

City of Decorah
Municipal Electric Utility Task Force
January 14, 2021 – 9:00am
Meeting Minutes

Electronic meeting pursuant to Iowa Code section 21.8 – In circumstances where such a meeting is impossible or impractical due to concerns about COVID-19 and social distancing for the safety of commission members and the public.

In support of Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds' proclamation declaring a State of Public Health Disaster Emergency in Iowa, the current COVID-19 situation makes it "impossible and impractical" to meet in one location. Due to this the Decorah City Hall was partially closed to the public for the January 14, 2021 MEU Task Force meeting. Seating was limited to ensure distancing. The public was invited to participate via electronic means.

Members present included: Pete Espinosa, Carly Hayden Foster, Larry Grimstad, Doug Hamilton, Kristine Jepsen, Andy Johnson, Mark Lovelace. Jim Beeghly and Karen McLean.

Others present: Council Liaison Steve Zittergruen, Sustainability Commission chair Jim Martin-Schramm, and City Manager Chad Bird.

There was a total of four people on the Zoom link.

Consider approval of minutes from the January 6, 2021 regular meeting

Motion by Grimstad and second by Lovelace to approve the minutes of the January 6, 2021 MEU task force meeting

Roll call vote: Ayes, unanimous.

Motion passed.

Division of responsibilities

There was general conversation about working with, and communicating with Alliant and the IUB on gathering information as the task force works through its fact finding and assessment.

Espinosa asked if the task force could work directly with Alliant and ask them for their advice on how the task force might go about their work.

Beeghly stated he believed there is an element of trust that needs to be reestablished or developed with Alliant.

McLean said there should be an accurate assessment of the assets and inventory and that seemed to be an issue in the past.

Grimstad noted if a dialogue is opened with Alliant, there should be a timeline so discussions don't drag out unnecessarily.

1. Community Education and Outreach

Hayden-Foster asked if this sub-committee might be tasked with communicating with Alliant AND the IUB as part of the education and outreach purposes.

Johnson said he wondered if the "ask" could be redefined and clarified.

There was discussion about redefining the plan and the ask and task this subcommittee to look at the parameters of the information desired and bring back to the full task force.

Espinosa again urged the team to ask Alliant to be part of the discussion and asked for their advice and comment on the process and questions that the task force should be asking and looking into.

McLean, Espinosa, Beeghly, Lovelace agreed to be on this subcommittee.

2. Communication with IUB

Hayden-Foster suggested this subcommittee be renamed "communication with Alliant AND IUB.

Espinosa, Lovelace, Johnson, Hayden-Foster agreed to be on this subcommittee.

3. Feasibility Study

Hamilton, Johnson, Jepsen, Grimstad agreed to be on this subcommittee.

4. Grant Writing and funding exploration

Jepsen, Grimstad, Hayden-Foster agreed to be on this subcommittee.

Jepsen noted the grant will need to be discussed and sent on to council on February 11 as it has an application submission deadline of February 26.

Discussion on future meeting dates

- a. January 28
- b. Second Thursday of the month
 - i. February 11
 - ii. March 11
 - iii. April 8
 - iv. May 13

Zittergruen discussed being included in subcommittee discussion groups so he is able to update the city council as needed.

McLean set the community education committee meeting for January 21 at 9:00am.

Espinosa said he would be in touch about the communication subcommittee meeting.

Jepsen set the writing meeting for January 28 at 9:00am.

Hamilton set the feasibility meeting for January 21 at 9:00am.

Other business

There was discussion about how best to keep the city council and the public informed about the task force's work and efforts. Bird mentioned the City's media outlets as resources.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:50am by Hamilton / Espinosa.

Respectfully submitted,



Chad A. Bird
City Manager

Sustainability Plan

E.3 ACTION: *Establish a Municipal Electric Utility (MEU) task force and commission a MEU Feasibility Study to be completed by fall 2021 (potential update of previous plan).*