

# **MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS**

## **of the Public Utilities Commission, City of Hibbing, St. Louis County, Minnesota**

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Minutes of the regular meeting of the Public Utilities Commission, Hibbing, Minnesota, 1902 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Ave., Hibbing, MN 55746, held on December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Meeting held at Hibbing City Hall, 401 E. 21<sup>st</sup> St., Hibbing MN. Chairperson Hart called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm p.m. In attendance were Chair Hart; Commissioner Bayliss, Commissioner Stokes, Commissioner Sandstede, Legal Counsel, Andy Borland; General Manager, Luke Peterson; Energy Pricing & Programs Manager Paul Plombon, Plant Maintenance Director Dan Edwards, and Customer Programs & Communication Specialist Eliot Dixon. Also in attendance were HPAT Rep., Jackson Johns; Local 94 rep. Rich Kampsula and Mark Reger, Barr Engineering rep., Katrina Marini, and Jim Wachter of the Mesabi Symphony Orchestra. Absent was Commissioner Babich.

### **Item 2. ADDS/DELETES –**

### **Item 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion by Commissioner Sandstede, supported by Chair Hart, to approve the regular meeting minutes of November 21<sup>st</sup> & December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

Motion carried unanimously.

### **Item 4. CITIZENS FORUM –**

### **Item 5. CONSENT AGENDA**

- Item 5.A.** Approving invoices >\$10,000 & approve the bills & ACH transfers dated November 18<sup>th</sup> – December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023
- Item 5.B.** Approve the payroll paid & overtime report for the November 30<sup>th</sup> & December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023 pay dates.
- Item 5.C.** Accept HPU Travel Expenditure Matrix
- Item 5.D.** Approve Annual Performance Review and Salary Adjustment for Paul Plombon
- Item 5.E.** Approve Annual Performance Review and Appointment for Stefanie Dickinson
- Item 5.F.** Approve Annual Performance Review and Salary Adjustment for Eliot Dixon
- Item 5.G.** Approve Last Day of Employment
- Item 5.H.** Approve Resolution 24-23: Official Newspaper & Public Posting
- Item 5.I.** Approve Resolution 25-23: Official Depositories (Security State Bank, American Bank, Wells Fargo Investment Services, US Bank, National Bank of Commerce, and Xpress Billpay)

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Item 5.J. Approve Resolution 26-23: Meeting Dates for Calendar Year 2024

Item 5.K. Approve Resolution 27-23: Declaring Equipment as Surplus and Authorizing the Sale of Same

Item 5.L. Approve Resolution 28-23: Authorizing Application and Acceptance of Funds for GRIP Program

Item 5.M. Approve End of Year Community Development Contributions

Commissioner Stokes requested that Items 5.D. & 5.E. be pulled from the Consent Agenda for further discussion.

Chair Hart requested that Item 5.K. be pulled from the Consent Agenda for further discussion.

Motion by Commissioner Bayliss, Supported by Commissioner Stokes, to approve Consent Agenda items 5.A., 5.B., 5.C., 5.F., 5.G., 5.H., 5.I., 5. J., 5.L., & 5.M. presented.

Motion carried unanimously.

Item 5.D.- Commissioner Stokes stated that due to his short time with the Commission he was choosing to abstain from voting on Item 5.D.

Motion by Commissioner Bayliss, Supported by Commissioner Sandstede to Approve Annual Performance Review and Salary Adjustment for Paul Plombon

Motion carried 3-0  
Commissioner Stokes abstained

Item 5.E.- Commissioner Stokes stated that due to his short time with the Commission he was choosing to abstain from voting on Item 5.E.

Motion by Commissioner Bayliss, Supported by Chair Hart to Approve Annual Performance Review and Appointment for Stefanie Dickinson

Motion carried 3-0  
Commissioner Stokes abstained

Item 5.K. – Chair Hart stated concerns with the wording of the resolution and requested the Resolution be amended to not limit the resale value of the equipment

Motion by Chair Hart, Supported by Commissioner Stokes to Approve Resolution 27-23: Declaring Equipment as Surplus and Authorizing Sale of Same on the condition the suggested revisions be made to the Resolution.

