

WILLMAR MUNICIPAL UTILITIES COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes – May 28, 2024

11:45 am – WMU Auditorium

The Municipal Utilities Commission (MUC) met in its regular scheduled meeting on Tuesday, May 28, 2024, at 11:45 am in the WMU Auditorium with the following Commissioners present: Shawn Mueske, John Kennedy, Dave Baumgart, Terrill Sieck, Carol Laumer, and Patricia Elizondo. Absent was Bruce DeBlieck.

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, Information Systems Coordinator Mike Sangren, Executive Secretary Beth Mattheisen, City Attorney Robert Scott (via teleconference), and WC Tribune Journalist Jennifer Kotila.

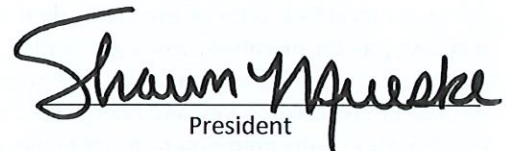
The meeting opened by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Commission President Mueske continued by asking if any changes to the agenda were needed. There being none, a resolution to approve the consent agenda was requested. Following review and discussion, Commissioner Laumer offered a resolution to approve the consent agenda as presented. Commissioner Kennedy seconded.

RESOLUTION NO. 20

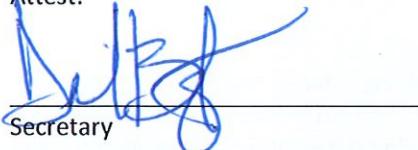
“BE IT RESOLVED, by the Municipal Utilities Commission of the City of Willmar, Minnesota, that the consent agenda be approved as presented which includes:

- ❖ Meeting minutes from May 13, 2024 and May 20, 2024 (special meeting); and,
- ❖ Bills represented by vouchers No. 20240648 to No. 20240691 and associated wire transfers inclusive in the amount of \$1,436,725.14.

Dated this 28th day of May 2024.


President

Attest:


Secretary

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

Facilities & Maintenance Supervisor Marti presented the Commission with the final draft of the updated 2024 WMU Strategic Plan (previous plan originated in 2021). The Commission and Staff developed the plan with guidance provided by Marcy Douglas from MRES. The 2024 Strategic Planning Summary consists of core values, long-range goals, and key performance indicators. Five long-range goals were identified, and they are Electric Utility, Water Utility, Customer Experience, Utility Identity & Communication, and Leadership. Along with these goals are the strategic actions required to achieve the goals. Team members and timelines will be determined and included in the approved plan. Following review and discussion, Commissioner Kennedy offered a resolution to approve the 2024 WMU Strategic Plan as presented. Commissioner Baumgart seconded

RESOLUTION NO. 21

“BE IT RESOLVED, by the Municipal Utilities Commission of the City of Willmar, Minnesota, that the 2024 WMU Strategic Plan be approved in its entirety as presented.”

Dated this 28th day of May 2024.


President

Attest:


Secretary

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

Each year Willmar Municipal Utilities offers local high school seniors the opportunity to submit a 500-700 word utility-related essay for the chance to be awarded \$1,000 scholarships. Contestants must be, or have as a legal guardian, a current customer of WMU. Director of Administration Johnson was pleased to announce this year's recipients of the 2024 WMU Scholarships are Maycee Gustafson and Brendan Pappenfus. Each will receive a \$1,000 scholarship payable to an accredited post-secondary educational institution. Congratulations and best wishes on a bright future, Maycee and Brendan!

General Manager Harren reported that at the May 20th City Council meeting, the Council voted 7-1 to cancel the sale of the parkland property in the south Swansson Field area.

Due to a possible scheduling conflict with the APPA National Conference, General Manager Harren had requested input on whether to reschedule the June 10th MUC meeting. Three Commissioners will be attending the conference and rescheduling would be required if a quorum is not met. It was a consensus of the Commission to have the meeting remain as scheduled for June 10th with a quorum in attendance.

General Manager Harren introduced the Missouri River Energy Services (MRES) 2023 year-in-review video entitled "*Collective Resilience: Building a Stronger Future Together*". This informative video presents an overview of the valuable assets, achievements, and strong financial stability of Missouri River Energy Services (MRES). Topics reviewed included: time-of-use rates, debt service coverage, positive bond ratings, various transmission projects, increase pay for member-owned generation, creation of an alternate operations site, and funding of WAPA capital projects for clean reliable energy. The presentation illustrates the continued commitment by MRES to deliver affordable, reliable energy and energy services to its 61 member communities including Willmar. It is through this collaboration and commitment to collective resilience that Missouri River will continue to deliver exceptional value and service to its member utilities long into the future.

American Public Power Association (APPA) has a 15-part on-demand training course entitled "*Public Power Governance Essentials*". This series offers a convenient way to get "up-to-speed" on governance requirements, such as complying with charters/bylaws, reporting conflicts of interest, understanding duties and legal obligations, and facilitating an effective board meeting. At this time, the informational video entitled "*Performance Monitoring for Boards*" (Lesson #9) was presented.

General Manager Harren reviewed with the Commission a response received from the Minnesota Department of Health addressing a question which had been raised if contaminants are in Willmar's water supply. The short answer is "no," our water is safe. The response stated that tritium is a naturally occurring isotope of hydrogen resulting from nuclear weapons testing beginning in the 1950s. While the wellfield is not currently contaminated, there is a moderate risk of contamination if there were a chemical spill or a similar type of event to occur in Willmar, specifically in the SW Swansson Wellfield area. Willmar's Wellhead Protection Plan will be up for amendment within a couple of years, and this process will provide the opportunity to look more closely at this type of issue.

General Manager Harren informed the Commission that meetings of both the WMU Planning and Labor Committees would be forthcoming. Tentative future Labor Committee agenda item(s) will include new building land acquisition, and MUC Self-Survey. Tentative future Planning Committee agenda items will include new building, new generation, transmission project, and water treatment plant. In addition to these meetings, a joint meeting between WMU and the City will be scheduled in the near future to discuss a number of items including WMU's Annual Update to the City, updating of collaborative agreements, and a Swansson Field Agreement South of Willmar Avenue.

Upcoming 2024 events to note:

- APPA National Conference (San Diego, CA): June 7-12 (Kennedy/Laumer/DeBlieck)
- MMUA Utility Leader Workshop (Alexandria): June 27
- MMUA Summer Conference (Fargo, ND): August 19-21
- Red Rock Hydroelectric Project tours (Pella, IA): July 31, Aug. 28, or Sept. 25

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Commissioner Laumer offered a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Baumgart seconded the motion which carried by a vote of six ayes and zero nays, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:36 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

WILLMAR MUNICIPAL UTILITIES


Beth Mattheisen, Executive Secretary

ATTEST:


Dave Baumgart, Secretary

