

Minutes of the Moorhead Public Service Commission
Hjemkomst Center, Auditorium
Tuesday, January 21, 2025 – 4:30 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Paul Baker, Lisa Borgen, Heidi Durand (video), Jason Ness, Joel Paulsen, and Kristine Thompson

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: General Manager Travis Schmidt; Staff Members Cheryl Glasoe, Taylor Holte, Jake Long, Mark Moilanen, Marc Pritchard, and James Sumba; MPS Attorney John Boulger; MPS Customer Paul Saarion, Treasurer for Signature Condos, and several MPS customers from Signature Condos

1. CALL TO ORDER.

Chairperson Thompson called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM. A quorum of the following members was present: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Ness, Paulsen, and Thompson.

2. ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON.

Chairperson Thompson nominated Commissioner Paulsen to serve as the Commission's Chairperson for 2025, and that election of the Vice Chairperson and Secretary will occur at the next Commission meeting. Commissioner Borgen seconded the motion. Commissioner Paulsen accepted the nomination. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Ness, Paulsen, and Thompson. Voting No: None.

3. APPROVE AGENDA.

Commissioner Paulsen made a motion to approve the agenda, with the removal of Agenda Item #14, Approve Revised Organizational Structure and Number of Personnel for 2025 and Amended Section 5.5 in Moorhead Public Service's Personnel Policy Manual. Commissioner Baker seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Ness, Paulsen, and Thompson. Voting No: None.

4. APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA.

Commissioner Durand made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Baker seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Ness, Paulsen, and Thompson. Voting No: None.

[The consent agenda approved above includes all items shown herein with an asterisk (*). These items were considered routine or non-controversial by the Commission and were enacted by the Commission in one motion, which is the motion above to approve the consent agenda.]

***5. APPROVE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 17, 2024.**

Commissioner Durand made a motion to approve the minutes of December 17, 2024. Commissioner Baker seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Ness, Paulsen, and Thompson. Voting No: None.

***6. APPROVE BILLS FOR PAYMENT.**

Commissioner Durand made a motion to approve the bills for payment. Commissioner Baker seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Ness, Paulsen, and Thompson. Voting No: None.

***7. APPROVE AGREEMENT WITH ASN CONSTRUCTORS FOR THE RELOCATION OF MPS' 115KV TRANSMISSION LINE AT THE STORM WATER DIVERSION CHANNEL IN WEST FARGO.**

Commissioner Durand made a motion to approve the Agreement with ASN Constructors for the relocation of MPS' 115kV transmission line at the Storm Water Diversion Channel in West Fargo. Commissioner Baker seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Ness, Paulsen, and Thompson. Voting No: None.

***8. APPROVE TASK ORDER NO. 12 WITH DGR ENGINEERING FOR MPS' NORTHEAST SUBSTATION.**

Commissioner Durand made a motion to approve Task Order No. 12 with DGR Engineering for MPS' Northeast Substation in the amount of \$108,000. Commissioner Baker seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Ness, Paulsen, and Thompson. Voting No: None.

***9. APPROVE TASK ORDER NO. 11 WITH APEX ENGINEERING GROUP FOR ENGINEERING AND FUNDING ADMINISTRATION SERVICES FOR MPS' 2025 LEAD SERVICE LINE REPLACEMENT PROJECT.**

Commissioner Durand made a motion to approve Task Order No. 11 with Apex Engineering Group, Inc., in an amount not-to-exceed \$56,257 to complete engineering and funding administration services associated with Moorhead Public Service's 2025 Lead Service Line Replacement Project, contingent upon final legal review by Attorney John Boulger. Commissioner Baker seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Ness, Paulsen, and Thompson. Voting No: None.

10. CUSTOMERS TO BE HEARD/RECOGNITIONS.

General Manager Travis Schmidt thanked Chairperson Thompson for her nine years of service on the Commission, including five years as Chairperson. Thompson recognized new Commissioners Jason Ness and Lisa Borgen. Borgen was appointed by Moorhead Mayor Shelly Carlson to serve as the City Council Representative on the Commission.

Paul Saarion, Moorhead Public Service (MPS) customer and Treasurer for Signature Condos in Moorhead, Minnesota, requested to speak at the meeting and provided the Commissioners with a handout regarding his concerns. Mr. Saarion spoke about MPS' 2024 Fire Protection Facility Charge and the commercial electric meter rates for Signature Condos' irrigation meters.

Chairperson Thompson made a motion to appoint a Customer Concern Working Group to further review Mr. Saarion's concerns, which will consist of Commissioners Baker, Durand, and Paulsen and will work with General Manager Travis Schmidt and any additional individuals that need to be involved with the review. Commissioner Borgen seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Ness, Paulsen, and Thompson. Voting No: None.

11. OLD BUSINESS.

There was no old business to discuss.

12. REPORTS.

City Council.

No report was made.

Public Service Commission.

No report was made.

General Manager's Report.

General Manager Travis Schmidt provided an introduction of the General Manager's Report, which included a notice received from Missouri River Energy Services regarding the annual general verification test performed at MPS' Centennial Generating Station, two national commendations received from American Public Power Association for providing electric restoration efforts in Florida after Hurricane Milton, and information received that Red River Valley Cooperative Power Association's (RRVCPA's) 2025 rates will increase by about 6.8 percent, and RRVCPA's wholesale supplier, Minnkota Power Cooperative, will increase its 2025 rates by about 8.5 percent.

13. APPROVE WATER RATE STUDY PROPOSAL FROM MISSOURI RIVER ENERGY SERVICES.

General Manager Travis Schmidt highlighted the need for a Water Rate Study (Study) in 2025. Finance Division Manager Mark Moilanen explained that a Study is usually done at least every seven years, but with MPS' largest water user closing in 2025, it makes sense to conduct the Study one year earlier to determine the rates for 2026 through 2029. Moilanen also noted that the Fire Hydrant Facility Charge was removed from the 2025 rates, with fire protection costs now included in a flat monthly fee based upon meter size. Schmidt, Moilanen, and Water Distribution Manager Jake Long responded to questions of the Commission. Discussion was held.

Commissioner Borgen made a motion to approve the Water Rate Study Proposal from Missouri River Energy Services. Commissioner Paulsen seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Ness, Paulsen, and Thompson. Voting No: None.

14. CLOSE MEETING FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION.

The meeting was not closed for Executive Session.

15. UPCOMING MEETINGS.

Upcoming meetings of the Moorhead Public Service Commission are scheduled for February 4, 2025, if needed, and February 18, 2025.

16. ADJOURN.

The meeting adjourned at 5:12 PM.

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The minutes herein are approved on this 18th day of February, 2025.

APPROVED BY:



Joel Paulsen
Chairpersonⁱ

ATTEST:



Lisa Borgen
Secretaryⁱ

ⁱ Pursuant to the Bylaws of the Moorhead Public Service Commission adopted January 18, 2022, Article 3, Section 11, states, "The Chairperson and Secretary shall sign, execute, and acknowledge all instruments authorized by the Commission or as are incident to the office. If either the Chairperson or Secretary is unavailable to execute an instrument, the Vice Chairperson may execute the instrument in place of the unavailable officer. Execution of instruments by two officers is required."