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PUBLIC HEARING - 25-206 & 25-205  
VIRTUAL - FEBRUARY 24, 2026 - 6:00 P.M.  
BEFORE THE COURT OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS  
FOR THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

In the Matter of Lake Charlotte Solar, LLC's, Joint  
Application for the Lake Charlotte 150 MW Solar Facility  
and 150 MW Lake Charlotte Battery Energy Storage System  
(BESS) Located in Rutland Township in Martin County,  
Minnesota

MPUC DOCKET NO: IP-7159/GS-25-206  
IP-7159/ESS-25-205  
CAH DOCKET NO: 23-2500-41194

Hearing held remotely via:

Webex & Telephone

February 24, 2026

BEFORE: Judge Suzanne Todnem

STENOGRAPHIC COURT REPORTER: Christine Simons, RMR, RPR

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**APPEARANCES:**

JEREMY DUEHR, Attorney at Law, Fredrikson & Byron, P.A., jduehr@fredlaw.com, appeared on behalf of the Applicant.

**PUC STAFF:**

Cezar Panait

**PUC EIP STAFF:**

Jessica Livingston

WHEREUPON, the following proceedings were duly had and entered of record, to wit:

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I N D E X

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1 JUDGE TODNEM: All right. Good evening.  
2 My name is Suzanne Todnem, and I'm an Administrative  
3 Law Judge with the Court of Administrative Hearings.  
4 And I'd like to welcome you to this public hearing  
5 In the Matter of the Application of Lake Charlotte  
6 Solar, LLC's, Joint Application for the Lake  
7 Charlotte 150-megawatt Solar Facility and  
8 150-megawatt Lake Charlotte Battery Energy Storage  
9 System, BESS, located in Rutland Township in Martin  
0 County, Minnesota.

1 This is CAH Docket Number 23-2500-41194,  
2 and PUC Docket Numbers IP-7159/GS-25-206 for the  
3 solar facility and IP-7159/ESS-25-205 for the BESS  
4 facility. Today is February 24th, 2026, and it is  
5 about 6:00 p.m. And we have convened by  
6 videoconference using the Webex conferencing  
7 platform.

8 Today I will briefly introduce myself --  
9 Oh, I'm sorry, I think the next slide.

0 All right. Today I will briefly  
1 introduce myself, and then you will hear from the  
2 Commission and then the Applicant. And then, lastly  
3 and perhaps most importantly, we will have time for  
4 you, the public, to make comments or ask questions.  
5 I encourage you to comment today. If you would like

1 to speak at this hearing, you may use the raise-hand  
2 icon or send a chat requesting to speak or press \*3  
3 if you are attending by telephone. I will go over  
4 this information again when it is time to hear  
5 public comments and questions.

6 All right. Next slide.

7 So, again, I'm Judge Todnem with the  
8 Court of Administrative Hearings. The Court of  
9 Administrative Hearings is an independent court. It  
0 is not a part of, or affiliated with, the Public  
1 Utilities Commission or the Applicant in this  
2 matter.

3 I have been assigned to preside over this  
4 hearing, compile a record for the Public Utilities  
5 Commission to consider in making a final decision on  
6 the Applicant's request for a site permit and  
7 storage system, and to prepare a report consisting  
8 of findings of fact, conclusions of law, and  
9 recommendations on the joint application.

0 My report will be issued on or about  
1 May 26th, 2026. My report will apply the site  
2 permit criteria set forth in statute and rule, and  
3 those rules can be found in -- or rules and laws can  
4 be found in Minnesota Statutes Chapter 216E and  
5 Minnesota Rules Chapter 7850.

1 My report, however, is not a final  
2 decision. The purpose of my report is to summarize  
3 all the information presented in a neutral and  
4 fact-based manner without advocacy, and to give a  
5 recommendation as to whether the Applicant's request  
6 for a site permit should be granted by the  
7 Commission.

8 The Commission will take my report and  
9 recommendation under advisement, and base its  
0 decision on the record, which includes input from  
1 the Applicant, interested parties, and from  
2 citizens. The Commission anticipates making a final  
3 decision on the site permit application in  
4 July 2026.

