

DULUTH PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
March 17, 2015

Members Present: Councilor Zack Filipovich, Councilor Jennifer Julsrud, Rob Prusak, Jim Ramnes, Linda Sellner, Councilor Joel Sipress, Jason Thorsell

Staff Present: Bob Asleson, Jim Benning, Liz Bieter, Leanna Gilbert, Eric Shaffer, Glenn Strid

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:15 p.m. by President Prusak.

Public hearing on wastewater rates

The Commission held a public hearing on sanitary rate resolution 15PUC-001. No one from the public was present to speak. After a brief summary of the resolution and the purpose for the changes, the hearing was closed and the Commission moved on to the next hearing.

Public hearing on service fees

The Commission held a public hearing on fee resolution 15PUC-002. No one from the public was present to speak. After a brief summary of the resolution and its purpose, the hearing was closed and the Commission moved on to the regular meeting.

Approval of previous meeting minutes

Old business:

15PUC-001 - RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE CUSTOMER CHARGE AND USER CHARGES FOR THE CITY'S WASTEWATER FACILITIES EFFECTIVE WITH METER READINGS AFTER MAY 1, 2015; SUPERSEDING ALL PRIOR INCONSISTENT OR CONFLICTING RATES.

Resolution 15PUC-001 was approved unanimously.

15PUC-002 - RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING FEES FOR VARIOUS UTILITY-RELATED SERVICES.

After a few questions about the various fees and some discussion, the Commission voted unanimously to approve resolution 15PUC-002.

New business:

15PUC-003 - RESOLUTION APPROVING THE 2015 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR THE NATURAL GAS SYSTEM.

Eric Shaffer explained this plan at the previous meeting. After some discussion, resolution 15PUC-003 passed 6-1 (Sellner).

15PUC-004 - RESOLUTION AMENDING ARTICLE V SECTION 1 OF THE BYLAWS PERTAINING TO OFFICERS.

There was not enough notice to vote on 15PUC-004 at this meeting, but commissioners discussed its purpose. The Commission will vote on the resolution at the April meeting.

Conservation programs

Liz Bieter provided information on available conservation programs as requested at the previous meeting. She gave a brief summary of the information and answered questions from commissioners.

Updates from staff

Jim Benning reported that there are still frozen services. There were three more yesterday. Utility crews have been working on a lot of frozen storm sewers and culverts. We are continuing with the termination of the consent decree.

Liz Bieter gave an update on Georgetown. We are targeting the Morgan Park neighborhood for increasing conservation. There are weekly discussions to make plans.

Upcoming Council actions

President Prusak is up for reappointment. There are also resolutions for the street preservation project which doesn't involve any utilities, the CEE agreement, the extension of the agreement with PFA for Riverside, the award of the gas blanket project to Hanco Utilities, and some easements and vacations.

Commissioner questions or comments

President Prusak mentioned the City Council summer break. He is concerned that it may affect the DPUC June meeting. The councilors will check their schedules.

Commissioner Sellner requested information about the definition of impervious surface in the ordinance on the City Council agenda. Eric Shaffer stated that the definition in the ordinance is the same as the MPCA definition. This is just to update Chapter 43 of the City Code, which was missed when the UDC was updated.

Preview of upcoming business

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 21, 2015, at 5:15 p.m. in City Council Chambers. There will be a resolution to amend the bylaws regarding election of officers.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:08 p.m.