

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS

of the Public Utilities Commission, City of Hibbing, St. Louis County, Minnesota

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Public Utilities Commission, Hibbing, Minnesota, 1902 E. 6th Ave., Hibbing, MN 55746, held on January 25, 2022. Meeting held at Hibbing City Hall, 401 E. 21st St., Hibbing MN. Chairperson Garrity called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m. In attendance were Chairperson Garrity, Commissioner Hart; Commissioner Bayliss; Commissioner Andria; Commission Babich (via Zoom); Legal Counsel, Andy Borland; General Manager, Luke Peterson; Financial Controller, Morgan Anderson; and Administrative Coordinator, Penny Rutchasky. Also in attendance were HPAT Reps., Ron Wirkkula, Kivanna Hill, & Amber Markato; Unified North Rep., Nathan Phillips; and Mark Reger, Citizen.

Item 2. ADDS/DELETES - General Manager Peterson requested to add under New Business a Work Session Discussion.

Item 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Commissioner Hart, supported by Commissioner Bayliss, to approve the regular meeting minutes of January 11, 2022.

Roll call vote.

Motion carried unanimously.

Item 4. CITIZENS FORUM – None

Item 5. CONSENT AGENDA

Item 5.A. Approve invoices over \$10,000 and approve the bills and ACH transfers from January 11-20, 2022 & ACH Transfers.

Item 5.B. Review and approve payroll paid & overtime report for the January 13, 2022 pay date.

Item 5.C. Approve Check No. 45831 Void and Reissuance in the Amount of \$65,000.

Item 5.D. Overnight Travel Requests – 2022 MMUA & UMMA Conferences

Item 5.E. Voluntary Covid-19 Vaccination Incentive

Motion by Commissioner Hart, supported by Commissioner Andria, to approve Consent Agenda Items 5.A., 5.B., 5.C., 5.D., & 5.E., as presented.

Roll call vote.

Motion carried unanimously.

Item 6. FINANCIALS & RISK MANAGEMENT

Item 6.A. The Commission reviewed the correspondence dated January 21, 2022 from L. Peterson regarding Capital Projects – Power Plant Summer Outage.

Peterson gave background that five public bids are requested for a summer outage maintenance period. He gave overview of each projects, adding that there will be more project requests forthcoming.

Motion by Commissioner Bayliss, supported by Commissioner Andria, to authorize to call for the following public bids: Public Bid No 2022-01: Non-Destructive Testing for Summer Outage; Public Bid No. 2022-02: Millwright Services for Summer Outage; Public Bid No. 2022-03: Pipefitter Services for Summer Outage; Public Bid No. 2022-04:

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Boilermaker Services for Summer Outage; and Public Bid No. 2022-05: Scaffold, Cleaning & Refractory Services for Summer Outage;

Roll call vote.

Motion carried unanimously.

Item 6.B. The Commission reviewed the correspondence dated January 21, 2022 from L. Peterson regarding Operations Update.

Peterson began by thanking the City crews for their efforts in preparing a cost saving wood laydown area for the biomass wood chips at the old recycle/wastewater area. Commission Bayliss also thanked the crews for working together to get this project finalized. Commissioner Hart inquired about road restrictions, and Peterson stated he will inquire if they will be an issue.

Boiler #4 wood operations went down this week, with a part on order. Peterson thanked the crews for their flexibility, as Boiler #4 is still generating on natural gas.

Peterson updated on Grant Street water issues. Crews have been flushing, and HPU is working on a long-term permanent project. He thanked the Grant Street customers for their patience, as the HPU works towards its water strategic planning. Peterson reported that the HPU was awarded a CDBG Grant for the 18th Street project in the amount of \$77,000.

This item was accepted and placed in the Commission file.

Item 7. POLICY & GOVERNANCE

Item 7.A. The Commission reviewed the correspondence dated January 21, 2022 from L. Peterson, General Manager, regarding Approve Resolution No. 2022-02: Recognizing Continued Implementation of the Cold Weather Rule and Other Protections

Peterson introduced this item as an update to the State rule protecting customers who meet certain criteria, with a brief discussion held.

Motion by Commissioner Bayliss, supported by Commissioner Andria, to approve Resolution No. 2022-02 Recognizing Continued Implementation of the Cold Weather Rule and Other Protections.

Roll call vote.

Motion carried unanimously.

Item 7.B. The Commission reviewed the correspondence dated January 21, 2022, tabled from the regular meeting of January 11, 2022, from L. Peterson, General Manager, regarding Approve Administration, Facilities and Safety Coordinator Job Description.

Motion by Commissioner Hart, supported by Commissioner Baylis, to approve the Job Description for the Administration, Facilities, and Safety Coordinator.

Roll call vote.

Motion carried unanimously.

Item 8. OLD BUSINESS - none

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Item 9. NEW BUSINESS

Item 9.A. The Commission reviewed the correspondence dated January 21, 2022 from L. Peterson regarding Hospital Water Line Acquisition.

Peterson gave update of being in favor of acquiring the private hospital water line and requested this item be added to an upcoming work session, as more information is currently being obtained.

Motion by Chairperson Garrity, supported by Commissioner Hart, to table this item to the work session at a date yet to be determined.

Motion carried unanimously.

Item 9.B. The Commission reviewed the correspondence dated January 21, 2022 from L. Peterson regarding Unified North Communication Attachment Lease Agreement.

Peterson introduced the item in that Mr. Phillips had been in touch requesting Communication Attachment Lease Agreement on the Mesabi Tower, prior to his tenure as General Manager. Legal Counsel Borland provided information that he used the LMC guidelines as a base to set rates for the tower lease attachments. Peterson stated a monetary agreement was reached during discussions with usage determined at a tiered rate.

Motion by Chairperson Garrity, supported by Commissioner Andria, to table this item to the next meeting.

Commissioner Hart questioned Mr. Phillips if tabling this item would affect the project. Mr. Phillips stated that if progress is not made it will impede his deadline for grant applications. Bayliss asked about interference with other implements on the towers. Mr. Phillips guaranteed there would be none, as per agreement language. Commissioners held brief discussion.

Chairperson Garrity and Commissioner Andria withdrew their motion.

Motion by Commissioner Bayliss, supported by Commissioner Hart, to authorize the Communication Attachment Lease Agreement to Unified North.

Roll call vote.

Motion carried unanimously.

Item 9.C. General Manager Peterson requested to add discussion for a Work Session. He suggested February 8, 2022 at 3:30 p.m.

Chairperson Garrity opined that the Commission is at a halfway point regarding the MP short term agreement, and the March 31, 2022 deadline is within 6 weeks. Chair Garrity stated that he is hoping for a successful, cooperative negotiations. Discussion held regarding sending a formal letter to Minnesota Power from the Commission requesting a formal meeting in the near future.

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Motion by Chairperson Garrity, supported by Commissioner Hart, for General Manager Peterson to draft a letter to Minnesota Power requesting a formal meeting, to be signed by the Commission Chair and Vice Chair.

Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion continued regarding a working session, with a date and time of Tuesday, February 15, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. at the Hibbing City Hall conference room.

Motion carried unanimously.

Item 10. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Bayliss, supported by Commissioner Andria, to adjourn the meeting at 5:51 p.m.

Motion carried unanimously.

Attest:



Patrick Garrity, Chairperson



Morgan Anderson, Commission Secretary

Meeting materials are available at www.hpuc.com
The next regular Commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 8, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. at the Hibbing City Hall, Council Chambers, 401 E. 21st St., Hibbing MN 55746.
All COVID-19 Pandemic guidelines must be observed.

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