

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

March 25, 2020, 1:00 P.M.

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, the Regular Meeting of the Public Utilities Commission, City of Princeton, was held via Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic, on March 25, 2020, at 1:00 P.M.

Present: Chairman Greg Hanson and Commissioners Dan Erickson and Mindi Siercks.

Also Present: Manager Keith Butcher, Bookkeeper Kathy Ohman, City Councilor Jenny Gerold, Electric Superintendent Ryan Grant, Water Superintendent Scott Daniels, City Administrator Bob Barbian, Princeton Mayor Brad Schumacher, and Union Times Reporter Tim Hennagir.

Meeting was called to order and led by the Pledge of Allegiance by Chairman Hanson at 1:05 P.M.

Chairman Hanson called for additions or deletions to the agenda. Princeton Mayor Brad Schumacher had one addition. Addition: New Business: H. Mayor Schumacher.

Ms. Siercks made a motion to approve the agenda of the February 26, 2020 Regular PUC Commission Meeting. Mr. Hanson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Siercks moved to approve the Minutes for the February 26, 2020 Regular PUC Commission Meeting. Although Mr. Erickson was not in attendance to this meeting, Mr. Erickson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

There was no Public Comments.

Mr. Erickson made a motion to approve the accounts payable listing for the period of February 1, 2020 through February 29, 2020. Ms. Siercks seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

General Manager Butcher reported the following:

A. The SMMPA Board Meeting was held March 11th in Owatonna, Minnesota. General Manager Keith Butcher was not in attendance of this meeting and has not received the minutes for this meeting. Key metrics was provided to the PUC Commissioners. SMMPA continues with rebranding.

B. In the Generation Plant, they have been removing rock around the transformers and spill containment area.

In the Electric Department, the line crew has been doing some tree trimming and LED light upgrades.

C. In the Water Department, they are making sure to keep up with their paperwork and inventories.

D. City Administrator Bob Barbian reported there was a development regarding the golf course club house, a plat on West Branch Road, and a development on Highway 95. The City of Princeton is taking steps with work spaces and times for all departments due to the COVID-19 pandemic. All staff is working full time.

- E. General Manager Keith Butcher reported the transformers at the South Substation have been relocated inside the fenced area. A copy of the Conditional Use Permit has not been received from the City of Princeton as requested. City Administrator Bob Barbian stated he has not been able to take the time to locate the Conditional Use Permit however he stated the permit does not allow for storage at this facility. The PUC would need to apply for an additional storage permit. The Princeton Business Expo to be held on April 4th which the PUC was participating in has been canceled.

General Manager Keith Butcher reported 475 electric meters and 125 water meters have been currently installed. Installation of AMI meters has been suspended at this time due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The AMI meters that were on hand have all been installed. Shipments of AMI meters are coming in quarterly from Eaton/Cannon.

There was a discussion on the EV Level 2 Chargers which are moving forward. The DC fast chargers are on hold for now.

There was a discussion on the 5th Street water main realignment project. Originally the project included additional fire protection for this area. The bid with the additional fire protection was over \$100,000.00. Having the bid modified to remove the extra fire protection would bring the bid to \$89,542.50 which saves rate payers approximately \$23,000.00. The discussion included the water project at the golf course for the new club house, brewery and also the 7th Avenue North project which would be done in conjunction with Mille Lacs County in 2022. If the project is not approved at this time, the contractor may withdraw their bid as spring projects are coming up for contractors. Additional fire protection on the north side of Princeton will be completed at a later date. Ms. Siercks made a motion to accept the bid of \$142,465.00 less \$51,000.00 for the additional fire protection for the 5th Street water main realignment project. Mr. Erickson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, the PUC staff has been split into two groups working in the office separately. Employees working from home have been provided a list of tasks they are able to complete at home. Employees working in the office are doing a cleaning regimen during the day. All employees remain on call and are in contact with other utilities in regards to mutual aid if required. City Administrator Bob Barbian stated the City of Princeton has their employees working in split shifts as well with all employees working 40 hours.

General Manager Keith Butcher announced PUC's IT specialist Greg Bergmann will be retiring in April. Mr. Butcher has solicited bids from four IT companies to handle the PUC's IT needs. He has selected CW Technologies for this task at a cost of \$1,450.00 per month. The contract does include a 60-day cancellation notice. The handling of the GIS system and AMI meters will be shifted to other personnel. Mr. Hanson suggested having Mr. Bergmann remain on staff for some additional time during this transition. Ms. Siercks made a motion to accept the hiring of CW Technologies for the PUC's IT managed services. Mr. Erickson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

General Manager Keith Butcher presented the rebranded PUC logo and updated website to the PUC Commission for approval. The theme of the logo was kept similar to the old PUC logo. Union Times Reporter Tim Hennagir will coordinate a posting with the launching of the new website. The consensus of the PUC Commission was they all liked the rebranded PUC logo and the new updated website which was very easy to use.

There was a discussion regarding the recording and archiving of PUC Commission Meetings on the internet. Manager Butcher feels the recordings and archiving should be done by the PUC. He would like to use the technology available to us to make sure everything is recorded and available to the public. He would also like to create a recording and video policy. Ms. Siercks made a motion to direct General Manager Keith Butcher pursue creating a recording and video archiving policy. Mr. Erickson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Resolution 20-03 RESOLUTION OF THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF PRINCETON DISCONTINUATION OF PRINCETON PUBLIC UTILITIES PAYMENT IN-LIEU-OF TAXES (PILOT) was presented to the PUC Commission for approval. There was a discussion regarding the City of Princeton's franchise fee and the PUC's cash reserve policy. City Councilor Jenny Gerold stated the City of Princeton franchise fee is for parks only and the PUC's PILOT goes into the City of Princeton's general fund. After much discussion, Mr. Erickson made a motion to accept Resolution 20-03. Ms. Siercks seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

General Manager Keith Butcher requested a letter from the City of Princeton announcing the appointment of City Councilor Jenny Gerold to the PUC Commission. He would like the letter to have a start date for Ms. Gerold.

Resolution 20-02 RESOLUTION OF THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF PRINCETON REGARDING AUTHORIZING THE SERVICES OF MINUTEMAN PRESS, PRINCETON, MN for the use of their services for printing and web design/upgrades in the amount of \$1,364.84 from December 18, 2019 through February 26, 2020 was presented. Mr. Hanson made a motion to accept Resolution 19-12. Mr. Erickson seconded. Ms. Siercks abstained from voting.

City of Princeton Mayor Brad Schumacher stated he was extremely disappointed in the PUC Commission for discontinuing their PILOT payment. He will be discussing this move at the next City of Princeton Council Meeting,

There being no further business, Ms. Siercks made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:46 p.m. Mr. Erickson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.



Gregory Hanson
Chairman



Kathy Ohman
Secretary