she was handing out campaign literature (which I attached to the complaint). While she could, in theory, attend any political events in an official

capacity, she can't spend PUD funds on it while simultaneously promoting her re-election campaign.

So in short, I'm not showing evidence with these videos, but the absence of any excuse for Linda Oosterman to be there in an official capacity, which would require either reviewing the entire 3+ hours of footage, or that Linda Oosterman prove that she had a legitimate reason to attend these events as public servant, and not simply there for the purposes of promoting her re-election campaign.

Hope this clears things up, let me know if it does or doesn't.

Thanks,

Andrew Saturn

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Tabatha Blacksmith replied Thur, June 27, 2019 at 5:29PM  
to: [saturn@gmail.com](mailto:saturn@gmail.com)

Hi Andrew,

Thank you for your email. This information is helpful. Please see my follow up questions below.

1) In your complaint, you indicated that the person(s) against whom the complaint was filed are "Linda Oosterman, John Weidenfeller, Thurston County PUD." The above answer seems to indicate that the complaint is against two individuals and the PUD as a whole. The latter could include PUD managers, directors, and other staff. But then you went on (in your letter) to say that the complaint is against "both Linda Oosterman and John Weidenfeller."

- Please confirm the names of all the individuals against whom this complaint is filed.

2) It is unclear what the "2017 Matrix of Designated Organization Members and Alternate Members" is supposed to represent, in relation to your complaint. It shows that Ms. Oosterman is a "Primary Voting Delegate" whereas the other individuals listed are not.

- Specifically, how does the Matrix support your allegations?
- If you have a Matrix for 2018, please email it to me.

Any information you can provide is greatly appreciated.

Thank you.

Tabatha Blacksmith  
Compliance Coordinator  
360.586.8929



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To respond, please reply to this email.

Washington Public Disclosure Commission  
<http://www.pdc.wa.gov>  
1.360.753.1111

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Andrew Saturn replied Thur, June 27, 2019 at 6:11PM  
to: "PDC Support" <[pdc@pdc.wa.gov](mailto:pdc@pdc.wa.gov)>

Hi Tabatha,

It is my belief that Linda Oosterman may claim that she is "not responsible for this violation because she was led to believe that it was part of her official duties to attend these events," even though she attended these events as a candidate and promoted her campaign.

The "2017 matrix" is the latest copy I have as of less than one month ago, and this is included to show that Linda Oosterman is in fact supposed to be representing the PUD at private business group meetings, for some unknown reason. My guess is that many elected officials misunderstand Chambers of Commerce to be some sort of government agencies, when in reality, they have nothing to do with the government, and attendance at their meetings and events is absolutely not necessary.

That being said, I included the PUD general manager, John Weidenfeller, because he and Julie Parker, the assistant general manager, are the individuals ultimately responsible for approving expenditures at the PUD. This can be seen by checking the signature lines of a check from the PUD, which I have attached to this email. as I stated in my complaint, John Weidenfeller has already violated RCW 42.17A.555 once before.

In a similar complaint filed by me in 2017 against the Port of Olympia, the PDC included the entire Port of Olympia as well as one of the commissioners who was running for re-election at the time. I defer to the PDC in choosing which individuals and/or agencies to technically file this complaint against, as I'm not sure who will actually be held responsible, or how the PDC will determine this given the circumstances.

However, if it makes more sense, please simply file the complaint against Linda Oosterman for now. If it is dismissed for the reason I assumed above, I will re-file it against individual managers of the PUD.

Thanks,

Andrew Saturn

IMG\_20190621\_131751.jpg  
2.83 MB

**What impact does the alleged violation(s) have on the public?**

**List of attached evidence or contact information where evidence may be found.**

Formal complaint (PDF)  
Expense report from the PUD (Excel Spreadsheet)  
Links in formal complaint to additional evidence

**List of potential witnesses with contact information to reach them.**

Julie Parker, Assistant GM at the Thurston PUD [julieparker@thurstonpud.org](mailto:julieparker@thurstonpud.org)

**Complaint Certification:**

I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that information provided with this complaint is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

PUD Commissioner Linda Oosterman, while running for re-election in 2018, misused public funds to pay for her membership and attendance at area Chamber of Commerce functions.

Area Chambers of Commerce are private industry organizations created to promote private business. While elected officials can often have legitimate invitations to speak or otherwise attend these events, they are typically of no public benefit, and a public official should not be using public funds to attend.

