

WILLMAR MUNICIPAL UTILITIES COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES OF AUGUST 24, 2020

The Municipal Utilities Commission (MUC) met in its regular scheduled meeting on Monday, August 24, 2020, at 11:45 a.m. in the WMU Auditorium with the following Commissioners present: Justin Mattern, Carol Laumer, Abdirizak Mahboub, Nathan Weber, Bruce DeBlieck, and Ross Magnuson. Absent was Commissioner Cole Erickson.

Others present at the meeting were: General Manager John Harren, Water Supervisor Alan Neer, Finance & Office Services Supervisor Andrea Prekker, Compliance/HR Manager Janell Johnson, Energy Services/ Marketing Rep Michelle Marotzke, Line Distribution Supervisor Todd Graves, IS Coordinator Mike Sangren, Administrative Secretary Beth Mattheisen, and City Attorney Robert Scott.

Commissioner President Mattern opened the meeting by introducing WMU's newest employee Water Supervisor Alan Neer. Alan comes to WMU with over 24 years of experience in the water service industry, and most recently was employed by the city of East Grand Forks. We welcome Alan to Willmar and the Willmar Municipal Utilities.

Commissioner Mattern continued by asking if any revisions were needed to the presented agenda. There being none, Commissioner Mattern requested a resolution to approve the Consent Agenda. Following review and discussion, Commissioner Mahboub offered a resolution to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Commissioner DeBlieck seconded.

RESOLUTION NO. 27

"BE IT RESOLVED, by the Municipal Utilities Commission of the City of Willmar, Minnesota, that the Consent Agenda be approved as presented which includes:

- Minutes from the August 10, 2020 Commission meeting; and,
- Bills represented by vouchers No. 20201126 to No. 20201195 and associated wire transfers inclusive in the amount of \$1,422,236.02.

Dated this 24th day of August, 2020.

President

Attest:

Secretary

The foregoing resolution was adopted by a vote of six ayes and zero nays.

Energy Services/Marketing Rep Marotzke informed the Commission that American Public Power Association (APPA) has designated October 6-10 as Public Power Week for 2020. Willmar Municipal Utilities along with more than 2,000 other community-owned, not-for-profit electric utilities that provide electricity to 49 million Americans. Public power puts the people of Willmar first, and Public Power Week gives us the chance to emphasize the advantages of locally-owned power to our citizens and remind them of the reliable and safe services our Utility provides. Commissioner Mattern reviewed with the Commission a resolution outlining the benefits of public power. Following discussion, Commissioner Laumer offered a resolution designating October 6-10 as Public Power Week. Commissioner Weber seconded.

RESOLUTION NO. 28

The foregoing resolution was adopted by a vote of six ayes and zero nays.

In conjunction with Public Power Week, WMU generally holds an Open House in appreciation of its customers. However due to the current circumstances (COVID-19), the Commission has elected to forego the traditional Open House this year. In lieu of the Open House, Energy Services/Marketing Rep Marotzke presented options to reflect the WMU's appreciation to its customers. It was a consensus of the Commission to utilize the annual newsletter as a way to provide a customer give-away within the contents of the newsletter (i.e. ten random \$50 utility bill credits). WMU will also provide 2021 calendars for its customers

Energy Services/Marketing Rep Marotzke requested the Commission to approve a three-year contract with Ridgewater College's Customized Training Program to provide monthly safety training for staff on a variety of subjects. The contract provides for 70 hours of training and 20 hours of consultation/safety meeting participation per year. The past contract (2017) with Ridgewater contained a 5% escalator for each year as does the new contract being offered. Annual costs for the customized safety training would be: \$21,880 for 2021; \$22,974 for 2022; and, \$24,122 for 2023. Following review, Commissioner Mahboub offered a resolution to approve the three-year contract with Ridgewater College to provide safety training for the WMU staff. Commissioner DeBlicek seconded.

RESOLUTION NO. 29

"BE IT RESOLVED, by the Municipal Utilities Commission of the City of Willmar, Minnesota, that the three-year contract with Ridgewater College to provide Customized Safety Training be approved as follows: Year 1 at \$21,880; Year 2 at \$22,974; and, Year 3 at \$24,122."

Dated this 24th day of August, 2020.

