

Minutes of the Moorhead Public Service Commission
Hjemkomst Center, Auditorium
Tuesday, May 20, 2025 – 4:30 PM

MEMBERS PRESENT: Paul Baker, Lisa Borgen, Heidi Durand (Interactive Technology—Personal), Matthew Leiseth, Jason Ness, and Joel Paulsen

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

OTHERS PRESENT: General Manager Travis Schmidt, Staff Members Adam Benhardt, Taylor Holte, Jake Long, Kurt McClain, Mark Moilanen, Andrew Nord, Lisa Norstad, Marc Pritchard, Alison Skansgaard, and Aaron Southard; MPS Attorney John Boulger; Assistant City Manager Mike Rietz

1. CALL TO ORDER.

Chairperson Paulsen called the meeting to order at 4:31 PM. A quorum of the following members was present: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Leiseth, Ness, and Paulsen.

2. APPROVE AGENDA.

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

3. APPROVE CONSENT AGENDA.

Commissioner Baker made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Durand seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Leiseth, Ness, and Paulsen. 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.]

***4. APPROVE MINUTES OF APRIL 22, 2025.**

Commissioner Baker made a motion to approve the minutes of April 22, 2025. Commissioner Durand seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Leiseth, Ness, and Paulsen. Voting No: None.

***5. APPROVE BILLS FOR PAYMENT.**

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

***6. ACCEPT PETITION FOR INSTALLATION OF WATER AND ELECTRIC SERVICES FOR PRAIRIE PARKWAY 2ND ADDITION.**

Commissioner Baker made a motion to accept the petition for installation of water and electric services for Lots 2-5, Block 1, and all of Blocks 2 and 3 of Prairie Parkway 2nd Addition, in the city of Moorhead in accordance with Minnesota Statute §429.031, Subdivision 2. Commissioner Durand seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Leiseth, Ness, and Paulsen. Voting No: None.

***7. APPROVE SPECIFICATIONS AND AUTHORIZE ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS FOR THE 2025 LEAD SERVICE LINE REPLACEMENT PROJECT.**

Commissioner Baker made a motion to approve the specifications and authorize advertisement for bids for the 2025 Lead Service Line Replacement Project, contingent upon final legal approval. Commissioner Durand seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Leiseth, Ness, and Paulsen. Voting No: None.

***8. APPROVE SPECIFICATIONS AND AUTHORIZE ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS FOR CONSTRUCTION PHASE OF OZONE GENERATOR AND EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT PROJECT AT MOORHEAD WATER TREATMENT PLANT.**

Commissioner Baker made a motion to approve the specifications and authorize advertisement for bids for the construction phase of the Ozone Generator and Equipment Replacement Project at Moorhead Public Service's Water Treatment Plant, contingent upon final legal approval. Commissioner Durand seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Leiseth, Ness, and Paulsen. Voting No: None.

9. CUSTOMERS TO BE HEARD/RECOGNITIONS.

General Manager Travis Schmidt acknowledged the presence of one Customer to be Heard, Rose Hanson. Chairperson Paulsen invited Ms. Hanson to address the Commission.

Ms. Hanson reported that the recent installation of an Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) water meter at her residence resulted in damage to a portion of her tankless water heater. She detailed the information she has gathered to date and noted that her claim had been denied by Moorhead Public Service's (MPS') contractor. Ms. Hanson requested that MPS investigate the matter further and provide her with a resolution.

Chairperson Paulsen reassured Ms. Hanson that MPS and the Commission were aware of the situation. Paulsen reviewed the roles that MPS and the licensed contractor play regarding this situation. Schmidt provided an overview of the problem and requested that Water Distribution Manager Jake Long present additional details to the Commission. Discussion was held. Following the discussion, Schmidt recommended that the Commission use the Commission's Budget Working Group to discuss the situation and findings. Commissioner Borgen volunteered to replace previous Commissioner Matt Gilbertson on the Budget Working Group. Paulsen stated that MPS will provide a response to Ms. Hanson based on the findings of the Budget Working Group. Discussion was held regarding a licensed plumber installing AMI water meters.