In some cases, area Chambers of Commerce host candidate forums and other political events. Public officials using public funds to attend these political events would be in violation of RCW 42.17A.555.

According to PUD records, Linda Oosterman, while running for re-election in 2018, attended the following events, and paid for her attendance using PUD funds, a violation of RCW 42.17A.555:

1. [5/2/2018 - Lacey South Sound Chamber of Commerce Forum](#)
2. [5/16/2018 - Thurston Chamber of Commerce Forum](#)
3. [10/10/2018 - Thurston Chamber of Commerce Candidates Forum](#)
4. [11/14/2018 - Thurston Chamber of Commerce Forum](#)

At these events, Linda Oosterman did not act in any official PUD capacity, and was there solely as a representative of her own re-election campaign. This can be verified by viewing YouTube video evidence of these events provided free to the public from Thurston Community Media.

I personally attended the 10/10/2018 event, and witnessed Linda Oosterman speaking on behalf of her own re-election and handing out campaign materials, including a “business card” featuring a photo of a child drinking from a garden hose.



This is not the first instance of Linda Oosterman misusing public facilities and other resources to promote her re-election campaign. On October 12, 2018, PUD General Manager John Weidenfeller misused PUD letterhead and other resources to leak an "internal memo" to members of the public in an attempt to attack my campaign. While Mr. Weidenfeller claims he acted alone, the "memo" was solely beneficial to the re-election campaign of Linda Oosterman, and served no PUD purpose. The PDC found this was a clear violation of RCW 42.17A.555 (case # 43061) and issued Mr. Weidenfeller a formal written warning.

As General Manager of the PUD, John Weidenfeller is solely responsible for approving financial expenditures such as commissioner attendance at Chamber of Commerce functions.

If possible, please file this formal complaint under both Linda Oosterman and John Weidenfeller.

Sincerely,

Andrew Saturn

# 2017 Matrix of Designated Organization Members and Alternate Members

No.	Organization	Commissioner Oosterman	Commissioner Olsen	Commissioner Stearns	GM Weidenfeller	DFA Parker
1	WPUDA Board Member (Friday 1x month)	<b>A#1</b>		<b>P</b>		
2	WPUDA Government Relations Committee (Thursday 1x month)	<b>P</b>		<b>A#1</b>		
3	WPUDA Communications Committee (Thursday 1x month)	<b>A#1</b>		<b>P</b>		
4	WPUDA Water Committee Member (quarterly full day/monthly Roundtable )	<b>P</b>	<b>A#1</b>	<b>A#2</b>		
5	WPUDA Telecom and NoaNet		<b>P</b>	<b>A#1</b>		
6	TRPC (1st Friday of each month - 4 hours)	<b>A#2</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>A#1</b>		
7	Thurston Conservation District			<b>P</b>		
8	Chehalis Partnership (4th Friday of each month - 4 hours)	<b>A#2</b>	<b>A#1</b>	<b>P</b>		
9	Emergency Management (ongoing)	<b>P</b>			<b>A#1</b>	
10	Thurston County EDC	<b>P</b>				
11	TC County Telecommunications (ongoing)	<b>A#2</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>A#1</b>		
12	Public Outreach/Liaison	<b>P</b>				
13	Options for Greater Efficiency (ongoing)			<b>P</b>		
14	DOE Water Resources Advisory Council			<b>P</b>		
15	Thurston County Chamber of Commerce	<b>P</b>				
16	Lacey Chamber of Commerce		<b>P</b>			
17	Yelm Chamber of Commerce		<b>P</b>			
18	Asset Management Plan & Comprehensive Financial Plan Refinement		<b>P</b>			<b>P</b>
19	Property Acquisition	<b>P</b>			<b>A#2</b>	<b>A#1</b>

## Key for Codes

P = Primary Voting Delegate

A#1 = First Alternate Voting Delegate

A#2 = Second Alternate Voting Delegate

Elections for 2017 held at 01/10/17 meeting:

[President](#)

Linda Oosterman

[Vice President](#)

Chris Stearns

[Secretary](#)

Russell E. Olsen

Updated 03/28/17

# Thurston PUD

Public Utility District No. 1  
OF THURSTON COUNTY, WASHINGTON  
**To The TREASURER OF THURSTON COUNTY**  
as ex-officio Treasury of Public Utility District No. 1  
of Thurston County, Washington



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TO THE  
ORDER OF

Andrew Saturn

6/19/2019

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TWO SIGNATURES REQUIRED

*John W. [Signature]*  
*Julia Parker*

Details on back

Security Features Included