President

Attest:

Secretary

The foregoing resolution was adopted by a vote of six ayes and zero nays

Line Distribution Supervisor Graves informed the Commission that on August 8th, the Utility had received a call from MMUA requesting Mutual Aid in Granite Falls following a severe wind storm that afternoon. Straight line winds (gusts of 70+ mph) had knocked over trees and caused structural damage to power lines causing numerous power outages. WMU sent a two-man Line Dept. Crew along with a double-bucket truck to Granite Falls Sunday morning (joining four additional communities) to provide the needed assistance to the community. At approximately 5:30 pm on Sunday, the Crew had completed the necessary tasks and returned to Willmar. Granite Falls was appreciative of the support provided by the WMU Line Crew.

Line Distribution Supervisor Graves continued by stating that the wind/thunderstorm experienced in Willmar last night (Aug. 23rd) had caused an outage of Feeder #2. This outage affected nearly 1500 customers. WMU's Line Department quickly had the power restored to these customers in approximately 1 hour. Graves added that this type of outage could have been much greater if not for past line distribution projects conducted by the Utility (burying of overhead lines).

As a member of Missouri River Energy Services (MRES), the Utility is provided a monthly update from the MRES and Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency (WMPMA) Board of Directors meeting. The update provides a brief overview of the topics discussed by the Boards and the actions taken. Included in the summary were guidelines/responses being followed by MRES relating to COVID-19. A summary of the August 6, 2020 MRES and WMPMA Board of Directors meeting was presented for review.

As part of the Silent Impact Resolution Workshop presented by Joe Schmit, Compliance/HR Manager Johnson presented the Commission with the monthly video update entitled "*Personal Pep Talk*". The topics presented by Mr. Schmit continue to be relevant and thought provoking for all. At this time, the informational video was viewed.

General Manager Harren informed the Commission that a meeting of the WMU Planning Committee had been held on Friday, August 21st. Approval of the meeting minutes, which includes the 2021 WMU Budget, will be requested at the September 14th MUC meeting.

General Manager Harren further stated that additional future meetings of both the WMU Labor and Planning Committees would be forthcoming (TBD). Tentative Labor Committee agenda item(s) will include: labor negotiations. Tentative Planning Committee agenda item(s) will include: Power Plant Environmental Studies (Phases I & II); Willmar/Priam Ownership & Construction Agreement; and, Power Plant Substation Control Building.

For information: 2020 Upcoming meetings/events to note include:

- MMUA Annual Summer Conference: August 25-26 (virtual event)
- Red Rock Hydroelectric Dedication Ceremony (video): September 2 @ 2:00 pm (WMU Auditorium)
- MRES Municipal Power Leadership Academy: September 16-17 (virtual meeting)

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Commissioner DeBlieck offered a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Mahboub seconded the motion which carried by a vote of six ayes and zero nays, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:07 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

WILLMAR MUNICIPAL UTILITIES

Beth Mattheisen
Administrative Secretary

ATTEST:

Abdirizak Mahboub, Secretary

RESOLUTION NO. 28

**2020 PUBLIC POWER WEEK
IN APPRECIATION OF WILLMAR MUNICIPAL UTILITIES,
OUR HOMETOWN ELECTRIC UTILITY**

WHEREAS, we, the citizens of Willmar, place high value on local control over community services and therefore have chosen to operate a community owned, locally controlled, not-for-profit electric utility and, as consumers and owners of our electric utility, have a direct say in utility operations and policies;

WHEREAS, Willmar Municipal Utilities provides our homes, businesses, farms, social service, and local government agencies with reliable, efficient, and cost-effective electricity employing sound business practices designed to ensure the best possible service at not-for-profit rates;

WHEREAS, Willmar Municipal Utilities is a valuable community asset that contributes to the well-being of local citizens through energy efficiency, customer service, environmental protection, economic development, and safety awareness;

WHEREAS, Willmar Municipal Utilities is a dependable and trustworthy institution whose local operation provides many consumer protections and continues to make our community a better place to live and work, and contributes to protecting the global environment;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: that Willmar Municipal Utilities will continue to work to bring lower-cost, safe, reliable electricity to community homes and businesses just as it has since 1891, the year when the utility was created to serve all the citizens of Willmar; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that the week of Oct. 4-10 be designated Public Power Week to recognize Willmar Municipal Utilities for its contributions to the community and to educate consumer-owners, policy makers, and employees on the benefits of public power;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: that our community joins hands with more than 2,000 other public power systems in the United States in this celebration of public power, which is best for consumers, business, the community, and the nation.

Dated this 24th day of August, 2020.

President

ATTEST:

Secretary