Schmidt recognized Senior Electric Field Technician Tyler Mathison for reaching his 10-year employment milestone.

10. OLD BUSINESS.

There was no old business to discuss.

11. REPORTS.

City Council.

Commissioner Borgen reported that she recently attended Missouri River Energy Services' (MRES') Annual Meeting in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, along with Water Distribution Manager Jake Long. Discussion was held.

Public Service Commission.

No report was made.

General Manager's Report.

General Manager Travis Schmidt provided an introduction to the General Manager's Report, which included the 2025 first quarter Strategic Plan updates, the quarterly dashboard for the first quarter, an update on Minnesota's Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), and the legislative newsletter from MRES. Schmidt provided highlights of MPS' dashboards for the first quarter of 2025. Finance Division Manager Mark Moilanen provided an update on the funding concerns regarding LIHEAP. Discussion was held.

Accept Report on 2024 Conservation Improvement Program (CIP) Summary and 2025 CIP Plan.

Project Engineer Taylor Holte provided an update on the 2024 CIP and CIP plans for 2025. Holte reported that MPS exceeded its CIP spending requirements for 2024. The 2025 CIP plan mirrors the successful strategies of 2024, with an additional emphasis on energy savings programs and rebates designed to enhance the energy efficiency of MPS' residential and business customers. Staff will continue to work closely with MRES to utilize its marketing and program resources to help meet future CIP goals and requirements. Holte responded to questions of the Commission. Discussion was held.

Commissioner Ness made a motion to accept the report on the 2024 Conservation Improvement Program (CIP) and CIP plans for 2025. Commissioner Durand seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Leiseth, Ness, and Paulsen. Voting No: None.

Accept Report on Lead and Copper Rule Revisions Sampling.

Water Plant Manager Marc Pritchard provided an overview of the Lead and Copper Rule Revision and updated the Commission on the new timeline for water sample monitoring, as required by the Minnesota Department of Health. Pritchard also discussed the upcoming addition of orthophosphate to MPS' Water Treatment Plant. Pritchard highlighted the positive impact this addition will have on water quality and the updated water sampling schedule. Discussion was held.

Commissioner Leiseth made a motion to accept the report on the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions and the Lead and Copper Rule Improvements, with a focus on upcoming sampling activities scheduled for 2025. Commissioner Borgen seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Leiseth, Ness, and Paulsen. Voting No: None.

12. APPROVE 2024 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS.

Finance Division Manager Mark Moilanen and Jamie Fay, CPA and partner of Eide Bailly, presented MPS' 2024 Audited Financial Statements and Executive Summary. Fay provided a PowerPoint presentation. Discussion was held.

Commissioner Ness made a motion to approve the 2024 Audited Financial Statements, Executive Summary, and Eide Bailly's Management Letter to the Commission. Commissioner Durand seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Leiseth, Ness, and Paulsen. Voting No: None.

13. AWARD BID FOR ROOF REPLACEMENT AT 415 HIGHWAY 75 NORTH.

Construction Manager Adam Benhardt presented details regarding the bids received for the construction and installation of a new roof on MPS' storage building located at 415 Highway 75 North in Moorhead. MPS collaborated with Sandman Structural Engineers (SSE) to provide engineering services for this project. SSE and MPS staff recommend awarding the bid to Gateway Building Systems.

Commissioner Borgen made a motion to award the bid for replacing the roof at Moorhead Public Service's storage building located at 415 Highway 75 North in Moorhead to Gateway Building Systems, Inc, in the amount of \$164,200, contingent upon final legal approval, as shown on the Bid Tabulation Sheet attached hereto and made a part of these minutes. Commissioner Baker seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Leiseth, Ness, and Paulsen. Voting No: None.

14. APPROVE SUMMER VOLUNTARY WATERING RESTRICTIONS.

Water Plant Manager Marc Pritchard provided an update on summer conservation efforts, including the implementation of voluntary watering restrictions effective May 28, 2025, to September 30, 2025. Pritchard also requested that the Commission authorize General Manager Travis Schmidt to implement further conservation measures, if necessary. Pritchard mentioned that these conservation measures are outlined in MPS' Water Supply Plan, which is on file with regulatory agencies. Pritchard responded to questions of the Commission. Discussion was held.

