

WILLMAR MUNICIPAL UTILITIES COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES OF JULY 27, 2020

The Municipal Utilities Commission (MUC) met in its regular scheduled meeting via Zoom (teleconference service) on Monday, July 27, 2020 at 11:45 a.m. with the following Commissioners present: Justin Mattern, Carol Laumer, Abdirizak Mahboub, Nathan Weber, Bruce DeBlieck, Ross Magnuson and Cole Erickson.

Others present at the meeting were: General Manager John Harren, Compliance/HR Manager Janell Johnson, Finance & Office Services Supervisor Andrea Prekker, Facilities & Maintenance Supervisor Kevin Marti, Energy Services/Marketing Rep Michelle Marotzke, IS Coordinator Mike Sangren, Administrative Secretary Beth Mattheisen, Staff Electrical Engineer Jeron Smith, City Attorney Robert Scott, City Councilman Shawn Mueske, and WC Tribune Journalist Shelby Lindrud.

Commission President Mattern opened the meeting by presenting a statement prepared by City Attorney Scott regarding the current COVID-19 health pandemic, the peacetime emergency declared by Governor Walz pursuant to MN Statutes, Chapter 12, and the need to conduct our current meetings by telephone or other electronics pursuant to MN Statutes § 13D.021, until such time it is no longer impractical or imprudent for the Commission to resume in-person meetings. As a matter of procedure, let the minutes reflect that all resolutions and motions were conducted by verbal roll call.

Commissioner Mattern continued by asking if any revisions were needed to the agenda presented. 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 Erickson seconded.

RESOLUTION NO. 24

“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 July 13, 2020 Commission meeting; and,
- ❖ Bills represented by vouchers No. 20201012 to No. 20201074 and associated wire transfers inclusive in the amount of \$2,955,350.40.

Dated this 27th day of July, 2020.

President

Attest:

Secretary

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

Commissioner Mattern was pleased to inform the Commission that the Willmar Assembly of God Church had recently made a financial donation to the Utility in the amount of \$20,000. In light of the current pandemic, the church has requested that the generous gift be distributed to United Community Action Partnership (UCAP) accounts for payment of past-due utility bill charges. On

behalf of Willmar Assembly of God Church, Pastor Keith Kerstetter had presented a check to Commissioner Mattern and General Manager Harren on July 21st in the amount of \$20,000. Therefore, the Commission was being requested to authorize the financial gift from Willmar Assembly of God as presented. Compliance/HR Manager Johnson reviewed with the Commission the process being followed to secure the distribution of the funds. It was noted that a notification letter will be distributed to each recipient (151 customers) informing them of the credit to be applied to their account and further stating that all data privacy laws will be adhered to (i.e. no sharing of private data relating to the account or account holder). Following discussion, Commissioner Mattern offered a resolution to accept the financial donation in the amount of \$20,000 from the Willmar Assembly of God Church to be applied to qualifying UCAP accounts for payment of past-due utility bill charges. Commissioner Laumer seconded.

RESOLUTION NO. 25

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

Energy Services/Marketing Rep Marotzke reviewed with the Commission the WMU Cost of Power Report for May 2020. This report is illustrated using a rolling year-to-date format and provides the overall cost of power for the year (.068 per kWh year-to-date). Also reflected in the analysis is the month-to-date cost (.070 per kWh).

Facilities & Maintenance Supervisor Marti presented the Commission with the June 2020 Wind Turbine Report. Turbine availabilities for the month of June were at 59.2% (Unit #3) and 86.2% (Unit #4) with a monthly total production of 667,898 kWh. The total generation year-to-date is 3,848,422 kilowatt hours. Marti noted that the lower availabilities were the result of repairs being conducted on both turbines. Turbine #3 was in-operable for a substantial portion of the month due to required blade and hub repairs, while Turbine #4 also had a number of issues which effected its availability.

