

City of Decorah  
Municipal Electric Utility Task Force  
June 10, 2021 – 9:02am  
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 March 25, 2021 MEU Task Force meeting. Seating was limited to ensure distancing. The public was invited to participate via electronic means.

Members present included: Carly Hayden Foster, Reg Laursen, Mark Lovelace, Andy Johnson, Kristine Jepsen and Karen McLean.

Others present: Mayor Lorraine Borowski, Council Liaison Steve Zittergruen, Sustainability Commission chair Jim Martin-Schramm, and Wanda Hemesath. Several other community members were present.

Items for discussion and possible action

1. Hayden Foster call to order.
2. Approval of April 22nd, 2021 minutes – not in Dropbox so will make a motion to approve at next meeting.
3. Updates:
  - a. Letter requesting information from Alliant
    - i. Hayden-Foster, Johnson, & Hemesath updated that letter was sent from the City. Alliant has reached out to Hemesath with some follow-up questions, which a phone call was supposed to happen later the same day. Hemesath will refer clarifications to the task force and ask that questions are presented in writing to task force, unless they are very simple questions that Hemesath is able to answer on the phone call.
    - ii. McLean suggested that the letter to Alliant be added to the Dropbox, Hemesath will upload the letter so that it is accessible for all.
  - b. Challenges with press releases
    - i. Hayden-Foster mentioned that the local news outlets were not willing to print the press release from the task force. Press release was just an attempt to bring the public up to speed on the developments and work that the task force has completed. Multiple members suggested that the press release may have to come from the city. Mayor and Hemesath said that they could attempt to communicate with the news outlets another option.
  - c. May update to the city council
    - i. Hayden-Foster presented an update to the city council in May.
4. Follow-up from the Powerpoint presentation from Education & Community Outreach subcommittee (McLean & Lovelace)
  - a. City Council has requested an update from this same subcommittee, most likely to present at a work session in July.
  - b. What's next? When do we invite speakers or open up to educational forums?
    - i. McLean & Lovelace – education component will be important going forward. Many misunderstandings or misconceptions with the time that has passed since the 2018 vote. Lovelace also mentioned that having a

speaker on the "process" of a potential MEU would be valuable. McLean mentioned the request of guest speaker from existing MEU communities has been requested.

- ii. Johnson mentioned listening opportunities with guest speakers would be valuable.
  - iii. Mayor reminded the group that the grant was accepted and a portion of the grant provides money to bring in speakers and conduct educational forums
  - iv. Laursen challenged the group to give some sincere thought about the best forums to have these sessions. Who can we reach? How can we reach them? How do we get strong participation?
  - v. Lovelace & Jepsen agreed that with zoom technologies and appropriate planning and repackaging of the information following the sessions, we can reach a good cross-section of the community.
  - vi. Hayden-Foster reminded the group that this is a different process this time, more about gathering information, having educational opportunities, and exchanging information so that the task force has make an informed suggestion/recommendation to the city council.
  - vii. Martin-Schramm suggested invited the chair of the IUB to present to the group on the "process". Lovelace suggested next meeting a list is created of potential speaker or topics and formulate a list of questions that people will want answers to.
5. Future meetings (July 8 & August 12) – same time
  6. Other business
    - a. Lovelace asked if we can assign new task force members to subcommittees at the next meeting.
  7. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:03 am.

Sincerely,



Mark Lovelace  
MEU Task Force member

**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).*