

A REGULAR MEETING OF THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF VIRGINIA, MINNESOTA WAS HELD AT THE OFFICE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2020 AT 3:30 P.M.

Approved

Item 1. - Commission President Marwick called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM.

Present: Commissioners Johnson, Makowsky, Marwick, Petroskey and Teasck  
Absent: None  
Also Present: Greg French - General Manager; Bill Hafdahl – Assistant General Manager, Mary Johnson – Supervisor – Customer Relations

Item 2 – Item 7 (b) – A motion was made by Commissioner Petroskey and supported by Commissioner Johnson to approve the meeting agenda. Motion carried unanimously.

Item 3 – None

Item 4 (a) - A motion was made by Commissioner Teasck and supported by Commissioner Petroskey that financial resolution No. 5299 - Authorizing the payroll dated November 5, 2020 in the amount of \$108,474.20, direct deposits #33104 through #33172; and the payroll dated November 19, 2020 in the amount of \$112,314.41, direct deposits #33173 through #33241; and the bills dated October 26, 2020 through November 23, 2020 in the amount of \$1,827,240.73, checks #108894 through #109119 and wire and electronic transfers in the amount of \$276,035.39; and Net Payment Adjustments for the month of October 2020 in the amount of \$325.49 be adopted; and to approve the Regular Commission Meeting minutes from the October 26, 2020 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

Item 5 (a) – Commissioner Marwick stated there were no injuries reported for the month.

Item 6 (a) – Mr. French stated VPU rolled out its Facebook page October 28, 2020, with the first post informing of the complete shut-down of steam to Southside. He further stated the roll-out was ahead of the December 1<sup>st</sup> timeline agreed upon by the Commission, and that several posts have been made since then.

Item 6 (b) – Mr. French stated since the southside steam conversion is complete VPU turned the focus onto the Northside steam conversion zone. There are currently 268 out of a total of 503 customers left to be converted. With contractors continuing to work throughout the winter, he hopes the number will be down to around 200 by April/May. President Marwick commended Mr. French, Mr. Hafdahl, and VPU Staff for their hard work and diligence in getting the southside conversion zone shutdown. Mr. French reminded the commission about past discussions of water line freeze-ups due to steam being off on southside and that VPU will assist customers whose service lines freeze due to shallow bury depth.

Item 7 (a) – Mr. French discussed the upcoming MMUA T&O Conference to be held virtually on December 8-10, 2020. He further asked the Commission approve the cost for himself, and the Director of Distribution to attend should they be available. A motion was made by Johnson and supported by Petroskey to approve cost to attend the conference. Motion carried unanimously.

Item 8 (a) – Mr. French stated there was a small fire at the plant last week which was immediately contained by VPU, and extinguished by the VFD. Despite the misunderstanding/misreporting of the incident, no injuries were sustained. VPU did utilize its Facebook page to inform customers of the incident. Mr. French stated an extensive follow-up with plant management and staff was done to stress how critical communication is in situations like this. Mr. French stated the plant has been running #7 coal and #11 wood boilers, and is producing 105,000 lbs/hr of steam, and generating 4.5 megawatts of power. He further stated the plant has been receiving 8 loads of wood per day, and will continue to generate until Minnesota Power upgrades the #306 breaker which will have automatic reclosure capabilities. He anticipates it will take a couple of months for the upgrade to be completed. Mr. French informed the Commission that VPU will be working with Kip Kennedy of CE Power and Minnesota Power Staff on an electric distribution study to create more system redundancies when the power plant is not producing electricity. Discussions will include auto-transfers of load, installing another substation in town, or possibly another 23kV connection to create redundancies within the distribution system. He stated he would keep the Commission informed as to the progress of the study.

8 (b) – Other discussion included updates on the Package Boiler, the potential Minnesota Power Solar Development project, and the water levels in the Rouchleau Pit.

Item 9 – A motion was made by Commissioner Petroskey and supported by Commissioner Johnson to adjourn at 4:18 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

James Petroskey, Secretary

Jeff Marwick, President