

**UTILITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
August 17, 2022**

Present: Jan Kahler, Aaron Eltrich, Robert Herring, Megan Andresen, and Abby Gehl

Absent: None

Chairperson Kahler called the meeting to order at 4:34 p.m.

Motion by Eltrich and seconded by Herring to approve the agenda. All Ayes

Motion by Eltrich and seconded by Herring to approve the minutes. All Ayes

Audience: None

Old Business: None to discuss

New Business:

A. Discussion on 69kV conversion project-

In review, Krogman stated that ITC is converting our transmission voltage from 34.5 to 69 kV; process been in the works for years. September 19th the scheduled date to begin the changeover process. MMEU will switch the entire town load from our power plant to our other substations, so ITC can deenergize the north feed to town in order to begin converting to 69. At this time the MMEU crews and Shermco, our engineer, will be converting the transformers; testing them to ensure they work while deenergized. We will then wait for notification from ITC they have the conversion complete for the north feed and energize it back to 69 which will feed the REC substation in that part of the loop. MMEU will then need to switch from 34.5 to 69 by either taking an outage or carry the town load on our own. We will be doing the latter and per Krogman we are prepared for a very short outage. On the 21st / 22nd, the plan it to switch all the load to the generation and completely isolate from the grid long enough to resynchronize with the new voltage. We will be notifying all customers through a bill flyer regarding the upcoming conversion work and the day with approximate time that is a potential of a very short outage; 15 minutes or less. If the schedule should change, we will contact KMAQ to announce so customers can plan for it. For MMEU's large power customers we will reach out to the contacts on file and acquire/verify emails so we can send out an email of changes with more precise times in case sensitive production will need to be shut down. After MMEU's load is all switched to the main power plant we will then begin working on converting the other substations. ITC will then begin working on the south feed. This will be about a two-week process and weather would be the only factor that should change the schedule per Krogman.

Gehl entered the meeting at 4:44 p.m.

Herring questioned if it would affect any of the equipment. Krogman replied no because all of the transformer/ substation transformers are 69 kV ready.

B. Discussion and update on staffing and contract negotiations

Krogman announced Jake Hayes will be starting at the power plant on Monday, August 22nd, bringing staffing to the appropriate level and Ethan McCaulley, apprentice, gave his 30-day notice which leaves us with 2 journeymen, 2 apprentices whom are almost done with the program (one moving to the metering position), and the two new apprentices who we recently hired. An ad was placed for an experienced apprentice (has graduated from line school and possibly been employed) or journeyman open until filled since requesting more experience will make for a smaller pool of applicants. Applications will be reviewed toward end of the month unless don't receive many applications then may wait and review later. Krogman stated we've been fortunate to have retirees who have helped out with the on-call rotation since the young apprentices can't be on call yet.

Krogman announced he is doing something new and is working with Rock River Physical Therapy, occupational therapy clinic, and updated our job descriptions based on what the Iowa Association recommended works well with pre-employment and post offer physicals to ensure an applicant is fit to do the job.

The union contract will be expiring at the end of the year and need to begin working on the negotiations soon. Krogman commented he'd like 2 board members to be on the committee; who would then report to whole board. Initial offers need to be open to the public; rest can be in closed session. Krogman asked the board if any interest in sitting on the committee to let him know. MMEU lineman currently make \$35-39 hourly; through networking with other Iowa utilities the range is \$32.40-45.22.

Motion by Andresen; seconded by Eltrich to approve the claims as presented. All ayes.

Budget Discussions were held.

Manager's Report-

A.J. Bowman, power plant superintendent, reported new hire Hayes will be starting Monday, August 22, 2022. Bowman reported he missed a couple meetings due to generation which went well. A tech will also be coming August 22, to troubleshoot one of the engines that won't switch over to natural gas; educational opportunity.

Chris Krogman, utility manager, reported that we have many customers calling about their utility bills being so much higher which has been due to increased usage and high market energy. Currently in the two highest months of the billing cycles. September's will be higher, then should see a decline.

The next board meeting is Wednesday, September 21, 2022 with a goal setting session since the agenda will be light.

Leesa Budde, accounting, nothing to report.

Board Members' Reports- None

Motion by Eltrich; seconded by Herring to adjourn the meeting at 4:55 p.m.