

DULUTH PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
April 16, 2013

Members Present: Councilor Sharla Gardner, Robert Prusak, Linda Sellner, Councilor Jim Stauber

Members Absent: Councilor Jennifer Julsrud, Jason Thorsell

Staff Present: Bob Asleson, Jim Benning, Alisa DeRider, Leanna Gilbert, Eric Shaffer, Glenn Strid

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:24 p.m. by President Sellner.

Note: This was not an official meeting as there was no quorum.

New business:

Fixed rate increase only scenario

Commissioner Julsrud had requested that staff calculate the increase if only applied to the fixed rates. Staff does not have this information ready yet.

Commissioner City e-mail accounts

The City recently switched to Outlook, so commissioners will need to go to a different website to check their City e-mail accounts. Leanna Gilbert will send out an e-mail with the new website address.

2013 DPUC work plan

The commission has already spent a lot of time discussing the water utility. They have also spent a little time on the sanitary sewer utility and are currently discussing the natural gas utility. The next topic could be the stormwater utility, since there are some new regulations that the City will need to comply with.

Updates from staff

See upcoming Council actions.

Upcoming Council actions

The West Duluth Reservoir surge tank is being awarded to Veit at approximately \$500K. This will be paid for with cash. It should be built this summer. The reservoir roof replacement will be bid this fall for construction next summer.

Phase IV of the Lakewalk has been awarded to Northland. They also have Phase V, which is the tunnel. That resolution should be on the next agenda.

Cascade Park flood related work was awarded to Hovland for approximately \$75K.

Hanco Utilities was awarded the gas blanket contract for about \$650K. That includes new services and miscellaneous repairs.

There is a resolution for a swap of sanitary sewer lines with WLSSD.

There is a street lighting utility resolution for the purchase of LED lights for ten locations throughout the city. This utility does not currently fall under the authority of this commission. That would be a Council decision by ordinance. The street lighting utility is an enterprise fund similar to the rest of the utilities.

There is a resolution to award wireless communication contract negotiation to Bench Strength. We contract with wireless companies and allow them to put antennas on our water towers, with the revenues going to the water utility. This consulting firm would negotiate with the wireless companies for a cut of any additional revenues over 20%. There was some discussion of current contracts and the process of negotiating these contracts with various companies.

MNDOT is replacing the culvert on Keene Creek on Grand Avenue. As part of that replacement, the water main and sewer line need to be replaced. We are taking this opportunity to put in a larger plastic water pipe. We have an agreement that when work is done on a MNDOT road, we will pay for the upgrade to the utilities. The estimated cost to the utilities is \$101K.

Commissioner Gardner reported that the Council will be interviewing two DPUC applicants on Monday. Two others will be interviewed in May. The new commissioner should be on board prior to the regular May meeting.

Commissioner questions or comments

President Sellner mentioned a couple points that she had read about in Robert's Rules of Order. There was some discussion about reconsideration of motions and secondary motions.

Commissioner Gardner inquired about proper procedure if commissioners are unable to attend meetings. It was decided that commissioners should contact Leanna Gilbert, who would then let everyone know if there would not be a quorum. President Sellner could then decide whether a meeting should be canceled. Per ordinance, a quorum is five commissioners, and two of them must be councilors.

Preview of upcoming business

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 21, 2013, at 5:15 p.m. in City Council Chambers.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.