

The Owatonna Public Utilities Commission met in regular session in the Morehouse Conference Room. Present were Commissioners Cosens, Stansberry, Simon and Rossi. Absent was Commissioner Kottke. Also present were General Manager Fritsch; City Administrator Busse; Chief Financial Officer Fondell; Director, Engineering Johnson; Director, Operations & External Relations Warehime; Manager, Human Resources Madson; Supervisor, Customer Care Heimerman; Supervisor, Operations/Buildings & Grounds Krogh; Supervisor, Meter Services Pelot; Executive, HR & Administration Coordinator Schmoll; Electric Engineer Dave Olson; Gas Engineer Jon Blough; Water Design Engineer Brian Clausen; Water Works Operators Myron Volker and Roger Noble; Accountant LaVonne Sedivy; and Accounting Specialist Tammi Brase. Other guests included customer, Roger Wacek.

Commissioner Simon led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes

The Minutes from the rescheduled meeting of September 20, 2016 were presented to the Commission. Commissioner Rossi moved to approve the Minutes as presented. Commissioner Simon seconded the motion. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion passed.

Committee Reports

Personnel Committee – Commissioner Stansberry reported the Personnel Committee met twice since the last Commission meeting. He noted, they discussed the SCADA automation project and the personnel involved; management compensation; general union negotiations, the loss of a couple linemen, a progressive discipline plan and the general manager's review process.

Finance Committee – Commissioner Simon reported the Finance Committee met, reviewed and approved Vouchers totaling \$5,773,626.73.

City Administrators Report

City Administrator Busse reported the City is winding up their budget process and will be having meetings to address their capital improvement plan and a 10-year outlook. She further reported the City is wrapping up from the flood. Debris cleanup went very well and Mrs. Busse thanked the City, OPU and Mike Johnson for all their efforts. The Governor has asked for a Presidential Declaration of Disaster which could potentially help the City and individual homeowners with some relief. Commissioner Cosens inquired about road repair projects. City Administrator Busse replied, those will be wrapping up soon. Commissioner Cosens further inquired about the sand bar by the Morehouse Park dam. City Administrator Busse noted once the ground is frozen equipment will be brought in to get that cleaned up.

Tree Trimming Bid

The attached bid tabulation was presented to the Commission. Chief Financial Officer Fondell reported we went out for bids for tree trimming services, however, we would not need to because tree trimming is considered a service. Director, Operations & External Relations Warehime reported apparent low bidder is Carr's Tree Service. We have had Carr's for the last several years and we have been happy with their work. He further noted the contract is for two years with the option of a third year. The price is for two years. Staff's recommendation is to award the bid to the low bidder, Carr's Tree Service in the amount of \$613,392.39. After discussion, Commissioner Stansberry moved to award the bid to the apparent low bidder, Carr's Tree Service, Inc. in the amount of \$613,392.39. Commissioner Simon seconded the motion. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion passed.

Contributed Services

The Contributed Services report as of September 30, 2016 was presented to the Commission. The Commission signed the report.

Operations/Scorecard

Staff updated the Commission on changes to the September scorecard.

Director, Engineer Johnson; Gas Engineer Jon Blough and Water Design Engineer Brian Clausen reported to the Commission on the health of OPU's electric, water and natural gas systems. They each gave a brief description of the system including the health of the system, 2016 operations and maintenance costs and projects; 2017 proposed operations and maintenance costs and projects; and, long term issues and concerns.

General Manager/Staff Reports

Supervisor, Customer Service Heimerman proposed new office hours to the Commission and asked for their feedback. The proposed hours would be 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays; 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. on Thursdays; and, 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. on Fridays. She noted she has been tracking call volumes and noted between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. on Thursday nights they are averaging 2 calls. Walk-in customers are at very low levels, as well. After discussion, the Commission agreed to the proposed hours and asked Mrs. Heimerman to continue to evaluate the needs of the customer, as well as the employees.

General Manager Fritsch noted OPU received a Top Project award from Finance & Commerce for the power plant repurposing. He noted he and Supervisor, Substations & Generation Deering accepted the award on behalf of OPU.

General Manager Fritsch discussed the Progressive Discipline Program with the Commission noting the program focusses more on coaching and counseling before discipline. The program will provide supervisors will a tool to ensure each situation is handled consistently and fairly. Mr. Fritsch will provide copies to the Commission once the program is completed.

Chief Financial Officer Fondell reminded the Commission of the special budget meeting coming up next week. She noted the proposed budget will be sent to the Commissioners the next day.

Commission Roundtable

President Cosens congratulated OPU on the many awards they have received. He noted the Commission is proud of the people who make these awards possible. He further thanked the crews for all their hard work.

Audience Comments

Customer, Roger Wacek, 646 E. Vine St., read a letter he wrote to the Editor of the newspaper on Health Insurance Costs and their effect on every aspect of life.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Commissioner Simon moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Rossi seconded the motion. All Commissioners voting Aye, the meeting adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Schmoll
Executive, HR & Administration Coordinator

BID TABULATION

Project: Tree Trimming

Project #: OELE17E16

Date/Time of Opening: 10/21/16, 1:00 p.m.

Budget #: 0550
Budget Amt: \$267,030.00

Project Amt: \$267,030.00
Est. Budget \$267,030.00

Portion:
Acct. Number: 1-40-59302-0000

Vendor	Bid Security	Signed Contract	Bid Amount (2017 & 2018 Combined)
Asplundh Tree Expert Co.	Yes	Yes	\$877,306.95
Carr's Tree Service, Inc.	Yes	Yes	\$613,392.39 **
Wright Tree Service	Yes	Yes	\$727,351.38

** - Apparent Low Bidder

Bidders List

Project: Tree Trimming

List of Firm Furnished Bid Documents:

**Carr's Tree Service
Wright Tree Service
Asplundh Tree Expert Co.**

List of Ineligible Bidders:

None