

The Owatonna Public Utilities Commission met in regular session in the Morehouse Conference Room at the Owatonna Public Utilities. Present were Commissioners Rossi, Doyal and Keilman. Absent were Commissioners Kottke and Simon. Also present were General Manager Warehime; Chief Financial Officer Fondell; Director, Engineering Johnson; Manager, Human Resources Madson; Supervisor, Substation & Generation Deering; Executive, Communications & Administration Coordinator Schmoll; and Energy Conservation/Key Accounts Officer Hendricks. Other guests included Electric Engineer, Dave Olson; Water Design Engineering, Brian Clausen; Gas Design Engineer, Josh Prokopec; Electric Engineering Technician, TJ Kalis; and customers Mike Brooks and Roger Wacek.

Commissioner Rossi led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Minutes**

The Minutes from the regular meeting of September 24, 2019 were presented to the Commission. Commissioner Keilman moved to approve the Minutes. Commissioner Doyal seconded the motion. All Commissioners voting Aye, the motion passed.

### **Committee Reports**

Personnel Committee – Commissioner Rossi reported Personnel Committee met and received a staffing update. The position of Gas/Water Engineering Technician is still open and being actively recruited. Mr. Rossi further reported the Committee had a discussion surrounding succession planning and discussed OPU's plans and processes around it.

Finance Committee – Commissioner Doyal reported the Finance Committee met, reviewed and approved Vouchers totaling \$3,868,507.31. He further reported one unbudgeted work order in the amount of \$131,000 was presented for purchasing regulators and meter bars sooner. Historically, these have been ordered in January. The lead time on delivery is getting longer making it harder to get the work done in a timely manner. The meter sets will come pre-assembled which will help with installation time, as well. Going forward, these materials will be budgeted for and ordered for the upcoming year.

### **City Administrator's Report**

City Administrator Busse was not in attendance.

### **System Health Reports**

Electric Engineer Dave Olson, Water Design Engineer Brian Clausen and Gas Design Engineer Josh Prokopec presented system health reports for each respective utility to the Commission. Highlights in the electric utility include the upgrading to LED street lights, the ongoing conduit install with Jaguar Communications, service territory expansion, substation addition and the conclusion of the fiber ring.

Water projects include installing pump station at Tower 5, installing 700' feet of 6" main along Hoffman Drive, and installing pressure relief valves. In 2020 work will focus on the installation of 5,400' of 16" looped feeder main on 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue to accommodate the Costco warehouse.

Natural gas projects include the ongoing 5 to 50 lb. conversion, gas modeling which includes replacing steel mains that have nuisance leaks on them, and the 6" gas main extension to the area by the Costco warehouse.

**Contributed Services**

The Contributed Services report as of September 30, 2019 was presented to the Commission. The Commission signed the report.

**Operations/Scorecard**

There were not any significant changes that needed discussion.

**General Manager/Staff Report**

Chief Financial Officer Fondell reported she was in the final stages of developing the draft budget. She further noted the preliminary rate changes announced at the last meeting will likely stand.

Mr. Warehime reported the work has been completed on integrating the service territory purchased from Steele Waseca into our system. It was a complicated project with several departments being involved so a celebration was conducted over the lunch time today.

Energy Conservation/Key Accounts Officer Hendricks discussed the most recent rate study with the Commission.

Manager, Human Resources Madson updated the Commission on the status of the annual employee engagement survey. She noted, 75% of the employees have completed the survey. The deadline is November 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Audience Comments**

Customer, Mike Brooks, expressed an interest in knowing where OPU stands on electric vehicles. Members of OPU's electric vehicle team will reach out Mr. Brooks for further discussions.

Customer, Roger Wacek, discussed an email he had sent to General Manager Warehime regarding multiple cropping of solar fields, specifically talking with SMMPA about this type of thing for the Lemond Solar project. He noted a presentation he attended in St. Charles which discussion the Butter Solar Portfolio which brought Organic Valley to 100% renewable power.

**Commission Roundtable**

Commissioner Doyal reported Alcorn was please to host the OPU Safety Committee. He noted it was interesting to see how many employees were involved across all of OPU. He further noted folks were very engaged and complimented Manager, Human Resources Madson on the coordination of it all.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Commissioner Doyal moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Keilman seconded the motion. All Commissioners voting Aye, the meeting adjourned at 5:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Schmoll,  
Executive, Communications & Administration Coordinator