

Pursuant to due call and notice thereof, Commissioner Ardner called to order the regular meeting of the Mora Public Utilities Commission at 3:00 PM on Monday, December 14, 2020 via a public Web-Ex virtual meeting.

2. **Roll Call:** Present: Commissioners Greg Ardner, Brett Baldwin, and Ryan Christianson
Absent: none
Staff Present: Utilities General Manager Crawford, Public Works Director Kohlgraf, Utility Billing Clerk Bliss, City Accountant King, and Deputy City Clerk Yoder
3. **Adopt Agenda:** MOTION made by Christianson, seconded by Ardner, voted on by roll call;
Aye: Ardner and Christianson
Nay: none
Absent: Baldwin
motion unanimously carried to approve the agenda as presented.
4. **Consent Agenda:** MOTION made by Ardner, seconded by Christianson, voted on by roll call;
Aye: Ardner and Christianson
Nay: none
Absent: Baldwin
motion unanimously carried to approve the consent agenda as presented.
 - a. Regular Meeting Minutes – November 16, 2020
 - b. Joint Meeting Minutes – November 17, 2020
 - c. November 2020 Claims
 - d. Accept Letter of Retirement – Water/Wastewater Operator I
 - e. Loan from PUC to City Council for the Mora HRA/ Eastwood Senior Living, Resolution PUC2020-1221
 - f. Write-off Unpaid Utility Charges
5. **Open Forum:** No one spoke at open forum.
6. **Special Business:** There were no special business items to discuss.
7. **Public Hearings:** There were no public hearings.
8. **New Business:**
 - a. **Personnel Policy Financial Limits:** The PUC reviewed the financial limits for 2021 set in Appendix A which reflected an increase in health insurance premiums for eligible employees and the removal of the building official monthly mileage allowance due to the purchase of a city vehicle for inspections. MOTION made by Christianson, seconded by Baldwin, voted on by roll call;
Aye: Ardner, Baldwin, and Christianson
Nay: none
motion unanimously carried to approve the Appendix A, Personnel Policy Limits as presented.
 - b. **Administrative Services Director Position Description:** After discussing operational needs for the addition of HRA operations at the city level on November 17, 2020, staff was directed to revise the city and utility budgets to include a finance director position. Staff presented a position of Administrative Services Director that was nearly identical to the vacant Clerk/Treasurer position but added acting city administrator in the city administrator's absence.

The proposed position would be funded by a 50% split between the city general fund and 25% electric fund, 12.5% water fund, and 12.5% sewer fund; starting salary range would be Grade 12, \$68,890 - \$72,342. MOTION made by Baldwin, seconded by Christianson, voted on by roll call;

Aye: Ardner, Baldwin, and Christianson

Nay: none

motion unanimously carried to approve the Administrative Services Director position as presented and directed staff to begin the recruitment process.

- c. **2020 Budget Amendment:** King presented amendments to the Utility budget and explained the city's audit firm, BerganKDV, stated the EDA was a blended component unit of the city therefore, the contribution of \$20,000 to the EDA from both the City and the Utility should have been considered transfers. MOTION made by Baldwin, seconded by Christianson, voted on by roll call;

Aye: Ardner, Baldwin, Christianson

Nay: none

motion unanimously carried to approve the 2020 budget amendments, as presented.

- d. **2021 Budget, CIP, and Fee Schedule:** The 2021 budget was presented for final review and Crawford pointed out recent adjustments including the addition of \$28,000 for the Administrative Services Director and \$43,000 for City Garage, HR, and IT expenses, in addition to reductions of (\$49,000) for well #4 controls and (\$32,000) for the Airport Lift station that were also listed in the Capital Improvement Plan.

Staff recommended utilizing reserve funds to keep the utility rate increases low or at zero using \$325,229 from the Electric Fund, \$149,396 from the Water Fund, and \$306,064 from the Sewer Fund for each fund respectively.

The PUC reviewed and discussed the 2021 Capital Improvement Plan and 2021 Utility Fee Schedule. Crawford explained the reason for the addition of electric connection and construction fees to the 2021 Fee Schedule was because the utility was losing money for staff time spent on local electrical construction/connections and after surveying SMMPA communities, it was evident Mora should be charging for those services. MOTION made by Baldwin, seconded by Christianson, voted on by roll call;

Aye: Ardner, Baldwin, Christianson

Nay: none

motion unanimously carried to approve the 2021 budget, capital improvement plan, and utility fee schedule as presented.