5 Next slide.

6 All right. Today is an opportunity for  
7 the public to hear from the Applicant, and also to  
8 provide comments and obtain information from the  
9 parties in this matter. Part of my role is to  
0 ensure that all relevant information is gathered  
1 fairly, including comments from the public, and that  
2 to the extent possible, questions from the members  
3 of the public are answered. Because my review is  
4 limited to the record, the comments you make here or  
5 in writing are the only way to get them into the

1 record, so I encourage you to comment in whatever  
2 form you are comfortable.

3 Your comments here are entered into the  
4 record through the transcript. At this time, I'd  
5 like to point out that we do have a court reporter  
6 present. The court reporter's role is to record  
7 everything that is said as part of the record.  
8 Therefore, it's important that only one person speak  
9 at a time, that speakers talk loudly and clearly,  
0 and that you do not use gestures, such as shaking  
1 your head.

2 If someone wants to see a transcript of  
3 the public hearings, including the one here today,  
4 you may contact the reporter at  
5 reporters@JanetShaddix.com to purchase a copy of the  
6 transcript, or you may contact the Commission to  
7 make arrangements to review a transcript in person  
8 in downtown St. Paul.

9 At this time, I will ask the parties or  
0 the Applicant to offer any proposed exhibits.

1 Mr. Duehr.

2 Did we lose Mr. Duehr?

3 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: He's still here; his  
4 camera is off. Actually, I don't see him any  
5 longer, maybe -- he actually just reconnected.

1 JUDGE TODNEM: I think he's back.

2 Mr. Duehr, at this time I'm looking for  
3 the offering of proposed exhibits.

4 You are muted.

5 MR. JEREMY DUEHR: Thank you, Your Honor.  
6 My connection disconnected me. I am back now.

7 JUDGE TODNEM: Great.

8 MR. JEREMY DUEHR: Your Honor, the  
9 Applicant worked with PUC and PUC EIP staff to  
0 generate an exhibit list, which we will present in  
1 hardcopy to you tomorrow evening and file to the  
2 docket after the public hearings. On that exhibit  
3 list are marked exhibits from the Applicant, marked  
4 as Exhibits LCS 1 through 18, and from the PUC  
5 marked as PUC 1 through 17, and from PUC IEP, marked  
6 as PUC IEP 1 through 8.

7 At this time, Your Honor, we would like  
8 to offer those exhibits into the record.

9 JUDGE TODNEM: All right. Then, those  
0 exhibits will be received into the record.

1 (Exhibits LCS 1 through 18, PUC 1 through  
2 17, and PUC EIP 1 through 8 offered and  
3 received.)

4 JUDGE TODNEM: I will note that copies of  
5 the prefiled testimony are available to the public

1 through the eDockets system, with the exception of  
2 portions that contain trade secret information, if  
3 any.

4 And with that, I will turn it over to the  
5 Commission.

6 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: Good evening,  
7 everyone. My name is Cezar Panait. I'm an engineer  
8 with the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, and  
9 my working title is energy facilities planner. I  
0 work in the energy infrastructure permitting unit,  
1 and I was assigned to work on this permit  
2 application, along with my colleague who will  
3 introduce herself just a little bit later.

4 So a few words about the timeline, and we  
5 have a few slides to talk about. So this is a  
6 table, a review of the timeline of the application,  
7 since the application was filed on June 3rd, and  
8 then the Commission accepted the application as  
9 complete on July 22nd. And then we had a public  
0 information and EA scoping meeting in Fairmont,  
1 Martin County, in the project area, last August, and  
2 then September we had the virtual meeting.

3 There was an environmental assessment  
4 that was developed and filed. My colleague,  
5 Jessica, will talk about that. We are here tonight

1 for the first of a two-series public hearings:  
2 Virtual, and tomorrow we'll be going to Fairmont in  
3 person again, Best Western Inn. And then there's an  
4 associated comment period with these hearings, and  
5 that deadline closes on March 13th.

6 The judge will file -- or compile and  
7 file a report that she talked about, and, lastly,  
8 sometime in July, the Commission -- the five-body  
9 Commission, the Public Utilities Commission, will  
0 meet in an open meeting. We refer to it as the  
1 agenda meeting, regularly scheduled on Thursdays,  
2 and they will deliberate and decide whether to issue  
3 the route permits -- or not the route, sorry, the  
4 site permits: One for the solar project and another  
5 one for the energy storage system. And, more  
6 importantly, if there are any additional permit  
7 conditions that the -- ought to be included with  
8 those permits to mitigate any impacts that the  
9 project might have.

