

The Municipal Utilities Commission (MUC) met in its regular meeting scheduled on Monday, October 14, 2024, at 11:45 am in the WMU Auditorium with the following Commissioners present: Shawn Mueske, John Kennedy, Terrill Sieck, Bruce DeBlicek, and Patricia Elizondo. Absent were Commissioners Dave Baumgart and Carol Laumer.

Others present at the meeting were: Interim General Manager 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 Attorney Robert Scott (via teleconference), and WC Tribune Journalist Jennifer Kotila.

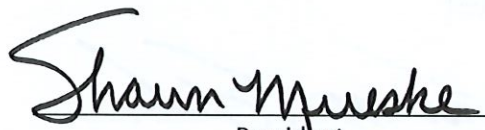
The meeting opened with the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. Due to the absence of Commission Secretary Baumgart, Commission President Mueske appointed Commissioner Sieck to serve as Acting Secretary. Following the appointment, Commissioner Mueske inquired if any changes to the agenda were needed. Following review and discussion, Commissioner Kennedy offered a resolution to approve the consent agenda, including the additional agenda item as presented. Commissioner Sieck seconded.

RESOLUTION NO. 38

“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: September 23, 2024 MUC Meeting and October 7, 2024 Special MUC Meeting; and,
- ❖ Bills represented by vouchers No. 20241390 to No. 20241528 and associated wire transfers inclusive in the amount of \$2,644,782.09.

Dated this 14th day of October, 2024.


President

Attest:


Acting Secretary

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

Commissioner Mueske reminded the Commission that any additional General Manager interview input should be directed to Liza Donabauer of DDA for finalization of the interview process for the General Manager position.

At the September 23rd MUC meeting, Facilities & Maintenance Supervisor Marti presented the Commission with a full assessment of the WMU Wind Turbine Program. Following the presentation, the Commission was asked to provide final action or directive relating to the program. Marti summarized the findings, which included that due to lack of resources, availability of replacement parts, financial considerations and existing projected life expectancy of the turbines, it is not practical to continue their operation. Following review, Commissioner DeBlicek offered a motion to terminate the WMU Wind Turbine Program and proceed with the

process to decommission WMU's two wind turbine units. Commissioner Sieck seconded the motion, which carried by a unanimous vote of five ayes and zero nays.

Finance & Office Services Supervisor Prekker reviewed the August 2024 Financial Reports, which included a recap of the August Investment Portfolio and the August Cost of Power Report. The financial information presented reflects operating revenues, expenses, retained earnings, and fund comparisons for both the Electric and Water Divisions.

Interim General Manager Johnson reviewed with the Commission the efforts being made to collect unpaid utility bills, which includes utilizing the lien process. This process involves sending lien letters to individuals, offering them the opportunity to appear before the Commission to contest the proposed lien against their property. To date, no requests have been received to contest any of the identified parcels.

While efforts to collect these unpaid bills are ongoing, Johnson requested the Commission's approval of a resolution asking the City Council to place liens on the properties for the unpaid utility bills. The total amount for the forty-two requested property liens is \$48,557.83. Following review and discussion, Commissioner DeBlieck offered a resolution to request the City Council to place liens on the forty-two identified properties for the total collectable amount of \$48,557.83. Commissioner Sieck seconded.

RESOLUTION NO. 39

"BE IT RESOLVED, by the Municipal Utilities Commission of the City of Willmar, Minnesota, that the Municipal Utilities Commission requests the Willmar City Council to place liens on forty-two identified properties for non-payment of utility bills for the total collectible amount of \$48,557.83."

Dated this 14th day of October, 2024.


President

Attest:


Acting Secretary

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

Interim General Manager Johnson was pleased to present the newly created *Municipal Power Advantage WILLMAR* informational brochure. The brochure was created by Missouri River Energy Services (MRES) in collaboration with WMU. This valuable marketing highlights the importance and benefits of operating a municipally owned electric utility. It showcases how the electric utility provides customer benefits and supports the community in ways beyond delivering reliable electricity. These benefits include positive financial impacts on the community, affordable rates, enhanced reliability, discounted rates for economic development, and local control and service. All are encouraged to view the brochure which is located on the WMU website.

Interim General Manager Johnson provided an update of the process to acquire property for the new WMU facility. Due to railroad spur and MnDOT access issues, Option #1 is no longer a viable option. As directed by the Commission, staff is now pursuing Option #2. Johnson expressed optimism about the potential to secure this property and assured the Commission that staff will continue to proceed as required.

Interim General Manager Johnson noted tentative future Labor Committee agenda items will include the new building land acquisition and the MUC Self-Survey. Tentative future Planning Committee agenda items include new building, new generation, and CMPAS transmission investment.

Upcoming 2024 events to note:

- MUC Special Mtg.: Interview of General Manager finalists including Meet-and-Greet session on Monday, October 21st (beginning @ 8:30 am)

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Commissioner Kennedy offered a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Sieck seconded the motion, which carried by a vote of five ayes and zero nays. The meeting was adjourned at 12:28 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

WILLMAR MUNICIPAL UTILITIES


Beth Mattheisen, Executive Secretary

ATTEST:


Terrill Sieck, Acting Secretary

Attendees:

- **Commissioners present:** Shawn Mueske, Dave Baumgart, John Kennedy, Carol Laumer, Terrill Sieck, Patricia Elizondo, and Bruce DeBlieck (via teleconference)
- **Others:** Liza Donabauer, DDA Management Consultant, Information Systems Coordinator Mike Sangren, and Beth Mattheisen, Executive Secretary

Meeting Overview:

1. Call to Order:

- The meeting was called to order by Commission President Shawn Mueske.
- The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2. Purpose of the Meeting:

- The primary purpose of this special meeting was to continue the selection process for the General Manager position.

3. Approval of Minutes:

MUC Baumgart made a motion to approve September 30th Special MUC Meeting minutes as presented. MUC Sieck seconded the motion, which carried by a unanimous vote of six ayes and zero nays.

4. General Manager Search Update:

Ms. Donabauer reviewed the General Manager search process. After discussion, MUC Laumer made a motion to recommend interviewing three additional semi-finalists, using the same in-person process previously used. MUC Elizondo seconded the motion, which carried by a unanimous vote of six ayes and zero nays.

5. Interview Process Recap:

- Three additional candidates will be interviewed and join the two existing finalists for possible second interviews. In-person interviews for the three newly selected finalists will last 45 minutes each.
- Plans were made for the new candidates to take tours of the community and WMU projects, as well as participate in a "meet & greet" session.
- Five candidates (three new and two existing) may be asked to participate in a final 30-minute second interview, which will include a five-minute presentation followed by a Q&A session.

6. Important Dates:

- **October 14th:** Deadline for Commissioners to provide input. After this date, Ms. Donabauer will distribute data about the finalists to the MUC and City Council Liaison.
- **October 21st:** 1st/2nd interviews to be conducted as needed, community and WMU project tours, and a "meet & greet" session (exact times TBD).

7. Adjournment:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by consensus at 1:17 pm.

Respectfully submitted,


Beth Mattheisen, Executive Secretary