

The Owatonna Public Utilities Commission met in regular session via Microsoft Teams. Present were Commissioners Kottke, Doyal, Rossi, Keilman and Johnson. Also present were General Manager Warehime; City Administrator Busse; Director, Engineering Johnson; Director, Finance & Administration Olson; Manager, Human Resources Madson; Manager, Electric Operations Deering; Executive, Communication & Administration Coordinator Schmoll; and Energy Conservation/Key Account Officer Hendricks.

President Kottke welcomed new Commissioner, Jay Johnson, to the Commission and thanked him for agreeing to serve.

Minutes

The Minutes from the regular meeting of April 28, 2020 were presented to the Commission. Commissioner Doyal moved to approve the Minutes as presented. Commissioner Rossi seconded the motion. On roll-call, Commissioners Kottke, Rossi, Doyal and Johnson voted Aye, the motion passed.

Oath of office for New Commissioner

City Administrator Busse administered the Oath of Office to new Commissioner Jay Johnson.

Election of Officers

A slate of officers with Commissioner Doyal as President and Commissioner Keilman as Vice President was presented to the Commission. In a roll-call, Commissioners Kottke, Rossi, Doyal and Johnson voted Aye. President Doyal took over the meeting.

Commissioners Rossi and Keilman will serve on the Personnel Committee with President Doyal as an ex-officio member. Commissioners Kottke and Johnson will serve on the Finance Committee with President Doyal as an ex-officio member.

Committee Reports

Finance Committee – Commissioner Doyal reported the Finance Committee met, reviewed and approved Vouchers totaling \$5,676,705.15. Mr. Doyal also reported one work order addition was approved.

Personnel Committee – Commissioner Rossi reported the Personnel Committee met and received a staffing update. He reported there are more openings than ever before due to resignations, retirements and hiring from within. The Committee received an update on what OPU is doing to keep employees and customers safe during COVID. Also, we have one OSHA recordable incident due to the employee losing time from work.

City Administrator's Report

City Administrator Busse reported development is still moving forward and the Council recently passed a TIF district or some affordable housing along Cherry St. called Eastgate. The Council further approved the purchase of a pumper truck. Street projects are moving forward but it looks like Bridge St. will be delayed. Ms. Busse further discussed the efforts of the City in regards to COVID related items, impacts on revenue and furloughed employees.

Commissioner Rossi expressed his pleasure in seeing bike lanes being incorporated around town.

Commissioner Keilman joined the meeting.

Small Demand Customer Rate Relief

Energy Conservation/Key Account Officer Hendricks presented to the Commission regarding the development of a Small Demand Customer Rate Relief policy. He noted the policy was developed to help customers whose business operations have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The policy will allow these businesses to switch from an EM05 rate to an EC99 rate which would reduce their utility bills significantly. After discussion, Commissioner Kottke moved to approve the Small Demand Customer Rate Relief policy as presented. Commissioner Keilman seconded the motion. By roll-call, Commissioners Rossi, Keilman, Kottke, Johnson and Doyal voted Aye. The motion passed.

Contributed Services

The Contributed Services report as of April 30, 2020 was presented to the Commission. Commissioner Kottke moved to approve the Contributed Services report. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. By roll-call, Commissioners Rossi, Keilman, Kottke, Johnson and Doyal voted Aye. The motion passed.

Operations/Scorecard

There was not anything significant to point out on the Scorecard.

General Manager/Staff Report

General Manager Warehime reported the West Owatonna Substation expansion project is mostly complete other than a few punch list items.

Mr. Warehime noted the AMI project is moving forward and even though we are a little behind, we are looking to get started in July. Mr. Warehime further updated the Commission on steps being taken with customers in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. He noted, disconnections as well as late payment fees called "forfeited discounts" have been suspended since we closed the doors in March. Since that time, late payment fees totaling approximately \$32,000 have not been charged to customers. He further noted, we are considering reinstating these fees as well as disconnections in July and asked the Commission for their input. The Commissioners agreed with the thought process of Management. This item will be revisited at the June Commission meeting.

Commission Roundtable

Commissioner Kottke expressed his appreciation for all their working during these unprecedented times and for coming up with ideas to help out our customers while still keeping OPU on stable ground. Mr. Kottke further inquired on the status of the Jaguar project. Director, Engineering Johnson replied the project is on track to be completed this year. The downtown area, however, may be an issue, but the residential areas should be complete.

Commissioner Johnson expressed how he is looking forward to working with the Commission and learning more about OPU and how they work with customers.

Commissioner Doyal welcomed Commissioner Johnson and thanked the other Commissioners for their agreements to the committee assignments.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Commissioner Kottke moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Rossi seconded the motion. All Commissioners voting Aye, the meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Schmoll
Executive, Communications & Administration Coordinator