

Meeting Minutes
Board of Directors – Wheat Belt PPD
December 22, 2023

A budget hearing was held December 22, 2023, at 8:30 a.m. with the regular board meeting directly following at the District Headquarters at 11306 Road 32, Sidney Nebraska, pursuant to written notice to each of the Directors and publication in the Sidney Sun-Telegraph, Legal Notice #L23-790, on December 21, 2023. The agenda was emailed to the directors, posted in the lobby and board room at Wheat Belt’s headquarters, and the availability of the agenda at the District office was part of legal notice.

Directors present at the meeting:

Brian Zimmerman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Present
Moe Moffat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Present
Stuart Morgan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Present
Jennifer Eckhardt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Present
Toni Blomenkamp	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Present
Collin Anderson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Present
Marcus Milanuk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Present	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Present

Employees present at times throughout the meeting: Lacey Gulbranson, Rollie Waite, Jim Weeda, Sharrell Keane, Mark Cape, Levi Berndt, and Kelli Chaon.

Attorney: Kendra Strommen present

Guests present: Tri-State G&T Representatives – Duane Highley, Reg Rudolph, and Hisham Noman

The budget meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. Keane presented the two versions of the budget that provided for changes to the original budget approved in the November board meeting. The versions are outlined in the board book. Keane highlighted that version 1 provided for changes to revenue and work plan projects that would be moving between 2023 and 2024. She also noted that the inventory levels had not changed from the original plan. After discussion, she then presented version two which included taking the lineman to the national average and adjusting apprentices accordingly. This version was provided based on the board request from the November board meeting discussions regarding compensation.

Zimmerman adjourned the budget hearing at 8:49 a.m.

The regular board meeting was called to order at 8:50 a.m. by board President Brian Zimmerman, who noted the posting of a copy of the Open Meetings Law in the boardroom and who established a quorum was present. Sharrell Keane recorded minutes at the request of Board Secretary Moe Moffat.

Introduction of Guests –

Tri-State G&T Representatives – Duane Highley, Reg Rudolph, and Hisham Noman

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Approval of the Consent Agenda

Morgan moved to approve the consent agenda containing the following items:

- Item 1: Approval of the agenda
- Item 2: Waive the reading of the Meeting Notice
 - Regular Board Meeting Notice December 22, 2023
- Item 3: Approve the Board Meeting Minutes of the Previous Meeting
 - November 27, 2023, Regular Board Meeting Minutes
 - October 27, 2023, revised meeting minutes, Regular Board Meeting Minutes
- Item 4: Approve Bylaws with no changes
- Item 5: Approve Bond Reimbursement Resolution

The motion was seconded by Milanuk, and roll call vote with Directors voting as follows:

Moe Moffat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Stuart Morgan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Jennifer Eckhardt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Toni Blomenkamp	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Collin Anderson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Marcus Milanuk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Brian Zimmerman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Motion carried.

Public Comment Period

No comments were received.

Tri-State Generation & Transmission

- Demand Response – Reg Rudolph & Hisham Noman: The following topics were discussed.
 - Cooperative Energy Ecosystem
 - Demand Side Management
 - Demand Response
 - Demand Side Management Effects on Load
 - Demand Response Program Potential Savings
- General updates and Q&A – Duane Highley: The following topics were discussed.
 - 2023 – Hard year with many uncertainties gaining clarity Tri-State
 - Adams County
 - FERC direction received
 - Formulary rate defined and in affect January 1st , 2024
 - Positive margin in 2023
 - Resource plan with new ERA funding
 - Oracle system implementation under way

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- Board questions were asked on the following topics leading to lengthy discussions on each
 - Impacts of FERC ruling on remaining members
 - Positive financial performance and potential use of funds
 - Personnel changes and impacts
 - Project Ascend
 - Boston Research Group (BRG) engagement clarity
 - Decarbonization goals and the potential for nuclear plant generation.
 - Reliability of the grid

During the Tri-State presentations the board took a break from 10:49 a.m. to 11:02 a.m. Tri-State representatives finalized their discussions at 11:49 a.m. and the board broke for lunch.

Public Comment Period

11:30 a.m. No comments were received.

The board reconvened at 12:15 p.m.

2024 Board Meeting Schedule

Moffat moved to approve the proposed 2024 board meeting schedule. Eckhardt seconded. Roll call vote by the directors as follows:

Stuart Morgan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Jennifer Eckhardt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Toni Blomenkamp	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Collin Anderson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Marcus Milanuk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Brian Zimmerman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Moe Moffat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Motion carried.

2024 Revised Budget

Eckhardt moved to approve utilizing the national average for the line crew wages and to implement wage increase as proposed. Morgan seconded. Roll call vote by the directors as follows:

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Jennifer Eckhardt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Toni Blomenkamp	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Collin Anderson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Marcus Milanuk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Brian Zimmerman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Moe Moffat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Stuart Morgan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Motion carried.

