

Decorah Municipal Electric Utility (MEU) Task Force Minutes

City Hall Council Chambers / Electronic meeting

Friday October 1 2021, 12:00pm

Minutes

- 1) Karen McLean called the meeting to order at 12:01. Minutes from the previous meeting were approved unanimously.
- 2) Follow up discussion from the Wednesday September 29th meeting with IUB members: Karen McLean initiated conversation about what IUB Chair Huser meant when she said that the board can not comment on an issue that is already before them on their docket, given that this task force has not yet filed a complaint. Andy Johnson and Jim Martin-Schramm explained that an existing Alliant rate case is before them, and that seemed to be what the IUB members were referring to. Steve Zittergruen asked whether there were two different processes for bringing problems to their attention: is contacting the customer service department of the IUB the same as filing a complaint? Andy Johnson explained yes, we could submit a new and unique complaint about this data request, or we could file a complaint as a component of the existing rate case. Karen McLean asked if Geri Huser said that the staff attorney could help facilitate communication between our taskforce and Alliant. Andy Johnson replied yes. Steve Zittergruen asked if there would be a cost to the city for utilizing this assistance, and Andy Johnson replied that this could probably happen at no cost but this should be confirmed with the IUB.
- 3) IUB filing from Sept 23: Carly Hayden Foster highlighted key parts of the document and explained where it could be found in the Decorah MEU Taskforce Dropbox folder.
- 4) Steps in a municipalization process: Carly Hayden Foster demonstrated the process for accessing the documents in the dropbox, and reviewed the document.
- 5) Taskforce response to Alliant's response to our 2nd data request: Doug Hamilton explained that the draft is still in development. Andy Johnson asked how we want to go about requesting city approval. Steve Zittergruen suggested that the committee finalize the draft of the response, get full taskforce approval of the complaint at the November MEU Taskforce meeting, and then take the complaint to the city. The committee will attempt to have a draft ready for consideration at the (next) November 5th MEU taskforce meeting, and if approved, Carly Hayden Foster will present the letter to the City Council at their November 15th meeting.

6) Other updates from committees:

Reg Laursen from the education and outreach committee asked when we will be moving to the phase of more community conversations, and how we will get people to attend them, and taskforce members discussed options. Reg Laursen asked for clarification on whether we should be advocating for a MEU or having conversations. Steve Zittergruen suggested that when we are presenting information about a potential MEU we should make the best case for and against municipalization. Karen McLean and Mark Lovelace plan to meet with Decorah Jobs in October. Reg also asked if we have access to recent information about reliability and disaster recovery. This needs further investigation.

7) New business:

Mayor Borowski noted that we are coming up on a year since the establishment of the taskforce, and suggested that this would be a good time to review our responsibilities. Mayor Borowski read highlights from the original City Council document (E3) establishing the taskforce. The Mayor acknowledged that we are already in fall of 2021 and we are not yet ready to commission a feasibility study, but that's ok, government moves slow. Mayor Borowski asked the taskforce to showcase the value of an MEU, and taskforce members discussed this suggestion. Steve Zittergruen asked that we issue a written report to the council summarizing our efforts to this point. Carly Hayden Foster will write an update on the MEU taskforce and present it to the City Council at their November 1 meeting.

8) The meeting adjourned at 1pm.

Decorah Municipal Electric Utility Task Force Members in attendance at the October 1 2021 meeting:

Carly Hayden Foster (fosterc@luther.edu)
Larry Grimstad (larrygrimstad@gmail.com)
Doug Hamilton (hamilton.douglas.g@gmail.com)
Kristine Jepsen (kristinejepsen@gmail.com)
Reginald Laursen (laursenr@luther.edu)
Andy Johnson (andy@energydistrict.org)
Tom Marquardt (tkmjj69@gmail.com)
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