Facilities & Maintenance Supervisor Marti presented the Commission with a security overview of WMU's various facilities. Per recommendations of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), League of MN Cities, and Auditor's findings, a summary of numerous security upgrades which have been implemented were presented to the Commission. These security modifications include both internal and external upgrades. Marti noted that policy revisions may be required pertaining to the increased security levels and that all security aspects of the facilities will continue to be monitored for any additional adjustments that may be required.

Commissioner Mattern requested input from the Commission regarding their preference for conducting upcoming Commission/Committee meetings (Zoom vs in-person). While we remain under Governor Walz's peacetime emergency declaration, cases in the Willmar/Kandiyohi County area have remained relatively flat with no recent spiking of numbers. Following comments by all, it was determined that it is the intent of the Commission to return to in-person meetings while following all established safety guidelines including facial masking, social distancing, and cleaning/sanitizing as required. Attorney Scott confirmed that while the Governor's order remains unchanged, it is legal to conduct in-person meetings with safety precautions in place. Following discussion, it was the consensus of the Commission to return to in-person meetings of the Commission/Committees beginning August 10th. Staff will continue to monitor the situation and provide any required updates to the Commission as deemed pertinent.

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 "*Race*". This topic is relevant to everyone and helps to relate to race and social injustices in our society

especially during these trying times. At this time, the informational video was viewed. This was a timely and “on-point” message for all.

General Manager Harren informed the Commission that a meeting of the WMU Planning Committee has been scheduled for Friday, August 21st @ 12:00 pm in the WMU Auditorium. The focal point of discussion will be to review the proposed 2021 WMU Budget. Harren further noted that Phases I & II of the Power Plant Environmental Studies have been completed. This information will be brought before the Planning Committee for discussion at a future meeting.

On behalf of the Commission, Commissioner Mattern extended their appreciation to a number of recent and upcoming retirements among WMU staff members. Those identified for their years of service and dedication include: Chris Carlson (14 yrs., June 30th); Joel Braegelman (41 yrs., July 31st), and Scott Schultz (35 yrs., July 31st). Congratulations and best wishes to all!

General Manager Harren informed the Commission that future meetings of both the WMU Labor and Planning Committees would be forthcoming (TBD). Tentative Labor Committee agenda item 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:

- WMU Planning Committee Meeting: August 21 @ 12:00 pm
- MMUA Annual Summer Conference: August 24-26 (“virtual event”)

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Commissioner Mahboub offered a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Weber seconded the motion which carried by a vote of seven ayes and zero nays, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:27 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

WILLMAR MUNICIPAL UTILITIES

Beth Mattheisen
Administrative Secretary

ATTEST:

Abdirizak Mahboub, Secretary

RESOLUTION NO. 25

WHEREAS, the Municipal Utilities Commission (“MUC”) of the City of Willmar, Minnesota is generally authorized to accept donations of real and personal property pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 465.03 *et seq.* for the benefit of its citizens, and is specifically authorized to accept gifts.

WHEREAS, Willmar Assembly of God Church (“Donor”) desires to donate \$20,000 to the MUC on the condition that the entirety of the donated funds be applied to qualifying United Community Action Partnership (UCAP) accounts for payment of past due utility bill charges; and

WHEREAS, The MUC finds that it is appropriate to accept the donation offered.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MUNICIPAL UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF WILLMAR, MINNESOTA THAT:

1. The Donation described above in the amount of \$20,000 shall be accepted and, as requested by Donor, the funds donated shall be applied to qualifying United Community Action Partnership (UCAP) accounts for payment of past due utility bill charges.
2. Finance & Office Services Supervisor Andrea Prekker is hereby directed to issue a receipt to the Donor acknowledging the MUC’s receipt of the Donor’s donation.
3. Finance & Office Services Supervisor Andrea Prekker will distribute a letter to each account holder to whose account any portion of the donated proceeds are applied acknowledging such donation.

Dated this 27th day of July, 2020.

President

Attest:

Secretary