

APPROVED REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS - WHEAT BELT PPD

FEBRUARY 26, 2021

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of Wheat Belt Public Power District was called to order by President Brian Zimmerman, at 8:30 a.m., Friday, February 26, 2021, at the District Headquarters, 11306 RD 32, Sidney, Cheyenne County, Nebraska.

ROLL CALL

The following Directors were present:

Toni Blomenkamp
Moe Moffat
Brian Zimmerman

Marcus Milanuk
Stuart Morgan

Also present were Lacey Gulbranson, Interim General Manager and Manager of Corporate Services; Carolyn Hostetler, Chief Financial Officer; Earl Reilly, Operations Manager; Ryan Borges, Staking Engineer; Kelli Chaon, Customer Engagement Manager; and Jason Weigle, Business Support Analyst.

Debra Schlaman recorded these Minutes at the request of the Board Secretary.

All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

President Brian Zimmerman declared a quorum present.

Attention of the Directors and attendees was directed to the Open Meetings poster.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Morgan made a motion to approve the Agenda as presented. Milanuk seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Yea: All present. Motion carried.

NOTICE OF MEETING

Notice of the meeting was by publication in the Sidney Sun-Telegraph on Wednesday, February 17, 2021, and proof of publication showing such notice as published is attached and thereby made a part of these Minutes. Milanuk made a motion to waive the reading of the meeting notice. Moffat seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Yea: All present. Motion carried.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Jennifer Eckhardt, David Fritz, and Attorney, Kendra Strommen were present.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY 22, 2021, BOARD MINUTES and the FEBRUARY 5, 12, AND 19 SPECIAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Moffat to waive the reading and to approve the January 22, 2021 Board Minutes and the February 5, 12, and 19, Special Board Meeting Minutes as published. Milanuk seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Yea: All present. Motion carried.

Public Hearing & Comment Period

No one appeared before the Board.

GENERAL MANAGER SALARY NOTICE

Copies of Legal Notice L21-054 as published, were included in the Board book.

Milanuk raised the question, should Gulbranson be compensated as the acting General Manager? Gulbranson responded and discussion among the Directors followed. The topic will be addressed again at a later date.

BOARD EDUCATION

Weigle presented three variations of expense reports to the Directors. Following discussion, the Directors approved one of the reports. Weigle will have them ready for the March Board meeting.

BOARD VACANCIES

Two interviews were scheduled to be conducted following the Board meeting, and two more will be conducted in the following week.

GENERAL MANAGER SEARCH

Gulbranson and Strommen reported.

Policy D-4: Selection of General Manager, was presented in the Board book. Following discussion and questions, Morgan made a motion to approve Policy D-4: Selection of General Manager, and Moffat seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Yea: Morgan, Blomenkamp, Moffat, Zimmerman. Milanuk was absent at the time of voting. Motion carried.

INTERIM GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Legislative & Regulatory

The NREA 2021 Bill Tracking document was included in the Board book. Several Bills were discussed by the Directors and Gulbranson. A motion was made by Milanuk to adopt the same stance as NREA on the Legislative Bills. Then Wheat Belt Board and management can support the Board approved positions as needed. Morgan seconded the motion. Yea: All present. Motion carried.

Financials

The Financial report was distributed under separate cover. The year end financials were only preliminary, but no major changes were expected. Hostetler is still waiting for Auditor approval to proceed to close the year 2020 financials.

Gulbranson reported that in the 2021 Large Items Budget, a placeholder for the replacement of the headquarters front doors was included in the amount of \$15,000. The quote to replace the doors came in at \$27,900. Gulbranson asked for an adjustment to the Large Item Budget for the difference of \$12,900. Following questions and discussion concerning the new doors, it was decided to wait until more information/cost on metal doors could be obtained.

Gulbranson reported that a new exhaust fan for the warehouse was needed and the cost of replacement was \$5,300. Following discussion, a motion was made by Moffat to approve the exception to the Budget in the amount of \$5,300 to replace the warehouse exhaust fan. Morgan seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Yea: All present. Motion carried.

Gulbranson reported that Bond rates have dropped to 1.7%. The audited year-end financials need to be approved before going forward. Hostetler heard from the auditors and should have the figures soon.

Legal

The latest NRECA Legal Reporting Services information was included in the supplemental Board book.

Other

Gulbranson reported that at the January Board meeting, discussion was held concerning Wheat Belt memberships. A list of the memberships was included in the Board book. Chaon and Gulbranson reported on the Basin and Tri-State memberships and benefits.

Gulbranson reported that interviews for the accountant position have been held and hope to have someone in the office in April. Letters will go out next week with the offer.

Reporting and discussion were held concerning the Southwest Power Pool rolling blackouts on Tuesday morning, February 16th that affected a portion of Wheat Belt's territory.

Executive Session

An Executive Session was called at 9:25 a.m. by Milanuk to discuss a FERC legal matter, customer, and personnel issues. Moffat seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Yea: All present. Motion carried.

Gulbranson and Strommen remained for the Executive Session. Morgan left the meeting at 9:51 and returned at 10:07. Morgan was not present during the FERC Legal Matter discussion.

A motion was made by Milanuk and seconded by Moffat to resume the meeting at 10:07 a.m. Roll call vote: Yea: All present. Motion carried.

A break was taken at 10:08 a.m.

The meeting resumed at 10:20 a.m.