0 These are the summary of some of the  
1 siting criteria that the Commission looks at, as per  
2 the Administrative Rule 7850. General factors  
3 when -- in making a determination whether to grant a  
4 site permit, the Commission looks at factors. And  
5 these are just some of them, not an all-inclusive

1 list, mainly looking at: Conserve resources and  
2 minimize the environmental impacts caused by the  
3 project; looking to minimize human settlement and  
4 other land-use conflicts; and nonetheless, ensuring  
5 an efficient and cost-effective power -- electric  
6 power system, including the electric transmission  
7 infrastructure.

8 The written comment period following  
9 these two hearings will -- again, will stay open  
0 until March 13th at 4:30 p.m. We ask members of the  
1 public and any local and state agencies to kindly  
2 try to submit comments in by that deadline.

3 Although, the Commission has the option to consider  
4 and include any filed -- late-filed comments if  
5 there's a justification for being filed a little  
6 late.

7 A couple of means to submit your  
8 comments, the most efficient one and effective, I  
9 should say, is to submit online. And there's a web  
0 address there where people can go to and follow the  
1 prompts to add their comments to this particular  
2 project. Also, comments can be e-mailed to us, by  
3 sending an e-mail to [consumer.PUC@state.mn.us](mailto:consumer.PUC@state.mn.us), and  
4 also we accept comments, handwritten or typed  
5 comments, through U.S. mail service.

1           In providing comments, we ask members of  
2           the public to kindly refer to the three questions  
3           below, which were also included in the notice of  
4           tonight's public hearing. Namely, whether the  
5           Commission should issue a site permit for the  
6           proposed project, whether the Commission should  
7           issue a site permit for the proposed battery energy  
8           storage, and if granted -- these permits -- what, if  
9           any, additional conditions or requirements should be  
0           included in the permits for the proposed project.

1           Additional information: So we have the  
2           electronic filing system. We refer to it as  
3           eDockets, and the right side of the screen shows a  
4           screenshot of what the eDockets page looks like. So  
5           the address is to the left. So by going to the  
6           Commission eDocket system and entering the docket  
7           numbers. And this particular application has two  
8           docket numbers: One, 25-205, that refers to the  
9           energy storage system; and 25-206, that refers to  
0           the solar project application.

1           So -- and then once you arrive in that  
2           website, then you could see all the docket --  
3           documents that have been eFiled. And click on them  
4           and open and read to see what each document is  
5           about, beginning with the application submission in

1 June and everything that's happened subsequent to  
2 that.

3 If anybody's interested in getting  
4 automatic e-mail notification for when a new  
5 document is filed, people can subscribe to that just  
6 by going to the second link on the bottom left of  
7 the page, and follow the prompts to add your e-mail  
8 for automatic future notifications.

9 With that, this is the time to turn it  
0 over to my colleague, Jessica, to talk about the  
1 environmental assessment.

2 MS. JESSICA LIVINGSTON: Thanks, Cezar.

3 Good evening, everybody. My name is  
4 Jessica Livingston, and I am the IEP environmental  
5 review manager here at the PUC. So my job is to  
6 prepare the environmental assessment that was done  
7 for the Lake Charlotte Solar project.

8 So the purpose of an environmental  
9 assessment is to serve as the environmental review  
0 document for both the solar and battery storage site  
1 permits. So what that means is the document looks  
2 at any potential human or environmental impacts  
3 related to constructing, operating, or  
4 decommissioning the project.

5 So things like air quality, also things

1 very specific to the actual site, like soil  
2 properties, ecosystem impacts. It's a very wide  
3 span of things that the EA covers. The purpose of  
4 the environmental assessment is to be used by the  
5 Commission in order to make an informed decision  
6 when it comes to the permitting of this project. So  
7 within the EA, there are things that are identified  
8 that, maybe, will be impacted by constructing or  
9 operating the project on different levels: Minimum  
0 impact, moderate impact, or maybe a more intense  
1 impact.

2 Some of those impacts can be mitigated by  
3 strategies that are in the site permits, and the  
4 Commission can determine if those site permits need  
5 to be modified, or if there needs to be special  
6 conditions included within the site permits based on  
7 things identified in the environmental assessment.

