

The Owatonna Public Utilities Commission met in regular session in the Commission Room. Present were Commissioners Schreiner, Truelson and Stansberry. Absent were Commissioners Emanuelson and Mayhew. Also present were General Manager Shurts; City Administrator Busse; Director, Financial & Administrative Services Bruno; Director, Gas, Water & Power Production Green; Manager, Energy Management & External Relations Warehime; Manager, HR, Safety, Risk & Loss Control Madson; Supervisor, Engineering & Substation Services Johnson; Supervisor, Gas, Water, Buildings & Grounds Bendorf; and Executive/HR Assistant Schmoll. Special guests included Violet Paleczny, OPU employee; Dave Ihrke, nominated next OPU Commissioner; Mayor Tom Kuntz; and Roland Truelson, OPU customer and brother to Commissioner Truelson.

Commissioner Truelson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes

The Minutes from the regular meeting of March 25, 2008 were presented to the Commission. Commissioner Truelson moved to accept the Minutes as presented. Commissioner Stansberry seconded the motion. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion passed.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee – Commissioner Truelson and Director, Financial & Administrative Services Bruno reported the Finance Committee met, discussed and approved the balance sheet, investments, disbursements, and three work orders additions. One was for the over-run of the HVAC system for Garage #1; one for increased material costs for purchasing metering transformers, and one for installation of replacement gas service lines. General Manager Shurts noted, even though the replacement of gas service lines ran over, we were considerably under budget on the construction of new gas service lines.

Personnel Committee – The Personnel Committee did not meet.

Mayor Kuntz expressed his thanks to Raymond Truelson for his 10 years on the Commission, welcomed Dave Ihrke as the next Commissioner and thanked staff for all their work.

City Administrator Report

City Administrator Busse reported there were several citizens at the last Council meeting for the storm sewer discussion. She noted the improvements made to the storm sewer system will benefit the whole community. To cover the costs of the improvements, the storm water fee will be increased and will be listed on next year's taxes as a separate line item. The Engineering Department is working on making sure they have considered all resources and have researched and documented all options. This may slow down the improvements, but it will ensure the investment is the very best choice. Ms. Busse thanked Mr. Shurts for OPU's work on the service territory issue for the Aquatic Center. Ms. Busse also thanked Commissioner Truelson for his years on the OPU Commission and stated she is looking forward to working with him on the Charter Commission.

Contributed Services

The Contributed Services report as of March 31, 2008 was presented to the Commission. Mr. Shurts distributed and discussed two graphs regarding Contributed Services. The Commission signed the report.

General Manager/Staff Report

Supervisor, Engineering & Substation Services Johnson distributed and discussed graphs detailing electrical outages in 2007. He noted OPU's reliability rating is 99.997% and stated most of the outages were caused by squirrels.

Supervisor, Gas, Water, Buildings & Grounds Bendorf distributed and discussed graphs detailing water main breaks and gas main hits. He noted OPU has started meeting annually with contractors and that has helped to reduce the gas main hits. Commissioner Truelson inquired on the number of people attending the meeting, as well as if the contractors are charged if they hit a gas line. Mr. Bendorf replied there are about 200 people who attend the meeting and yes, the contractors are required to reimburse OPU for labor and materials used to fix the hit.

Director, Gas, Water & Power Production Green distributed and discussed a weekly NYMAX chart detailing the natural gas prices since 2004. He noted, the price of natural gas has risen significantly. Mr. Green recapped OPU's hedging program and discussed the results of the program since 2004. He noted if it were not for our hedging program, currently OPU would be paying between 15-20% more for gas than we are.

Manager, Energy Management & External Relations Warehime reported staff and SMMPA met with Apogee, Viracon's parent company, to discuss ways for all Apogee companies, including Viracon, to become more energy efficient.

Manager, HR, Safety, Risk & Loss Control Madson discussed OPU's disconnect procedures in great detail. Mr. Shurts added, the state legislature is making it more difficult for utilities to shut off residences and to collect past due bills.

Commission Roundtable/Audience Comments

Roland Truelson – I hear a lot of good things about the utilities. Keep up the good work.

Commissioner Stansberry – Thanks to Roger for getting the Energy Star booklets. They were given out to 2-5th graders.

Commissioner Schreiner – Thanks for Raymond for his many years on the Commission. Mr. Truelson is Mr. Owatonna when it comes to City Government.

Commissioner Truelson - The staff at OPU can be summed up with one word...Professionalism. That word fits the best for everyone here. Special thanks to Marge and Tammy for all their work on the special events like retirement parties and the recognition party. Thanks to Mayor Kuntz for all his support and work. Steve's talent is greatly appreciated. OPU has a lot of good people and the people in the community appreciate that, as well. Thanks for the 10 memorable years.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Commissioner Truelson moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Stansberry seconded the motion. All Commissioners voting Aye, the meeting adjourned at 5:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Schmoll
Executive/HR Assistant