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE

Gulbranson asked for Board direction on the broadband strategic initiative. Discussion was held on the benefits, cost of time and resources, grants, and the possibility of a market survey concerning broadband to our customers. The consensus was to "pause" for now and wait and see what the Legislature does and then possibly proceed. We would continue to monitor the Legislative bills and complete a market survey to customers to identify a path moving forward.

NONDISCLOSURE AGREEMENTS

Weigle drafted a few Nondisclosure Agreements. Discussion was held by staff, directors and counsel. Following discussion, a standard employee nondisclosure agreement would be developed and placed in the March Board book for approval. Discussion was also held on an Intellectual Property Nondisclosure Agreement.

POWER SUPPLY REPORTS

Tri-State Board Meeting

Morgan discussed his report in the Board book. Questions and discussion followed. Discussion was held on requirement policies with what happened this month from the cold weather. Reliability is the main question for the future.

Basin Reports

Morgan reported on the Basin and partial requirements contract with Tri-State.

MEETING REPORTS

No meetings have taken place.

POLICIES AND RESOLUTIONS

Policy C-7: Payment Responsibility: Added a section to clearly connect contract/prepayment refusal to disconnect and clarified deposit to prepayment wording. A motion was made by Milanuk to approve the recommended changes to Policy C-7. Morgan seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Yea: All present. Motion carried.

Policy C-9: Disconnect for Nonpayment: Clarified wording to match current website. A motion was made by Milanuk to approve the recommended changes to Policy C-9. Moffat seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Yea: All present. Motion carried.

Policy C-10: Reading of Meters & Meter Calibration; C-11: Irrigation Accounts; Policy C-12: Exception to General Provisions; Policy C-13: Nondiscrimination; Policy C-14: Damage to District Property; Policy C-15: Failure of Customer Equipment; Policy C-16: Tree Trimming, and Policy C-17: Yard and Lease/Rental Lights. A motion was made by Morgan to readopt Policies C-10, C-11, C-12, C-13, C-14, C-15, C-16, C-17 and C-18 with no recommended changes. Milanuk seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Yea: All present. Motion carried.

SAFETY ISSUES and SAFETY MEETING MINUTES

The February 11, 2021, Safety Meeting Minutes were included in the Board book and were reviewed. Training: NREA JT&S Load Securement, Truck Recovery, and Tool Inspection videos were shown. Chaon reported on SRS and the service location numbers.

Safety Committee Meeting Minutes

The February 11, 2021, Safety Committee Meeting Minutes were included in the Board book and were reviewed.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

OPERATIONS & OUTAGE REPORTS

Major Outages

Tuesday, February 16th – Reilly reported on the Southwest Power Pool load shedding by Tri-State and NPPD. The Covalt Substation was out for one hour and the Lewellen Substation was out for 45 minutes.

Construction, Maintenance & Operations

Reilly reported that Electro-Test started recloser and substation maintenance.

Crews changed out a pole that was hit by a tractor. Reilly explained that the customer would be billed for the damages.

Borges reported that the construction crew elected not to replace poles in the cold weather as the equipment doesn't work very well and opted to conduct service checks instead. The crew will begin replacing poles east of Gurley.

CORPORATE SERVICES REPORT

Customer Engagement

Gulbranson and Chaon reported on Policy C-9: Disconnect for Nonpayment. A lengthy discussion followed concerning the current policy which references how we will treat disconnected services with livestock. In most cases we disconnect services remotely from the office and do not need to go to the actual service. Direction: If we know there is livestock, we will contact law enforcement when disconnected, otherwise follow policy.

Chaon and Gulbranson reported on delinquent dates on the billing statements. They would like to have a due date for bills rather than due upon receipt with a delinquent date. Questions and discussion followed, and options will be presented in the coming months.

Continuation of Service Policy

Chaon explained the differences in commercial vs. residential accounts. She would like to discontinue the \$50 continuation fee and explained the reasons. If

an account is up for disconnect, it will be disconnected. There will be a one-time grace each year on all accounts. Letters will be sent to customers concerning the \$50 discontinuance of the \$50 continuation fee.

Bankruptcy Discharge Write-off Request

Gulbranson asked for bankruptcy discharge write-off for Account 38180, Location 81768 in the amount of \$5,559.93; Account 38260, Location 81781 in the amount of \$13,153.54; and Account 38279, Location 81784 in the amount of \$6,775.54 in the total amount of \$25,489.01. A motion was made by Moffat and seconded by Morgan to approve the bankruptcy discharge write-off in the amount of \$25,489.01. Roll call vote: Yea: All present. Motion carried.

METERING, INFORMATION and TECHNOLOGY

Weeda was attending the on-line Tech Advantage meeting.

IT Report

No changes to Weeda's report.

Security Report

No changes to Weeda's report.

FUTURE MEETINGS, TRAINING & ARRANGEMENTS

Blomenkamp will attend the NRECA Director Training and Zimmerman would like to receive information also in order to attend.

Weigle discussed the Google calendars with the Directors and how they would like to receive information.

Morgan reported on the NRECA meetings.

ELECTION OF DELEGATES

NRECA: A motion was made by Milanuk appointing Blomenkamp as the voting delegate and Zimmerman as the alternate. Moffat seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Yea: All present. Motion carried.

Other

Gulbranson distributed the ACRE Membership renewal forms to the Directors.

The next Board meeting will be Friday, March 26, 2021, beginning at 8:30 a.m.

FEBRUARY BOARD MEETING ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the President declared the meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.

ATTEST:

Brian Zimmerman, President

Brian Moffat, Secretary