8 The purpose of the environmental  
9 assessment is also to allow the public to be  
0 informed in the decision being made about this  
1 project. So if you all, as local residents of the  
2 area, have something that you think should be  
3 additionally studied within the environmental  
4 assessment or taken into consideration when it comes  
5 to special permit conditions that would be something

1 the Commission would want to hear about. So if  
2 anyone has questions about anything related to  
3 environmental review, please let me know.

4 Next slide, please.

5 There are a couple different ways that  
6 you can access the environmental assessment. So,  
7 first, would be on the Public Utilities Commission  
8 project website, which is available on the link  
9 PUC.EIP.MN.gov/web/project/16339. And then if you  
0 scroll to the bottom of this webpage, under docket  
1 documents, you can click view project documents, and  
2 choose the Lake Solar -- Lake Charlotte Solar  
3 environmental assessment.

4 There are also appendices affiliated with  
5 the assessment that have different attachments, like  
6 maps, as well as the scoping decision and other  
7 appendices related to the EA. You can also access  
8 the environmental assessment on the Public Utilities  
9 Commission's eDocket website, which is available on  
0 www.eDockets.state.mn.us/dockets. The docket number  
1 you want to enter for this project would be 25-205  
2 or 25-206, and then click search at the bottom of  
3 that search page. The environmental assessment will  
4 also show up, along with its appendices, within the  
5 eDockets for either site permit.

1                   There are also a limited number of print  
2 copies. One of them is available right now at the  
3 Martin County Library located in Fairmont. If you  
4 ask the librarian, they would be able to make --  
5 they would be able to make this available for you.

6                   And there are a limited number of print  
7 copies available on request. I'm going to have a  
8 couple of these to be able to view tomorrow during  
9 the in-person meeting. But if you would like your  
0 own copy, just please send me an e-mail, and I can  
1 get something pulled together and sent to you in the  
2 next few weeks here. Thank you very much.

3                   Next slide.

4                   And that is all I have for you today, so  
5 I will hand it back to Cezar. Thank you.

6                   MR. CEZAR PANAIT: Thank you, Jessica.

7                   And with that, I believe the next slide  
8 goes into the description of the project itself.

9                   Marta, please.

0                   MS. MARTA LASCH: Thank you, Cezar.

1                   So my name is Marta Lasch. I'm a  
2 permitting lead with Geronimo Power. I'll ask my  
3 colleagues to introduce themselves: Jeremy, Karsen,  
4 and then Eric.

5                   MR. JEREMY DUEHR: Good evening. Jeremy

1 Duehr, with Fredrikson & Byron, on behalf of the  
2 Applicant.

3 MR. KARSEN RUMPF: Hello, Karsen Rumpf,  
4 senior project manager handling the Lake Charlotte  
5 Solar project.

6 MR. ERIC WOOD: Eric Wood, senior  
7 consultant with Energy Safety Response Group.

8 MS. MARTA LASCH: All right, thank you.  
9 Next slide, please.

0 So the Lake Charlotte Solar project is  
1 being developed by Geronimo Power. We're  
2 headquartered in Bloomington. We've been developing  
3 renewable energy projects in southwest Minnesota for  
4 20 -- 20 years now. We were founded by Noel Rahn,  
5 when he was approached by a wind developer and saw  
6 what they were doing and thought: I can do that.

7 And so he started his first wind project  
8 on his family land near Mountain Lake. Since then,  
9 we have developed over 1,000 megawatts of renewable  
0 projects in Minnesota. We operate 165 megawatts of  
1 solar here, and then, more broadly, we have  
2 2,800 megawatts in operation or under construction  
3 throughout the U.S.

4 And we're here to talk about Lake  
5 Charlotte.

1 Next slide, please.

2 So some of this Jessica covered. The  
3 solar and storage project are both proposed to be  
4 150 megawatts. We have roughly 1,300 acres under  
5 site control, and about 1,000 of that is proposed to  
6 be fenced in our preliminary designs. We're  
7 interconnecting to the existing Rutland substation  
8 within the project area. Construction may start as  
9 early as early summer 2027, and we're targeting  
0 operation in the fall of 2028.

