

DULUTH PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
October 16, 2018

Members Present: Councilor Arik Forsman, Jennifer Julsrud, Rob Prusak, Carrie Ryan, Councilor Joel Sipress; Chris McIntosh arrived at 5:30 p.m.

Members Absent: Councilor Em Westerlund

Staff Present: Jodi Amundson, Bob Asleson, Jim Benning, Todd Carlson, Leanna Gilbert, Howard Jacobson, Courtney Kile, Eric Shaffer, Glenn Strid, John Upton, Kerry Venier

Call to Order: President Prusak called the meeting to order at 5:18 p.m.

Approval of previous meeting minutes

Old business:

Stormwater system discussion

Staff prepared multiple stormwater rate scenarios as requested. Commissioners and staff discussed the impacts of the scenarios to residential and commercial customers as well as what was needed to repair and maintain the infrastructure. Commissioners Ryan and Sipress requested that staff determine the amount necessary to keep up with the street program if the 0.5% sales tax goes through. Commissioner Julsrud motioned to begin the public education process and present a 100-year life cycle with a 6-year rate increase of 11% and see what the public feedback is. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved. Staff will have a draft presentation prepared for the next meeting.

Middle and Woodland water booster stations

This topic will be discussed when the tour takes place.

Updates from staff

Eric Shaffer reported that the gas blanket project is winding down. Jim Benning said that concrete is still being poured for Superior Street.

Upcoming Council actions

Jim Benning stated that there are a bunch of easements. The Twin Ports interchange is starting up. There is a resolution to be reimbursed for design work to move a pump station and utilities in that area.

Utility appeal filed by Bruce Moore

The landlord of Bruce Moore appeared before the Commission to speak regarding a utility appeal filed by the tenant on October 15, 2018. Commissioner Sipress called a point of order that the Commission could not technically hear the appeal at this time since the appeal process had not been followed. This appeal could be heard at the next meeting if the appellant files supporting documentation and facts and findings from staff are given to the Commission prior to the meeting. The landlord stated that he and Mr. Moore withdraw the appeal, however, Mr. Moore is the official appellant so the landlord cannot technically withdraw it. Staff will send out the appeal form and the appeal procedures to both Mr. Green and Mr. Moore.

Commissioner questions and comments

President Prusak mentioned that a former commissioner, Linda Sellner, had passed away.

Preview of upcoming business

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 20, 2018, at 5:15 p.m. in City Council Chambers. Staff will prepare a draft public education presentation for stormwater as well as a timeline for the next few months as requested.

It is the mission of the Duluth Public Utilities Commission to ensure safe, reliable, efficient utilities services at reasonable rates.

Known absences for future meetings

Commissioner McIntosh will not be able to attend the November meeting.

Tour of water pump stations

The Commission decided to reschedule the tour for November.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.