

DULUTH PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
September 20, 2016

Members Present: Councilor Zack Filipovich, Jen Julsrud, Jim Lewis, Rob Prusak, Councilor Joel Sipress, Jason Thorsell, Councilor Em Westerlund

Members Absent: none

Staff Present: Bob Asleson, Jim Benning, Leanna Gilbert, Eric Shaffer, Glenn Strid

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:23 p.m. by President Prusak.

Approval of previous meeting minutes

Old business:

2017 utilities budget discussion

Glenn Strid explained that the budgeted amount for 2017 benefits was increased for all of the utilities since the last meeting. Updated cash projections were provided. Eric Shaffer explained the changes to the water capital plan since Superior Street was pushed back to 2018. He also mentioned that the water capital plan is basically controlled by MN Power, County, MNDOT, and City street projects. Commissioner Julsrud suggested increasing water rates by 1-3% each year to increase the capital budget to an amount that would allow us to replace problem water mains. Commissioners discussed the current rates, what could be done with an increase, and what needs to be done to keep up with infrastructure replacement. Commissioner Julsrud will discuss this further with staff and then bring a plan forward to the Commission.

New business:

16PUC-008 – RESOLUTION APPROVING AND RECOMMENDING 2017 UTILITY BUDGET.

After some discussion about the draft budget presentation, Commissioner Julsrud motioned to approve 16PUC-008, and the resolution was approved unanimously.

Updates from staff

Eric Shaffer reported that all of the water main is in for the Michigan Street project, and the concrete should be done in early October. The 4th Street County project is moving along. Four blocks of water main are in on one end, and more will be put in between 16th and 17th Avenue East. About 2/3 of the gas main is in, and it will tie in at 18th Avenue East to another gas project that is nearly done. The requisition for the water model software was processed this week. We are still gathering hydrant data for them, which should be ready this week. The model itself is up and running, but they need to calibrate it with the hydrant data.

Upcoming Council actions

The Public Works & Utilities Department budget presentation is on Monday.

Commissioner questions or comments

There were no further questions or comments at this time.

Preview of upcoming business

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 18, 2016, at 5:15 p.m. in City Council Chambers. Staff will prepare for water rate discussions.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:16 p.m.