1 I believe Jessica and Cezar already  
2 covered some of the history of the application, so  
3 next slide.

4 All right. Here's a map of the proposed  
5 project. Pink would be the project boundary,  
6 fencing is the dashed line, and green and the  
7 slightly yellow-green areas are the primary and  
8 alternate array. The blue box represents our  
9 proposed project substation, and to the west of  
0 that, the pink rectangle represents the storage  
1 area.

2 Next slide.

3 If any of those in attendance are  
4 unfamiliar with the components of a solar project,  
5 they are made up of the solar panels themselves; the

1 racking system that holds that; the piles which they  
2 are mounted on and that are, you know, driven into  
3 the ground as the foundation for the panels; all of  
4 the electrical wiring that connects the panels to  
5 the inverters and from the inverters to the  
6 substation.

7 This is an electrical generating  
8 facility, and so we are required to have security  
9 fencing. We are proposing an ag style for Lake  
0 Charlotte Solar. The BESS project will have a  
1 chain-link fence.

2 Within the project area, to connect the  
3 key components such as the inverters, are access  
4 roads. The substation, which will collect all of  
5 the electrical cabling and step it up and connect to  
6 the -- to the grid associated with this project is  
7 the -- the battery project, the battery enclosure.

8 Next slide.

9 So we are proposing a storage facility  
0 with the solar project, and this is because of the  
1 flexibility that it provides to renewable energy  
2 generation. We can charge the batteries when demand  
3 is low, and discharge the batteries when demand is  
4 high -- when electrical needs are high.

5 These are battery units, which are

1 designed and intended to operate outdoors 365 days a  
2 year, in rain, snow, or sleet, what have you, and  
3 different than what your home battery systems may  
4 look like.

5 Next slide.

6 Construction will have a number of  
7 phases. Grading; the picture on the right shows  
8 pile installation or pier installation; and the  
9 upper left-hand corner, access road construction;  
0 and in the lower left-hand corner, delivery of  
1 the -- an inverter there. But deliveries will be a  
2 constant activity on-site until all of the  
3 components and equipment are delivered.

4 Next slide.

5 As I mentioned earlier, there are a  
6 lot -- there's a lot of electrical cabling that  
7 connects each solar panel to the next, and then  
8 routes those cables to a combiner box. Which then  
9 goes to an inverter, where the direct current  
0 electricity is converted to alternating current,  
1 which can be put onto the electrical grid.

2 And for the electrical cabling that  
3 connects the panels, that is now collected  
4 aboveground, and underground cabling is limited  
5 typically to the cables from the combiner box to the

1 inverter and from the inverter to the substation.

2 Next slide.

3 Here you can see a few pictures of what  
4 construction, restoration, and operation look like.  
5 We have a vegetation management plan, and an AIMP,  
6 an agricultural impact management plan, which  
7 outlines the best management practices to ensure a  
8 well-established seed mix, a perennial seed mix, and  
9 limit impact to agricultural activities.

0 You can see here there's quite a bit of  
1 space between the panels and the fencing here. And  
2 this shows chain-link fencing, but, again, we're  
3 proposing an ag style fencing for Lake Charlotte  
4 Solar.

5 Next slide.

6 Here you can see how the vegetation will  
7 evolve over the first handful of years of the  
8 project's life, with that perennial seed mix taking  
9 some time to -- to take root and establish itself  
0 during this time. Mowing and vegetation maintenance  
1 is important to ensure that we manage weeds  
2 effectively and encourage the establishment of the  
3 desired seed mix.

4 Next slide.

5 We are proposing, since our last public

1 hearing, the addition of a landscape screening  
2 buffer along Charlotte Oak Drive, which borders the  
3 southwestern corner of the project. Yes, this is --  
4 will be made up of the same screening plan that is  
5 proposed south of Northrop. And this is the only  
6 change to the layout at this time.

7 Next slide.

8 Here we have some visual simulations.  
9 This depicts what the screening will look like --  
0 may look like for what is planned south of Northrop.  
1 Behind the vegetation, you can see the fencing and  
2 solar panels.

3 Next slide.

4 This is another visual simulation, this  
5 time of the project substation, the O&M building in  
6 the middle, and on the very right end in the  
7 picture, the battery storage facility.

8 Next slide.

9 Next, we have a picture of the existing  
0 conditions along Charlotte Oak Drive looking east  
1 from the roadway through the trees along the road.  
2 We show the proposed vegetation, vegetative  
3 landscape screening, and behind that, the solar  
4 array.

