



WILLMAR MUNICIPAL UTILITIES COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes – December 22, 2025

11:45 a.m. WMU Auditorium

The Willmar Municipal Utilities Commission met in regular session on Monday, December 22, 2025, at 11:45 a.m. in the WMU Auditorium. Commissioners present were John Kennedy, Dave Baumgart, Terrill Sieck, Carol Laumer, and Bruce DeBlieck. Commissioners absent were Patricia Elizondo and Shawn Mueske.

Staff present included General Manager Jeron Smith; Director of Administration Janell Johnson; Facilities & Maintenance Supervisor Kevin Marti; Finance & Office Services Supervisor Andrea Prekker; Information Systems Coordinator Mike Sangren; and Executive Secretary Abby Ahrendt. Also present were City Attorney Robert Scott (via teleconference) and Jennifer Kotila of the *West Central Tribune*.

Vice President Kennedy, serving as Acting President, called the meeting to order, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Kennedy asked if there were any requests or changes to the agenda. General Manager Smith noted that President Shawn Mueske, Commissioner Patricia Elizondo, and City Council Liaison Tom Gilbertson were excused. The meeting proceeded to the Consent Agenda. Following review and discussion, Commissioner DeBlieck moved, and Commissioner Baumgart seconded, to approve the Consent Agenda.

RESOLUTION NO. 54

BE IT RESOLVED by the Municipal Utilities Commission of the City of Willmar, Minnesota, that the Consent Agenda be approved as presented, including the following:

- ❖ Minutes from the December 8, 2025, MUC Meeting
- ❖ Bills represented by vouchers No. 20251882 through No. 20251924, including associated wire transfers, totaling \$2,591,310.45.

Dated this 22nd day of December, 2025.



President

Attest:



Secretary

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

Vice President Kennedy recognized Commissioners Terrill Sieck (2023–2025) and Bruce DeBlieck (2017–2025) for their years of service to the Commission. In the absence of President Mueske, Kennedy read a letter expressing appreciation for their dedication, consistent attendance, and leadership during critical times, noting their willingness to attend additional meetings and participate remotely when needed. The letter conveyed the Commission's gratitude for their service and acknowledged the valuable counsel they provided throughout their tenures. Vice President Kennedy then presented each Commissioner with a plaque in recognition of their service.

Information Systems Coordinator Sangren presented the 2026 Pen Test Vendor Selection, noting that WMU has historically rotated vendors on a two-year cycle for penetration testing services. Sangren reviewed

competitive quotes received from NetSPI and FRSecure and recommended awarding a two-year contract to FRSecure in the amount of \$38,000, as the lower quoted vendor that could provide fresh perspectives on WMU's systems, with testing planned for July 2026. Following review and discussion, Commissioner Baumgart moved, and Commissioner Sieck seconded, to approve the recommendation.

RESOLUTION NO. 55

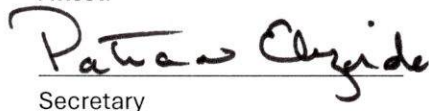
BE IT RESOLVED that the Willmar Municipal Utilities Commission approves the recommendation to award a two-year contract for penetration testing services for the 2026–2027 period to FRSecure for \$38,000 as presented by the Information Systems Coordinator.

Dated this 22nd day of December, 2025.



President

Attest:



Secretary

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

General Manager Smith presented the 2026 Electric Utility Reporting on Distributed Generation, explaining that the filing is required under Minnesota Rules and ensures WMU has updated rates, tariffs, and interconnection information on file for customers with distributed generation resources. Smith noted that the report is required to be filed with the Willmar Municipal Utilities Commission by January 2, 2026.

General Manager Smith presented the 2026 Municipal Utilities Commission meeting schedule. Commissioner Baumgart moved, and Commissioner Laumer seconded, to approve the schedule as presented. This motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner DeBlieck presented the Labor Committee meeting minutes from the December 11, 2025 meeting. He reviewed the Committee's discussion regarding the 2026 WMU Policies, the Memorandum of Understanding between Willmar Municipal Utilities and IBEW Local 160 related to Minnesota Paid Leave, and the General Manager's annual performance evaluation. Following review, Commissioner DeBlieck moved, and Commissioner Sieck seconded, to approve the Labor Committee meeting minutes from December 11, 2025. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Laumer moved, and Commissioner Baumgart seconded, to approve the 2026 WMU Policies as recommended by the Labor Committee.

RESOLUTION NO. 56

BE IT RESOLVED that the Willmar Municipal Utilities Commission approves the 2026 WMU Policies as presented and recommended by the Labor Committee.

Dated this 22nd day of December, 2025.



President

Attest:

Patricia Chyzide

Secretary

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

Commissioner Baumgart moved, and Commissioner Sieck seconded, to approve the Memorandum of Understanding between Willmar Municipal Utilities and IBEW Local 160 regarding implementation of the Minnesota Paid Leave program for calendar year 2026.

RESOLUTION NO. 57

BE IT RESOLVED that the Willmar Municipal Utilities Commission approves the Memorandum of Understanding with IBEW Local 160 regarding Minnesota Paid Leave for calendar year 2026.

Dated this 22nd day of December, 2025.

John H. III
President

Attest:

Patricia Chyzide

Secretary

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

Commissioner DeBlieck moved, and Commissioner Baumgart seconded, to approve the General Manager's performance review as recommended by the Labor Committee.

RESOLUTION NO. 58

BE IT RESOLVED that the Willmar Municipal Utilities Commission accepts the Labor Committee's determination that the General Manager's performance evaluation is satisfactory, with a COLA adjustment to be considered in accordance with the terms of the General Manager's employment agreement.

Dated this 22nd day of December, 2025.

John H. III
President

Attest:

Patricia Chyzide


Secretary

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

General Manager Smith provided an update to the Commission, beginning with City Council actions. He reported that Commissioner Patricia Elizondo was reappointed by the City Council and noted the introduction by the City Council, of Municipal Utility Commission applicants including Steve Ammerman and Brad Michelson. Smith also reported that the City Council approved moving forward with a joint work session with Dave Unmacht, with staff interviews scheduled for early January. He provided an update on the implementation of CivicPlus, noting a target date of January 12, 2026 for use at the first Commission meeting of the new year. Smith reviewed highlights from the 2025 Regional Winter Assessment, discussed the Xcel Energy powerline maintenance project scheduled for 2026, and concluded by highlighting upcoming events, including MMUA Governance in Action on January 23, 2026, in St. Cloud, and the APPA Legislative Rally to be held in February 2026 in Washington, D.C.

Vice President Kennedy asked if there was any additional discussion. Hearing none, Commissioner Baumgart moved, and Commissioner DeBlieck seconded, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 12:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
WILLMAR MUNICIPAL UTILITIES


Abby Ahrendt, Executive Secretary

ATTEST:


Secretary