Commissioner Ness made a motion to approve summer conservation efforts in the form of voluntary watering restrictions, effective May 28, 2025, to September 30, 2025, and give authority to the General Manager to implement further conservation measures, if necessary. Commissioner Durand seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Leiseth, Ness, and Paulsen. Voting No: None.

15. APPOINT MOORHEAD PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION REPRESENTATIVE TO SERVE ON MPS' WELLHEAD PROTECTION TEAM.

Water Plant Manager Marc Pritchard provided an overview of MPS' Wellhead Protection Plan and the need for its 10-year update and amendment process. Pritchard noted that Commission representatives are needed to serve on the Wellhead Protection Team. Pritchard explained that MPS will work with local government units throughout the amendment process and will seek feedback on the overall effectiveness of the plan within Clay County.

Commissioners Durand and Ness volunteered to serve on the Wellhead Protection Team. Pritchard responded to questions of the Commission. Discussion was held.

Commissioner Leiseth made a motion to appoint Commissioners Durand and Ness to serve on the Wellhead Protection Team throughout the update process of the Wellhead Protection Plan, and authorize the General Manager to send letters to local government units requesting them to appoint or approve their own representatives to participate in the update process. Commissioner Borgen seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Leiseth, Ness, and Paulsen. Voting No: None.

16. APPROVE SPONSORSHIP REQUEST FOR MOORHEAD SAUSAGE FEST 2025.

General Manager Travis Schmidt provided information on the sponsorship request for the Moorhead Sausage Fest 2025. Schmidt stated that the event aligns with MPS' sponsorship criteria and is open to the general public. Discussion was held.

Commissioner Borgen made a motion to approve the sponsorship request for Moorhead Sausage Fest 2025 in the amount of \$1,500. Commissioner Baker seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Leiseth, Ness, and Paulsen. Voting No: None.

17. APPROVE SPONSORSHIP REQUEST FROM FRED'S DISSONANCE FOR MOORHEAD JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION.

General Manager Travis Schmidt provided information on the sponsorship request from Fred's Dissonance for the Moorhead Juneteenth Celebration. Schmidt stated that the event aligns with MPS' sponsorship criteria and is open to the general public. Discussion was held.

Commissioner Borgen made a motion to approve the sponsorship request from Fred's Dissonance for the Moorhead Juneteenth Celebration in the amount of \$2,500. Commissioner Ness seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Leiseth, Ness, and Paulsen. Voting No: None.

18. CLOSE MEETING FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION.

Chairperson Paulsen stated that the meeting will be closed for executive session as permitted by Minnesota Statutes, Section 13D.05, subdivision 3(c), to discuss a possible property transaction involving Parcel No. 10.032.1000 in Clay County, Minnesota.

Commissioner Baker made a motion to close the meeting for executive session. Commissioner Ness seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Leiseth, Ness, and Paulsen. Voting No: None.

THE MEETING CLOSED FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 5:45 PM.

PRESENT IN CLOSED SESSION WERE: COMMISSIONERS PAUL BAKER, LISA BORGEN, HEIDI DURAND, MATTHEW LEISETH, JASON NESS, AND JOEL PAULSEN; GENERAL MANAGER TRAVIS SCHMIDT; STAFF MEMBERS JAKE LONG, MARK MOILANEN, AND MARC PRITCHARD; MPS ATTORNEY JOHN BOULGER.

Commissioner Leiseth made a motion to adjourn executive session. Commissioner Borgen seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 6-0 vote. Voting Yes: Baker, Borgen, Durand, Leiseth, Ness, and Paulsen. Voting No: None.

[No action was taken in closed session; therefore, a motion was not presented in open session.]

19. UPCOMING MEETINGS.

Upcoming meetings of the Moorhead Public Service Commission are scheduled for June 17, 2025, and July 1, 2025 (if needed).

20. ADJOURN.

The meeting adjourned at 6:24 PM.

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The minutes herein are approved on this 3rd day of June, 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."