5 Next slide.

1                   And this is an enlarged visual simulation  
2                   that was on the previous slide.

3                   I'll add that hardcopies of the visual  
4                   simulations will be available at the in-person  
5                   hearing tomorrow, and they're also included in our  
6                   testimony, which Jeremy referenced, is on the docket  
7                   and available to the public.

8                   Next slide.

9                   This is another visual simulation, this  
0                   time taken from the east side of Trunk Highway 15  
1                   looking north. You can see the solar panels just to  
2                   the west of the existing 345 transmission line.

3                   Next slide.

4                   This is a map that just shows where those  
5                   photos were taken and the orientation of the view.

6                   Next slide.

7                   We've done a lot of environmental review  
8                   and agency coordination prior to our application  
9                   submittal, and we've continued that outreach and  
0                   coordination since submitting the application to the  
1                   PUC. We expect to conclude our SHPO consultation  
2                   within the next few weeks. We also expect to  
3                   receive the storage project's surplus service  
4                   interconnection results in Q2 of 2026.

5                   We've conducted some local outreach to

1 our -- the project's -- some of the project's  
2 neighbors, as well as nearby first responders, the  
3 Northrop Fire Department, and Fairmont Fire  
4 Department. We provided a first responder battery  
5 storage safety training in November.

6 Agencies or groups that we'll continue to  
7 coordinate with throughout the permitting process  
8 and ahead of construction. Martin County Drainage  
9 Administration, some of the alternate array that's  
0 shown in the site plans would be dependent on the  
1 results of drain tile reroute or abandonment  
2 petitions. So they are a key stakeholder that we  
3 will engage with.

4 We'll also be engaging with Martin County  
5 Soil and Water Conservation District to permit  
6 impacts to wetlands that are interior to the  
7 project. Which are shown to be avoided in the  
8 current design, but in preconstruction filings, we  
9 will address those changes.

0 At the state level, we'll continue our  
1 coordination with MnDOT, DNR, SHPO, MPCA, BWSR; and  
2 at the federal level, the Army Corps of Engineers.

3 Next slide.

4 The project may have some economic  
5 benefits to the surrounding community through the

1 production tax that the projects will produce. Its  
2 electricity is taxed. Roughly 72,000 will go to  
3 Rutland Township, and roughly 287,000 will go to  
4 Martin County. There'll be roughly 200 jobs needed  
5 at peak construction, and during operations, we  
6 anticipate three to four full-time jobs to support  
7 the solar project and one to two jobs to support the  
8 storage project.

9 Next slide.

0 Karsen and I are the main points of  
1 contact for the project. Please feel free to reach  
2 out if you have any questions. Thank you.

3 JUDGE TODNEM: All right. Next slide,  
4 please.

5 All right. So, first, I want to thank  
6 the Commission and the Applicant for those  
7 presentations. And now it's time for members of the  
8 public to make question -- or to make comments or  
9 ask questions.

0 Next slide.

1 So, first, I want to welcome and  
2 encourage each of you to comment. We will call on  
3 speakers by name or phone number in order. You are  
4 encouraged to turn on your camera if you are  
5 participating through the Webex video option. We

1 ask speakers to limit their initial comments to five  
2 minutes, but you can rejoin the queue to speak again  
3 if you need more time or if you think of more  
4 comments later after everyone has had a first  
5 opportunity to speak.

6 In particular, the Commission is  
7 interested in comments about the human and  
8 environmental impacts of the project and how the  
9 impacts can be addressed or mitigated; and if the  
0 site permits are granted, what additional conditions  
1 or requirements should be included in the site  
2 permits for the proposed projects.

3 If you have questions about the project,  
4 now is your opportunity to ask them. And I ask that  
5 you direct your questions to me, and I will field  
6 them out to the panel as appropriate. The panel can  
7 then address your questions here or provide a  
8 written response during the comment period that is  
9 open until 4:30 p.m. on March 13th.

0 Please note that no chat messages will be  
1 made a part of the record. So please do not submit  
2 your comments or questions through the chat  
3 function. Only the oral record that the court  
4 reporter can record is part of the record.

