



City of Duluth

411 West First Street
Duluth, Minnesota 55802

Minutes - Draft

Duluth Public Utilities Commission.

Tuesday, June 18, 2024

5:15 PM

Council Chambers, City Hall, 411 West First Street

CALL TO ORDER

President Ryan called the meeting to order at 5:17 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Erin Abramson, Andrea Crouse, Councilor Mike Mayou, Carrie Ryan, Councilor Terese Tomanek

Members Absent: Councilor Wendy Durrwachter

Staff Present: Jim Benning, Cyndi Falconer, Leanna Gilbert, Amanda Mangan, Chris Ostern, Kerry Venier

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Linda Herron, resident of 2617 E 5th Street, mentioned concerns about cyber security for public utilities. Jim Benning responded that we are conducting a cyber security analysis as required by the State.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

[DPUC126](#) April 16, 2024 DPUC meeting minutes draft

Indexes:

Attachments: [04162024 DPUC meeting minutes draft](#)

The April 16, 2024 meeting minutes were approved by all present.

UPDATES FROM STAFF

Jim Benning mentioned that there is still a vacant seat on the Commission. He also mentioned that the budget process has been moved up. There will be a budget retreat on September 13, so we will need to have a resolution recommending the budget to City Council in August. In July, there will be an overview of the budget. Jim gave an update on the EPA's administrative order of consent. That will most likely go to Council for the July 15 meeting. City staff is working on determining the cost of the required corrections and how to complete them within the timeline. Jim proposed converting the existing clean water surcharge into a water infrastructure fee to fund the required corrections. The amount of the fee would depend on the capital investment needed to complete the corrections. There was some discussion about the timing of the conversion

and how long the fee would last, other sources of funding, whether the fee could be based on usage versus a flat rate, if additional staff would be required, and public outreach about the consent order. The Commission gave their approval for staff to move forward with this process. Cyndi Falconer gave an update on the lead replacement program. 217 lead services have been replaced so far this year. City staff is planning to replace 1,500 lead services next year. Gary and New Duluth should be completed this year. Lincoln Park will continue next year. There will also be a project in Central Hillside next year. We will be able to submit our lead service inventory to the State by the deadline. Jim Benning mentioned that the Water Treatment Plant resiliency project bids came in very high, so we are rescoping that project to include rented generators if needed. There was some discussion about the details of renting generators.

COMMISSIONER QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

There were no questions or comments at this time.

UPCOMING COUNCIL ACTIONS

Jim Benning mentioned resolutions for the Woodland Booster Station reconstruction PFA loan request and for the design of two lead service replacement projects.

PREVIEW OF UPCOMING BUSINESS

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 16, 2024 at 5:15 p.m. in City Council Chambers. The Commission will discuss the potential water infrastructure fee and the 2025 budget.

KNOWN ABSENCES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

No absences were mentioned.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:07 p.m.