

The Commission met on **Thursday, February 26, 2015**, with Chair Heydinger and Commissioners Lange, Lipschultz, and Tuma present.

The following matters came before the Commission:

TELECOMMUNICATIONS AGENDA

P-999/SA-15-81

In the Matter of Annual Update of Telephone Exchange Boundaries

Commissioner Lipschultz moved to accept the boundary revisions agreed to by the companies as reflected in the comments of the Minnesota Department of Commerce (the Department) and authorize the Department to upload all revised shape files to the Federal Communications Commission boundary data website no later than March 16, 2015.

The motion passed 4 – 0.

ENERGY AGENDA

G-011/M-13-669

In the Matter of a Petition by Minnesota Energy Resources Corporation (MERC-Consolidated) for Approval of Changes in Contract Demand Entitlements for the 2013-2014 Heating Season Supply Plan effective November 1, 2013

G-011/M-13-670

In the Matter of a Petition by Minnesota Energy Resources Corporation (MERC-Northern Natural Gas (NNG)) for Approval of Changes in Contract Demand Entitlements for the 2013-2014 Heating Season Supply Plan effective November 1, 2013

Commissioner Lange moved to do the following:

1. Approve MERC's demand entitlement petitions for 2013-2014, effective November 1, 2013, for its two Purchased Gas Adjustment (PGA) areas – MERC-Consolidated and MERC-NNG.
2. Accept MERC's peak-day analysis with the caveat that the Department cannot fully verify the results of MERC's analysis for all of MERC's PGA areas.
3. Accept MERC's proposed level of demand entitlement for all of its PGA areas.
4. Allow MERC's proposed recovery of associated demand costs effective November 1, 2013, for all of its PGA areas.

5. Note that the issue of storage recovery costs was already decided by the Commission in its August 6, 2014 Order in MERC's 2007-2008 demand entitlement petitions.

The motion passed 4 – 0.

G-008/GR-13-316

In the Matter of the Application of CenterPoint Energy Minnesota Gas for Authority to Increase Natural Gas Rates in Minnesota

Commissioner Lipschultz moved to do the following:

1. Accept the proposed communication plan for the revenue decoupling education and consumer outreach program of CenterPoint Energy Minnesota Gas (CenterPoint).
2. Take no action on whether to delegate to the Commission's Executive Secretary authority to approve CenterPoint's revenue decoupling of customer notices, bill insert, fact sheets, frequently asked questions (FAQs) and other education and consumer outreach materials.

The motion passed 4 – 0.

ET-2, E-015/CN-14-787

ET-2, E-015/TL-14-797

In the Matter of the Application of Great River Energy and Minnesota Power for a Certificate of Need and a Route Permit for the Menahga Area 115 kV Transmission Line Project in Hubbard, Wadena, and Becker Counties

Commissioner Lange moved to do the following:

1. Accept the need and route permit application as complete.
2. Direct the use of the informal review process to develop the record for the certificate of need.
3. Approve joint hearings and combined environmental review for the certificate of need and route permit proceedings.
4. Delegate administrative authority to the Executive Secretary and take the following actions:
 - A. Designate Tracy Smetana, Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, 121 Seventh Place East, Suite 350, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-2147, (651) 296-0406, to act as the staff member to facilitate citizen participation in the process.
 - B. Request that the Department continue to study issues and indicate during the hearing process its position on the reasonableness of granting a certificate to Great River Energy and Minnesota Power (Applicants).

- C. Require that Applicants facilitate in every reasonable way the continued examination of the issues by the Department and Commission staff.
 - D. Require Applicants to place a compact disc or printed of the application for review in a government center and/or public library in each county where the proposed transmission line is located.
 - E. Direct Commission staff to work with the administrative law judge to select a suitable location for a public hearings on the application.
 - F. Direct Applicants to work with the staff of the Commission to arrange for publication of the notice of the hearings in newspapers of general circulation at least ten (10) days prior to the hearings, that the notice be in the form of visible display ads, and proof of publication of the ads be obtained from the newspapers selected.
5. Take no action on an advisory task force at this time.

The motion passed 4 – 0.

E-015/TL-14-977

In the Matter of the Application of Minnesota Power for a Route Permit for the Line 16 Reroute Project in St. Louis County

Commissioner Tuma moved to do the following:

- 1. Accept the application as complete.
- 2. Appoint a Commission staff person as public advisor.
- 3. Take no action on an advisory task force at this time.
- 4. Grant a variance to the ten-day timeline to facilitate the Commission’s input on whether additional routes should be considered to 40 days, subject to the Executive Secretary’s authority to seek additional time from the Commission.
- 5. Direct staff to formally contact relevant state agencies to request their participation in the development of the record and public hearings under Minnesota Statutes, section 216E.10, subd. 3, and request that state agencies submit comments prior to the last day of the public hearing.
- 6. Direct staff to electronically file a generic route permit template into the record of this proceeding.
- 7. Request that the Department begin the environmental review process and route selection, including identifying alternative sites or routes; to conduct public scoping meetings and issue notices required in that process; and to perform related administrative tasks, including coordinating advisory task forces.

8. Request that the Department present draft route alternatives to facilitate Commission input to the Commissioner of Commerce on the scope of the environmental assessment prior to its issuance.

The motion passed 4 – 0.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION: May 27, 2015



Daniel P. Wolf, Executive Secretary