

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, June 14, 2021, in the city hall council chambers.

2. **Roll Call:** Present: Commissioners Greg Ardner and Brett Baldwin
Absent: Ryan Christianson
Staff Present: Utilities General Manager Lindy Crawford, Utility Billing Clerk Jessica Bliss, and City Accountant Sara King
3. **Adopt Agenda:** MOTION made by Baldwin, seconded by Ardner, and unanimously carried by the PUC to approve the agenda as presented.
4. **Consent Agenda:** MOTION made by Ardner, seconded by Baldwin, and unanimously carried by the PUC to approve the consent agenda as presented.
 - a. Regular Meeting Minutes – May 17 ,2021
 - b. May 2021 Claims
 - c. Approve Hire of Water/Wastewater Operator II
 - d. Approve Hire of Administrative Services Director
5. **Open Forum:** No one spoke at open forum.
6. **Special Business:** There were no special business items to discuss.
7. **Public Hearings:**
 - a. **Proposed Assessment of Unpaid Utility Charges:** The PUC reviewed a list of two past-due utility accounts for consideration to certify to the respective property taxes for the 2022 payable year. The public hearing was opened at 3:02pm; no one spoke at the public hearing, and it was reported no responses were received from the account owners. MOTION made by Ardner, seconded by Baldwin, and unanimously carried by the PUC to close the public hearing at 3:03pm. MOTION made by Ardner, seconded by Baldwin, and unanimously carried by the PUC to recommend the certification of the entire list of unpaid utility charges to the Mora City Council.
8. **New Business:**
 - a. **Electric Distribution Pole Replacement Project – Advertisement for Bids:** The PUC reviewed a proposed advertisement for bids for a multi-year electric distribution pole replacement project as listed in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). MOTION made by Baldwin, seconded by Ardner, and unanimously carried by the PUC to direct DGR Engineering to advertise the electric distribution pole replacement project as presented.
9. **Old Business:**
 - a. **Electric GIS Services Discussion:** Crawford reported the existing GIS vendor was unable to meet the needs of MMU and staff, therefore staff obtained two proposals for electric GIS services, from mPower and DGR Engineering. Crawford expounded the quote from DGR in the amount of \$16,650 for the first year and \$2,350 annually thereafter, would require a significant amount of staff time for data collection and field work; the mPower quote in the amount of \$24,080 for the first year and \$4,800 annually thereafter would include the field work and outage management software; the existing annual fees from STAR Energy were \$9,500. MOTION made by Ardner, seconded by Baldwin, and unanimously carried by the PUC to direct staff to move forward with the proposal from mPower.

10. Communications: The following communications were reviewed.

- a. Utility Billing Monthly Report – May 2021: Bliss reported positive results of reduced large balances by staff seeking payments.
- b. Utility Billing Adjustment Report – May 2021

11. Reports:

- a. Public Utilities General Manager: Crawford reported a significant power outage in the city; Vizenor would start next week to bring some relief to the water/wastewater department, and a summer street staff member would also start next week.
- b. Public Works Director: Absent
- c. Commissioner Baldwin: Nothing new to report.
- d. Commissioner Christianson: Absent
- e. Chairperson Ardner: Ardner inquired of the reed beds at the WWTP, and Crawford reported the reeds were doing very well thanks to the summer heat.

Discussion ensued regarding a potential merger of HRA and City staff.

Ardner proposed an option for a PUC contribution to the general budget for the potential merger and budgeting thereof. Crawford presented some graphs and information illustrating what a PUC contribution to the general fund may look like, similar to other SMMPA community practices and similar to the liquor store's annual contribution.

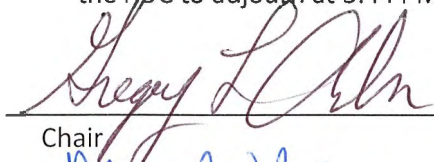
Ardner discussed the impact to Crawford and city staff if a merger took place, the utility reserve funds, methods of a contribution via tracking kilowatt hours or an annual flat percentage or flat dollar amount, the option of an HRA levy to the taxpayers, and how the financial status of the HRA could negatively impact the City's budget and how the PUC could assist financially.

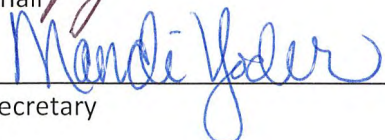
Crawford explained the HRA staffing needs for five full-time staff, including the vacant positions of executive director, and a maintenance technician.

Discussion ensued regarding the importance for Crawford to be compensated for time spent on the HRA, the finance staff impacted by the potential merger, and the lack of HRA funds to support a separate HRA staff at present time. It was reported by Crawford that a financial management plan was being prepared by Ehlers so the council and HRA could plan for the future.

Discussion ensued regarding the statutorily required composition of the HRA board to include an HRA resident; the PUC Consensus was the condition of the City Council becoming the HRA board as part of the PUC loan to the City must be voided.

12. Adjournment: MOTION made by Ardner, seconded by Baldwin, and unanimously carried by the PUC to adjourn at 3:44 PM.


Chair


Secretary