Moffat moved to approve version 2 of the budget proposed changes. Eckhardt seconded. Roll call vote by the directors as follows:

Toni Blomenkamp	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Collin Anderson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Marcus Milanuk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Brian Zimmerman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Moe Moffat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Stuart Morgan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Jennifer Eckhardt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Motion carried.

2024 Rate Schedule: E-2

Milanuk moved to approve the proposed changes to rate schedule E-2. Anderson seconded. Roll call vote by the directors as follows:

Toni Blomenkamp	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Collin Anderson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Marcus Milanuk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Brian Zimmerman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Moe Moffat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Stuart Morgan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Jennifer Eckhardt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Motion carried.

Safety Issues and Safety Meeting

Cape updated the board regarding the December Safety meeting and Safety Committee meeting. Cape also reported there were no loss time accidents in 2023.

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Department Reports

Engineering – Reviewed by Mark Cape

Operations – Reviewed by Rollie Waite

Corporate Services and Financials– Reviewed by Sharrell Keane

- Milanuk made a motion to approve the year end bad debt write off in the amount of \$867.88. Blomenkamp seconded followed by roll call vote with voting as follows:

Brian Zimmerman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Moe Moffat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Jennifer Eckhardt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Toni Blomenkamp	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Stuart Morgan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Collin Anderson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Marcus Milanuk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Motion carried.

General Manager's Report

Gulbranson reviewed her report focusing on the following items as outlined in the board book:

- Summary of Operations
- Lodgepole
- Tri-State Demand Response
- Carbon America
- City of Sidney
- Sidney Solar System
- Data Center / Bitcoin Mining
- Line Extension
- Tri-State Capital Credit Retirement
- Tri-State Contract Committee
- NREA Annual Meeting
- Christmas Party

Power Supply Report

Morgan reviewed the Tri-State report submitted in the board book.

- Milanuk made a motion to nominate Gulbranson to be the Wheat Belt representative on the Tri-State Contract Committee. Eckhardt seconded followed by roll call vote with voting as follows:

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Brian Zimmerman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Moe Moffat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Jennifer Eckhardt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Toni Blomenkamp	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Stuart Morgan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Collin Anderson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Marcus Milanuk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Motion carried.

Strategic Plan Update

Gulbranson noted there would not be an update today and the next update would be in the January board meeting.

FERC Interventions, Protests and Settlement

Gulbranson provided an update on FERC Contract Termination Pricing, Contract Buy Down Pricing, FERC Formulary Rate Filing. Gulbranson also commended the board on their impact on the FERC ruling showing the board the number of times where Wheat Belt PPD was mentioned in the ruling.

Department Reports - Continued

IT & Metering – Reviewed by Jim Weeda

- Weeda discussed the annual audit that was conducted in early December and present the board with the results. After discussions, Milanuk made a motion to approve the year-end inventory adjustment in the amount of \$15,017.22. Anderson seconded followed by roll call vote with voting as follows:

Stuart Morgan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Collin Anderson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Marcus Milanuk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Brian Zimmerman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Moe Moffat	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Jennifer Eckhardt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Toni Blomenkamp	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Motion carried.

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Meeting reports

Milanuk discussed the following topics that were presented in the annual NREA board meeting:

- Guidance on Customer generation provided by NREA looking for support from the membership. Gulbranson pointed out the current Wheat Belt policy is in alignment on the amount of generation behind the meter. The board decided to support the policy as it is written.
- Board compensation cap potentially being increased. After discussion on the potential impacts the board determined not to provide input to the proposal at this time.
- NREA provided a list of candidates for the senator positions and recommended each district invite the candidates to a board meeting. The board determined to reach out to these candidates to ask for them to visit a board meeting.
- Milanuk encouraged all board members to become a member of the National and/or the Nebraska ACRE organization.
- NREA legal council is working on precincts to adjust to match the service territories.

Future Meetings and Trainings

The calendar and meeting materials provided within the board packet were discussed.

Delegations/Organizational Items

The delegate list was reviewed. No further actions were taken.

Other Business

Blomenkamp asked about the yearly donation for board members to an organization. Keane indicated that per guidance from statewide legal council the organization need to be one that provides support to the district. The board elected to donate as follows:

Broadwater Fire Department – Anderson and Blomenkamp
Garden County volunteer Fire Department – Milanuk and Moffat
Dalton Volunteer Fire Department – Morgan and Eckhardt
Big Springs Volunteer Fire Department - Zimmerman

Zimmerman recognized Gulbranson for five years of service with Wheat Belt PPD.

The next regular board meeting is Friday, January 26, 2024, at 8:30 a.m. at the Wheat Belt office.

Adjournment

With no further business, Zimmerman moved for adjournment at 1:37 p.m.

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Attest:

Brian Zimmerman, President

Brian Moffat, Secretary