

The Municipal Utilities Commission (MUC) met in its regular scheduled meeting on Monday, August 28, 2023, at 11:45 am in the WMU Auditorium with the following Commissioners present: Bruce DeBlieck, Shawn Mueske, John Kennedy, Patricia Elizondo, and Terrill Sieck. Absent were Commissioners Dave Baumgart and Carol Laumer.

Others present at the meeting were: General Manager John Harren, Director of Administration Janell Johnson, Finance & Office Services Supervisor Andrea Prekker, Facilities & Maintenance Supervisor Kevin Marti, Staff Electrical Engineer Jeron Smith, Information Systems Coordinator Mike Sangren, Executive Secretary Beth Mattheisen, City Administrator Leslie Valiant, City Councilmembers Michael O'Brien and Audrey Nelsen, City Attorney Robert Scott (via teleconference), and WC Tribune Journalist Jennifer Kotila.

The meeting opened by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Commission President DeBlieck continued by appointing Commissioner Sieck to serve as Acting Secretary. Following the appointment, Commissioner DeBlieck asked if there were any changes to the presented agenda. There being none, a resolution to approve the consent agenda was requested. Following review and discussion, Commissioner Mueske offered a resolution to approve the consent agenda as presented. Commissioner Kennedy seconded.

RESOLUTION NO. 26

“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 14, 2023, MUC Meeting; and,
- ❖ Bills represented by vouchers No. 20231185 to No. 20231245 and associated wire transfers inclusive in the amount of \$3,299,748.35.

Dated this 28th day of August, 2023.



President

Attest:


Acting Secretary

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

At this time, Commissioner DeBlieck presented Alexis Flaten with the MMUA Tom Bovitz Memorial Scholarship Award (\$1,000). Ms. Flaten had previously been selected as the top entry of the local WMU Scholarship (\$1,000) and her essay was subsequently submitted to MMUA for additional scholarship consideration. This was the second time in WMU's history that a local high school senior had been awarded the scholarship at the state level. Congratulations and best wishes to a bright future, Alexis!

Commissioner Kennedy (LC Vice Chair) reviewed with the Commission the minutes from the August 18th WMU Labor Committee meeting (see attached). Following review, Commissioner Kennedy offered a motion to approve the minutes of the August 18th WMU Labor Committee meeting as presented. Commissioner Sieck seconded the motion which carried by a vote of five ayes and zero nays.

Commissioners DeBlieck and Elizondo and General Manager Harren presented the Commission with a recap of their recent attendance at the 2023 MMUA Summer Conference. Topics of discussion included: navigating a new energy path for resilience; federal grant funding; renewable energy; cybersecurity; workforce trends; artificial intelligence (AI); distributed energy resources and avoided distribution costs; federal and state legislative updates; and, how ethics and resilience go hand-in hand. It was further noted that Commissioner DeBlieck had been named as a recipient of MMUA's Community Service Award. DeBlieck, Elizondo and Harren expressed their appreciation to the Commission for allowing them the opportunity to attend the informational conference and highly encourage Commissioners to attend in the future.

A meeting of the WMU Planning Committee will be held on Tuesday, August 29th beginning at 12:00 pm. Agenda items will include budgets, rates, and Kandiyohi County Fair Association donation request.

Additional meetings of both the WMU Labor and Planning Committees will be forthcoming. Tentative future Labor Committee agenda item(s) will include new building land acquisition and union negotiations. Tentative future Planning Committee agenda items will include new building, water treatment plant funding, new generation, and water system model.

Following the regular business portion of the meeting, Facilities & Maintenance Supervisor Marti served as a guide for the annual tour of various WMU project sites, facilities, and areas of interest. The tour included site visits and observations of the following: former Power Plant site including new substation, future water fill station, and generation sites; Northeast Water Treatment Plant; new facilities site options; Willmar Substation; and, scheduled vehicle replacements. Upon completion of the facilities tour, the Commission returned to the WMU Office.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Commissioner Mueske offered a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Sieck seconded the motion which carried by a vote of five ayes and zero nays, and the meeting was adjourned at 1:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

WILLMAR MUNICIPAL UTILITIES


Beth Mattheisen, Executive Secretary

ATTEST:


Terrill Sieck, Acting Secretary



WILLMAR MUNICIPAL UTILITIES
MUC Labor Committee Meeting Minutes
Friday, August 18, 2023
12:00 pm (WMU Conference Room)

Attendees: Commissioners Dave Baumgart, John Kennedy & Patricia Elizondo, General Manager John Harren, Director of Administration Janell Johnson, and Executive Secretary Beth Mattheisen.

Commissioner Baumgart (LC Chair) called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm.

1) Union contract negotiations and requests:

General Manager Harren reviewed with the Labor Committee the process involved in conducting labor contract negotiations between WMU and IBEW Local Union #160. A joint meeting between reps from both entities was held on August 15th at which time requests to amend the union contract were presented for consideration. The current three-year contract with IBEW is for the time period of 2021-2023 and therefore will be expiring on December 31st.

General Manager Harren and Director of Administration Johnson reviewed each of the proposed contract amendments submitted by IBEW for consideration.

Recommendation:

Following discussion, it was a consensus of the WMU Labor Committee to direct staff to meet with union reps to present WMU's position on the submitted contract amendment requests.

Commissioner Baumgart departed the meeting at 1:04 pm.

2) Adjournment:

There being no further business to come before the WMU Labor Committee, Commissioner Kennedy offered a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Elizondo seconded the motion which carried, and the meeting was adjourned by a vote of two ayes and zero nays at 1:14 pm.

