

DULUTH PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
January 20, 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, Leanna Gilbert, Howard Jacobson, Tom Johnson, Chris Kleist, Eric Shaffer, Glenn Strid

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

Approval of previous meeting minutes

Old business:

14PUC-004 - RESOLUTION OF THE DULUTH PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION RECOMMENDING THAT THE CITY OF DULUTH ADOPT A NO-LOSS POLICY FOR REMAINING WETLANDS WITHIN CITY BOUNDARIES.

Commissioner Sellner explained the intent of resolution 14PUC-004. Commissioners and staff discussed whether a policy regarding wetlands was in the purview of the Commission. Commissioner Julsrud motioned to remove 14PUC-004 from the agenda. The motion carried 6-1.

New business:

Repayment to MN Power

After the Hibbard steam plant put in a well, there was no way for the City to measure their sewage. This resulted in overcharging for sewage in the amount of approximately \$130,000, so we are repaying them.

Election of officers

Commissioner Julsrud motioned to re-elect Rob Prusak for President and Jim Ramnes for Vice President. Their re-election was approved unanimously.

Updates from staff

Chris Kleist gave a brief presentation on stormwater billing for residential and non-residential customers and answered questions from commissioners.

Upcoming Council actions

Jim Benning mentioned an ordinance on the upcoming agenda that would update Chapter 48 of the City code, which is the water and gas section.

Commissioner Julsrud stated that she is the Public Works & Utilities chair this year.

Commissioner questions or comments

Commissioner Sipress mentioned the recent increase in service fees. He is concerned that the fees might keep residents from getting preventative maintenance and suggested providing incentives.

Commissioner Julsrud said that she would also be interested in that and added that she would like to see opportunities for low-cost comprehensive energy audits as well.

Commissioner Sellner commented that the Commission was a little lax about parliamentary procedure in regards to the agenda tonight and requested Bob Asleson research the removal of resolutions from the agenda and the discussion of resolutions prior to putting them to a vote.

President Prusak stated that his first term expires on March 31st and that he would appreciate the councilors' support of his re-appointment.

Commissioner Julsrud noted that when the Commission was established, it was decided that it should be structured and professional, but commissioners don't need to hold each other's feet to the fire regarding Robert's Rules.

Preview of upcoming business

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 17, 2015, at 5:15 p.m. in City Council Chambers. Eric Shaffer will present the 5-year natural gas capital plan at an upcoming meeting.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m.