



City of Duluth

411 West First Street
Duluth, Minnesota 55802

Minutes - Final

Duluth Public Utilities Commission.

Tuesday, January 17, 2023

5:15 PM

Council Chambers, City Hall, 411 West First Street

CALL TO ORDER

President Ryan called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Chris Adatte, Andrea Crouse, Councilor Noah Hobbs, Steve Lipinski, Councilor Mike Mayou, Carrie Ryan

Members Absent: Councilor Terese Tomanek

Staff Present: Cyndi Falconer, Leanna Gilbert, Chris Ostern, Eric Shaffer, Rebecca St. George

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

No comments were made at this time.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[DPUC098](#) November 15, 2022 DPUC meeting minutes draft

Indexes:

Attachments: [11152022 DPUC meeting minutes draft](#)

Commissioner Lipinski motioned to approve the November 15, 2022 meeting minutes, and the motion was approved by all present.

NEW BUSINESS

Woodland Booster Station Pre-design Study

Eric Shaffer gave a brief overview of the Woodland Booster Station study and answered questions from commissioners. He asked for support and recommendation from the Commission to move forward with the design by MSA, since they have done all of our other booster station designs. After some discussion, President Ryan motioned to recommend having MSA proceed with the final design, and the motion was approved by all present.

Lead services replacement update

[DPUC099](#) Proposed bills for lead service replacement grant programs

Indexes:

Attachments: [SF0030-0 23-01376 Senate bill for lead service line replacement and line mapping grant programs](#)
[HF0024-0 House bill for lead service line replacement and line mapping grant program](#)

Eric Shaffer reported that we are moving forward with lead removal. The four consultants are working on plans for projects with 160 to 200 services each in selected neighborhoods. City staff is replacing water meters throughout the city and identifying more lead services. We are trying to pick out more neighborhoods for future projects. We originally estimated 5,000 lead services at \$10,000 each for replacement, so we were going for \$10M in projects for five years with Federal funding through the State. Two bills have been introduced from the State that would provide additional funding and extend the program out to 2033. When we bid out lead replacement projects last year, the price per service averaged \$16,000. City staff has determined that there are just under 5,000 lead services on the public side. On the private side, we are currently up to 6,500 services, but we estimate that this number will probably go up to 8,000. 8,000 services at \$16,000 each is \$128M. The project is twice as big as we had originally thought. Staff is discussing offering water testing in the future. If the State comes through with this funding, that will be a really good thing for the City. We are still waiting for the State to put through legislation so that we can get the Federal funding that we applied for and were awarded through the PFA. President Ryan suggested that the Commission send a letter in support of this legislation.

President Ryan said that the pitcher filter is not really adequate for a family of five and asked staff to look into further options. Staff will continue to look into other options as requested. About 1,200 filters have been distributed so far.

Eric Shaffer mentioned that 20 of 180 property owners in one of the neighborhoods where we are planning a lead service removal project will not respond to the consultant. Attorneys are still working on the ordinance requiring compliance with lead service replacement if the City provides the funding. That should be ready for review at the next meeting.

Election of officers

Commissioner Crouse nominated Commissioner Ryan to continue as President. Commissioner Ryan nominated Commissioner Adatte to continue as Vice President. All present voted to approve Commissioner Ryan as President and Commissioner Adatte as Vice President.

UPDATES FROM STAFF

Eric Shaffer reported that there were 144 water main breaks last year. He also talked about stormwater billing for residential customers. There was some discussion about various billing methods and the technology and staffing needed. Staff will look into other solutions as requested.

COMMISSIONER QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

Commissioner Lipinski asked for a report on the Capacity, Management, Operations & Maintenance (CMOM) program, which is for maintenance of the sanitary sewer system. Staff will put that on the next meeting agenda.

UPCOMING COUNCIL ACTIONS

Eric Shaffer mentioned the upcoming resolution for design of the Woodland Booster Station. There are quite a few resolutions for Public Works & Utilities on the upcoming City Council agenda, but no specific resolutions were mentioned.

PREVIEW OF UPCOMING BUSINESS

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 21, 2023 at 5:15 p.m. Staff should have a draft lead service replacement ordinance for the Commission to review and will also give a report on the CMOM program as requested. Staff will draft a letter supporting State legislation to release the Federal funding for the Commission to review as requested.

KNOWN ABSENCES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

President Ryan and Vice President Adatte will not be able to attend the February 21, 2023 meeting. Commissioner Crouse will be chair for that meeting if there is a quorum.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:13 p.m.