

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

April 22, 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 April 22, 2020, at 1:00 P.M.

Present: Chairman Greg Hanson and Commissioner Dan Erickson.

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, Union Times Reporter Tim Hennagir, and Deo Sioco from CW Technologies.

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Hanson at 1:02 P.M.

General Manager Keith R. Butcher proceeded to swear in newly appointed PUC Commissioner Jenny Gerold. Prior to being sworn in Jenny Gerold read a statement that she will not be accepting the seat on the PUC Commission Board. She will however remain as the PUC Liaison. She will be taking this statement to the Princeton City Council at their regular meeting on April 23, 2020.

Mr. Erickson moved to approve the Minutes for the March 25, 2020 Regular PUC Commission Meeting. Mr. Hanson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

During Public Comment, Union Times Report Tim Hennagir asked the question at this particular time do we not have a full quorum of PUC Commissioners. General Manager Keith Butcher stated there is a full quorum as the PUC Commission consists of three members. With two members present, this provides us with the full quorum but not a full PUC Commission. City Administrator Bob Barbian stated he would bring this to the Princeton City Council so they can determine what process they would like to proceed on filling the third seat.

Chairman Hanson called for additions or deletions to the agenda. Addition: New Business: D. Upgrade to a Microsoft Exchange Server.

Mr. Erickson made a motion to approve the agenda of the April 22, 2020 Regular PUC Commission Meeting. Mr. Hanson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Erickson made a motion to approve the accounts payable listing for the period of March 1, 2020 through March 31, 2020. Mr. Hanson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

General Manager Butcher reported the following:

- A. Princeton Mayor Brad Schumacher stated he had sent two e-mails to the PUC Commission Board and General Manager Keith Butcher. When questioned regarding the content of the e-mails he stated one was pictures of PUC workers and the other was a data information request. He did not wish to discuss the e-mails at this time.

- B. The SMMPA Board Meeting was held April 9 via video conference. General Manager Keith Butcher was unable to attend this meeting. Key metrics were provided to the PUC Commissioners.
- C. In the Generation Plant, they will be test running engines the end of this week and beginning of next week. Due to the current working situation, they will be running only two engines at a time. They have replaced the air dryer and are continuing to work on spill containment recommendations.

In the Electric Department, the line crew has been doing some ongoing maintenance and equipment cleaning. We are currently looking at doing some underground work north of Highway 95. They have also been doing LED lighting conversions. The Electric Department has been working on improving and upgrading the Electric GIS.

- D. In the Water Department, we have received the Consumer Confidence Report for 2019. This will be posted on the PUC website and in the newspaper. The Water Department has received their Certificate of Completion acknowledging that Princeton Public Utilities Commission has completed its 2019 Water Conservation report that is an annual requirement. They were flushing hydrants last week for their spring flushing. They have also been working with Verizon on their 5G system upgrade. The Water Department has been working on improving the Water GIS. KLM Engineer have completed their inspection of the North Water Tower. It will now be going back online.
- E. City Administrator Bob Barbian reported they are working on the clubhouse redevelopment at the Golf Course with General Manager Keith Butcher on the electric and water. The City of Princeton has been working on assembling an application for a Federal EBA Grant that will fund a portion of the Industrial Park Development west of 21st Avenue.
- F. General Manager Keith Butcher reported they have launched the new website for Princeton Public Utilities. It is still a work in progress and will continually be updated. The PUC audit has been rescheduled for May 12 through the 14th due to COVID-19 pandemic. A new solar interconnection application was received. MMUA is holding their Summer Conference on August 24 through the 26th. General Manager Keith Butcher and PUC Commissioner Greg Hanson will be attending this conference. The annual EIA-61 Report will be filed soon. Keith Butcher has been working on modernizing the PUC's internal IT department with the hiring of CW Technologies. Staff training was conducted on April 15th and April 21st. Mr. Butcher has been working with Cannon/Eaton on the new AMI meter reading and their Yukon database system. We have implemented the recommendations from the engineer on the spill containment plan. When he has verified the recommendations have been implemented he will sign off on the plan. Once the plan has been approved, we will be look at other improvements we can make over long term to ensure we have proper containment. One PUC employee is a member fire department. If there is a fire call in the middle of the day, he is not required to check out. He has also been working with the developer on the new Golf Course Clubhouse with looping the water main and a utility easement.

Because of the Stay At Home Order, General Manager Keith Butcher reported there has been a hold on the AMI meter conversions. We are currently focusing efforts on staff training on the Yukon software.

There was a discussion on the EV Level 2 Chargers host agreement. Keith Butcher has been communicating with both potential hosts. One of the potential hosts would like an alternate placement spot.

Recapping the PUC policy changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic, include the PUC has suspended all disconnections and have waived late fees for customers. Comparing April 2020 to April 2019, there has been an

increase in uncollected accounts and an increase in payment plans during this time. The late fees that were waived in April totaled approximately \$7,200.00. We have seen a reduction in electric consumption of approximately 4.6%. There was a discussion on customer's payment allocation on their accounts. City Councilor Jenny Gerold asked if it was possible to transfer money from the Water Department cash reserve to the Electric Department to increase the cash reserves in the Electric Department. General Manager Keith Butcher explained that the Electric and Water Departments are separate funds and it is not good practice.

Due to the resignation of PUC Commissioner Mindi Siercks as of March 31, 2020, there was a discussion on removing her signature from PUC bank accounts. Mr. Erickson made a motion to remove the signature of former PUC Commissioner Mindi Siercks from all bank accounts. Mr. Hanson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

General Manager Keith Butcher started a discussion regarding staffing. He would like to consider hiring an office manager who would benefit the organization.

A quote was received from CW Technologies to do an e-mail migration to a Microsoft Office 365 Exchange Server. With this upgrade, it would make it possible to access emails, calendars, contacts, multiple devices, and more. CW Technologies has their own mail filter, which will give the PUC an added level of cyber security. Mr. Erickson made a motion to accept the quote to upgrade the PUC e-mail migration to a Microsoft Office 365 Exchange Server. Mr. Hanson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

General Manager Keith Butcher reported he has been asked and has accepted to serve on a committee screening to assist in the hiring of a new full time general manager at North Branch Power and Light.

There being no further business, Mr. Erickson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:04 p.m. Mr. Hanson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.



Gregory Hanson
Chairman



Kathy Ohman
Secretary