Motion carried unanimously.

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### **Item 6. PUBLIC MEETING – WELLHEAD PROTECTION PLAN**

Hibbing Public Utilities General Manager Luke Peterson stated that as part of the Wellhead Protection Plan, Part 2 approval process a public informational meeting was required. Barr Engineering Hydrologist Katrina Marini presented a summary of the Wellhead Protection Plan (WHPP), Part 1 and Part 2. The WHPP Part 1 identified that Hibbing's current aquifers are located above bedrock and are consequently susceptible to contamination. The WHPP Part 2 will address potential contaminants and prepare for water source changes over the next ten years.

The Commissioners discussed locations of Wells "at-risk" of contamination. General Manager Peterson stated that ground aquifers are currently in good shape and best plan to protect current water sources will be to incentivize residents away from the use of private wells and onto public water services.

Legal Counsel Andy Borland questioned the legal obligations of the utility to provide future information and public education to the community. Katrina Marini stated that obligations for a public meeting and suggested further information could be made available on the HPUC website.

### **Item 7. FINANCIALS & RISK MANAGEMENT**

#### **Item 7.A.**      Review and Approve 2024 Capital Budget & Forecast

Motion by Chair Hart, Supported by Commissioner Sandstede, to Approve 2024 Capital Budget & Forecast.

Motion carried unanimously

#### **Item 7.B.**      Approve FM Global Renewal Property Proposal

Motion by Commissioner Sandstede, Supported by Commissioner Stokes, to Approve FM Global Renewal Property Proposal.

Motion carried unanimously.

#### **Item 7.C.**      Approve LMCIT Workers' Compensation Coverage

Motion by Commissioner Stokes, Supported by Commissioner Sandstede, to Approve LMCIT Workers' Compensation Coverage.

Motion carried unanimously.

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**Item 7.D.** Approve Purchase of 6-Stage Flowserve Feed Water Pump from Virginia Public Utilities

Commissioner Stokes questioned the need for piping work to be completed in coordination with installation of Pump. HPU Energy & Pricing Manager Paul Plombon stated current contractors are qualified and prepared for the work.

Commissioner Sandstede questioned the timeline of the pump's refurbishment. Energy & Pricing Manager Plombon stated that the refurbishment was completed by VPU in 2020. Included in the Ohman Pump quote is work to prepare the pump for installation. The pump is expected to last multiple decades.

Motion by Commissioner Stokes, Supported by Commissioner Sandstede, to Approve Purchase of 6-Stage Flowserve Feed Water Pump and Installation Quote from Ohman Pump

Motion carried unanimously.

**Item 7.E.** Approve Air Emissions Quote from Barr Engineering

Motion by Commissioner Stokes, Supported by Commissioner Bayliss, to Approve Air Emissions Quote from Barr Engineering.

Motion carried unanimously.

### **Item 8. POLICY & GOVERNANCE-**

General Manager Luke Peterson commented on the finalization of a long-term employment contract as reached between staff and the commission. The contract is still being developed but can be expected at the January 2024 Working Session.

### **Item 8. OLD BUSINESS--**

### **Item 9. NEW BUSINESS --**

Commissioner Stokes thanked the Commission, HPU Management & Staff, and all of the HPU ratepayers for a great year and wished all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

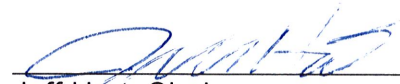
### **Item 10. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Commissioner Stokes, supported by Commissioner Sandstede, to adjourn the meeting at 5:48 p.m.

Motion carried unanimously

Attest:

  
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Jesse Babich, Commission Secretary

  
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Jeff Hart, Chair

Meeting materials are available at  
The next meeting is a working meeting scheduled for Tuesday, January 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
at 5:00 p.m. at the Hibbing City Hall, 401 E. 21<sup>st</sup> St., Hibbing MN 55746.

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