5 Next slide.

1 All right. So if you would like to  
2 speak, please raise your hand or send a chat  
3 indicating that you would like to speak, or press \*3  
4 if you are participating by phone. And then I'll  
5 just ask Mr. Panait to monitor the attendees to see  
6 if anyone is interested in commenting or asking a  
7 question. Again, I encourage all members of the  
8 public to ask any question you might have of either  
9 the Commission or the Applicant, or to make any  
0 comment you might have.

1 Any questions or comments? This is a  
2 very important part of the process, and like I  
3 mentioned before, it's the only way to get your  
4 comments into the record, either orally here or  
5 through written comments.

6 I will also note that I do review written  
7 comments and oral comments equally. So please  
8 choose whichever method you feel most comfortable  
9 with. But if you do make an oral comment or  
0 question, you can get an immediate response,  
1 potentially. So, again, I encourage you to take  
2 advantage of this opportunity.

3 Mr. Panait, I just want to make sure I'm  
4 not missing any raised hands or other indications  
5 that somebody would like to speak?

1 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: No, Your Honor. We  
2 have no raised hands or chat messages.

3 JUDGE TODNEM: Okay.

4 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: Let me look one more  
5 time. I'll look in the chat, also. I don't see  
6 any -- any messages or any raised hands.

7 JUDGE TODNEM: Okay. Last call for any  
8 questions or comments?

9 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: I do have a question,  
0 if I may, Your Honor?

1 JUDGE TODNEM: Certainly.

2 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: Just a question for  
3 the Applicant, for Marta or Jeremy. On slide 31 --  
4 I'm going to it again -- maybe if you could spell  
5 out these acronyms on the bottom for the state  
6 agencies and federal agencies for the members of the  
7 public to know what these are?

8 MS. MARTA LASCH: Certainly. Would you  
9 like me to name all of the acronyms or the --  
0 specifically the agencies?

1 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: The agencies, yes, the  
2 last line.

3 MS. MARTA LASCH: Okay. Yes. MnDOT is  
4 the Minnesota Department of Transportation; MDNR  
5 would be the Minnesota Department of Natural

1 Resources; MN SHPO is the Minnesota State Historical  
2 Preservation Office; MPCA is the Minnesota Pollution  
3 Control Agency, and BWSR -- B-W-S-R, BWSR is the  
4 Board of Water and Soil Resources; U.S. ACE is the  
5 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

6 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: Thank you.

7 JUDGE TODNEM: Thank you. That was a  
8 good question, and thank you for the immediate  
9 response.

0 MS. MARTA LASCH: Certainly.

1 JUDGE TODNEM: Are there any other  
2 questions or comments from members of the public?

3 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: No questions.

4 JUDGE TODNEM: All right. So then with  
5 that, I just want to remind everyone that written  
6 comments are accepted until 4:30 p.m. on March 13th,  
7 2026. You can submit your comments online using the  
8 eDockets system, by e-mail, or by U.S. postal  
9 service mail. All comments submitted by the  
0 deadline will be considered regardless of the form  
1 in which they are received.

2 Please remember to put in the subject  
3 line of your correspondence the PUC docket number  
4 and the CAH docket number. They are MPUC Docket  
5 Numbers IP- -- well, I think they can probably use

1 the shorter numbers, which are 25-206 or 25-205, and  
2 the CAH Docket Number, which is 23-2500-41194.

3 All right. Last call, any questions or  
4 comments?

5 MR. CEZAR PANAIT: No questions.

6 JUDGE TODNEM: Okay. Then, with that, I  
7 want to thank everyone for taking time out of your  
8 busy lives to attend this hearing. It is important  
9 that we inform the public and that we gather as much  
0 public input as we can on these projects. Again, we  
1 will have a hearing in person tomorrow evening,  
2 starting at 6:00 p.m. in Fairmont. And with that,  
3 we are adjourned.

4 (Hearing adjourned at 6:43 p.m.)  
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1 STATE OF MINNESOTA )  
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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, Christine Simons, do hereby  
 certify that the above and foregoing transcript,  
 consisting of the preceding ^ add pages is a  
 correct transcript of my stenographic notes, and is  
 a full, true and complete transcript of the  
 proceedings to the best of my ability.

Dated February ^ add, 2026.

/s/ Christine Simons  
 CHRISTINE SIMONS  
 Registered Merit Reporter  
 Registered Professional Reporter

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