

The Owatonna Public Utilities Commission met in regular session in the Morehouse Conference Room at the Owatonna Public Utilities. Present were Commissioners Zirngible, Rossi, Doyal, Johnson and Vetter. Also present were General Manager Warehime; City Administrator Busse; Director, Finance & Administration Olson; Director, Engineering & Field Operations Fenstermacher; Director, Information Technology & Metering Baum; Manager, Facilities & Gas/Water Operations Prokopec; Manager, Human Resources Madson; Supervisor, Accounting Linders; Executive, Communications & Administration Coordinator Schmoll; Key Account & Energy Conservation Officer Hendricks; Accountant Lori Jerpbak; Accounting Specialist Shanda Meier and Associate Engineer Caden Sorenson. Also present was Councilmember Dan Boeke.

President Zirngible opened the meeting by leading the Pledge of Allegiance. He then asked for approval of the agenda and consent agenda items. The consent agenda items included the minutes from the May 23, 2023 OPU Commission meeting and the Contributed Services report as of May 31, 2023. Commissioner Rossi moved to approve the agenda and consent agenda. Commissioner Doyal seconded the motion. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion passed.

Committee Reports

Personnel Committee – Commissioner Rossi reported the Personnel Committee did not meet in person but received a staffing update. He noted, Paden Forester was hired as a meter serviceworker and Caden Sorenson was hired as the associate engineer. Interviews continue for the electric design project coordinator.

Finance Committee – Commissioner Doyal reported the Finance Committee met, reviewed, and approved Vouchers totaling \$5,757,094.16. He further reported several work orders were closed in June at 5% below budget. The Committee was informed there will be some work orders coming in with overages due to factors out of our control. More information will be coming forward on those work orders.

City Administrator's Report

City Administrator Busse gave an update on the City's comprehensive planning process. She noted, more information will be coming. Once complete, the plan will guide the City as the town grows. She further reported a part-time IT person has been hired, the park foreman and the street maintenance worker lead positions were filled with internal candidates and recruiting continues for the assistant city engineer. In conclusion, City Administrator Busse gave an update on the expansion project of the wastewater treatment plant and the process for the City of Medford to connect to that system.

General Manager/Staff Report

Director, Information Technology & Metering Baum presented the Information Technology's roadmap to the Commission. He noted the roadmap is instrumental in planning and budgeting; provides clarity and vision; assists in prioritizing and organization; and improves communication & understanding of all OPU's systems and future needs. Mr. Baum frequently discusses IT topics with the Rochester and Austin Utilities especially in the areas of analytics, staffing and tips and tricks. Commissioner Zirngible asked for an update on the budgeted IT items for 2023. Mr. Baum replied, there have been some issues with supply chain and internal HVAC systems that are causing delays.

General Manager Warehime discussed the OPU Scorecard in detail with the Commission. Director, Engineering & Field Services Fenstermacher provided additional details in the electric graphs.

Commissioner Roundtable

Commissioner Vetter asked what OPU does to help keep the electric peak down and how it measures the effectiveness of their efforts. General Manager Warehime discussed the various ways OPU uses to help control electrical usage during peak times including curtailing our central water works system, using residential load management units to cycle central air conditioning, issuing Peak Alerts to enlist the community in reducing their electric usage and calling on a few of our larger industrial customers to curtail their energy use. General Manager Warehime will put together some scenarios related to the pricing versus peak. Director, Finance & Administration Olson noted, changes are being proposed to the Energy Management program and will be presented to the Commission at a later date.

Audience Comments

City Councilmember Dan Boeke was present and asked for clarification on some numbers he received recently in a report. General Manager Warehime will follow-up with him.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at 5:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Schmoll
Executive, Communications and Administration Coordinator