9. Old Business:

- a. **Delinquent Water Utility Accounts Procedure:** The PUC discussed procedures relating to delinquent water utility accounts as they related to city code. Current city code §50.24 explained the process in regard to certifying unpaid utility charges, however it also stated water services would be disconnected if left unpaid; akin to how delinquent electric accounts were handled. Bliss explained the reasons to disconnect and certify water/sewer had been practiced because water/sewer rests with the property, electric did not. Staff was directed to amend city code language from "will disconnect" to "may disconnect" and bring to city council for review and consideration.

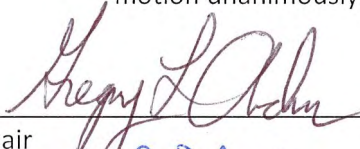
10. Communications: The following communications were reviewed.

- Utility Billing Monthly Report – November 2020
- Utility Billing Adjustments Report – November 2020

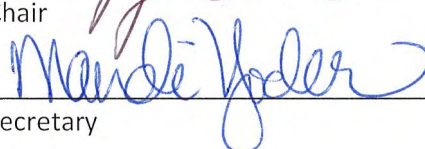
11. Reports:

- a. Public Utilities General Manager: Crawford stated the \$40,000 Digger Derek truck (not yet purchased) from Lake City saved the city from having to purchase a new one at \$270,000, SMMPA reached a settlement in the amount of approximately \$10 million and would be issuing a one-time payment of \$190,000 to the City of Mora, and last Tuesday Skramstad and Crawford met with Senator Rarick and requested legislative support to change the number of PUC members from three to five in the form of a stand-alone bill.
- b. Public Works Director: Kohlgraf reported 95% completion of the Highway 65 electric project, meeting with SMMPA and Great River Energy to discuss power pole replacements, and reported the city had enough wire on-hand to meet the needs of the power project. Kohlgraf also reported the reed beds were put to bed for the winter and S.E.H. would meet with staff to see how and why the volatile solids had been lowered; the WWTP had the lowest flow in approximately seven years indicating water going into the WWTP was close to the same amount leaving the WWTP.
- c. Commissioner Baldwin: Nothing new to report.
- d. Commissioner Christianson: Nothing new to report.
- e. Chairperson Ardner: Nothing new to report.

- 12. Adjournment:** MOTION made by Christianson, seconded by Baldwin, voted on by roll call;
Aye: Ardner, Baldwin, Christianson
Nay: none
motion unanimously carried to adjourn at 3:37 PM.



Chair



Secretary

**A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE MORA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION AND THE MORA CITY COUNCIL
AUTHORIZING AN INTERFUND LOAN BETWEEN
THE MORA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION AND THE CITY OF MORA, MINNESOTA**

WHEREAS, the Mora Public Utilities Commission (PUC) and the Mora Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) are component units of the City of Mora (City) and operate on behalf of the City; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors of the HRA has requested funds from the City to fund Eastwood Senior Living operations; and

WHEREAS, the Mora City Council has requested to borrow funds from the PUC in order to assist the HRA; and

WHEREAS, both the Mora City Council and PUC have determined it to be in the interest of both the City and the HRA to enter into this temporary loan in the manner specified below.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the PUC and the City Council hereby authorize an interfund loan in the amount of \$200,000, at the interest rate of 3.00%, for the term of five years once payments begin after a two-year payment deferral.

Authorization is granted with the following conditions:

1. There shall be no penalty for early payoff, and any prepayments before the payment process began would be on principal only.
2. Loan disbursements shall be done periodically, upon staff approval of qualified expenditures.
3. The PUC requests, and the City Council accepts, that the City Council formally shall become the HRA Board.

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

The foregoing resolution was introduced and moved for adoption by Commissioner Ardner and seconded by Commissioner Christianson

Voting for the resolution:..... Ardner & Christianson
Voting against the resolution:..... none
Abstained from voting: none
Absent: Baldwin

Motion carried and resolution adopted this 14th day of December, 2020.

By: Greg Ardner
Greg Ardner, Chairman

ATTEST:

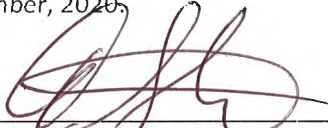
Lindy Crawford
Lindy Crawford, City Administrator

CITY COUNCIL

The foregoing resolution was introduced and moved for adoption by Council Member Anderson and seconded by Council Member Pioske.

Voting for the resolution:..... Mayor Skramstad, Anderson, Mathison, Pioske, & Greiber
Voting against the resolution:..... none
Abstained from voting: none
Absent: none

Motion carried and resolution adopted this 15th day of December, 2020.

By: 
Alan Skramstad, Mayor

ATTEST:


Lindy Crawford, City Administrator