

The Commission met on **Thursday, January 21, 2021**, with Chair Sieben and Commissioners Means, Schuerger, Sullivan, and Tuma present.

The following matters were taken up by the Commission:

**E-015/PA-20-839**

**In the Matter of Minnesota Power's Approval of a Purchase Agreement with Spalj Real Estate, LLC.**

Commissioner Tuma moved that the Commission:

1. Approve Minnesota Power's sale of the Crosby Service Center with the conditions as recommended by the Department on pages 6–7 of its December 23, 2020 Comments.

The motion passed 5–0.

**E-111/M-20-744**

**In the Matter of a Petition by Dakota Electric Association Requesting Approval to Limit the Availability of Temporary Service Extensions to Commercial Accounts Only.**

Commissioner Tuma moved that the Commission:

1. Approve Dakota Electric Association's petition to limit availability of temporary service extension to commercial accounts only, with the condition that Dakota Electric Association will make every effort to communicate to contractors that have received this service over the last year of the change in availability of temporary service and that the change would not go into effect until March 1, 2021.

The motion passed 5–0.

**G-011/M-20-636**

**In the Matter of Minnesota Energy Resources Corporation's (MERC or the Company) Request for Change in Demand Units for its Consolidated Purchased Gas Adjustment (PGA) area.**

Chair Sieben moved that the Commission:

1. Accept the Company's proposed level of demand entitlement.

2. Allow MERC to recover associated demand costs through the monthly PGA effective November 1, 2020.

The motion passed 5–0.

**G-011/M-20-637**

**In the Matter of Minnesota Energy Resources Corporation's (MERC or the Company) Request for Change in Demand Units for the Northern Natural Gas (NNG) Purchased Gas Adjustment (PGA) Area.**

Commissioner Sullivan moved that the Commission:

1. Accept the Company's proposed level of demand entitlement.
2. Allow MERC to recover associated demand costs through the monthly PGA effective November 1, 2020.

The motion passed 5–0.

**E-015/M-20-828**

**In the Matter of Minnesota Power's Petition for the Approval of the Acquisition of Solar Power to Support Economic Relief and Recovery**

**E,G-999/CI-20-492**

**In the Matter of an Inquiry into Utility Investments that May Assist in Minnesota's Economic Recovery from the COVID-19 Pandemic**

Commissioner Tuma moved that the Commission:

1. Require that the filing that Minnesota Power intends to submit by February 4, 2021, contain the following information:
  - a. Detailed and transparent support for all elements of the cost and energy production estimates for each of the three proposed solar projects, including but not limited to:
    - i. interconnection costs;
    - ii. labor and materials costs; and capacity factors;
    - iii. a cost cap proposal as a rate payer protection; and

- iv. a discussion of the LCOEs compared to same and similar sized and located solar projects.
  - b. A detailed explanation of the proposed ownership structure and associated agreements for each project, including but not limited to:
    - i. how costs will be allocated or shared between MP and its newly created affiliates;
    - ii. copies of the affiliated interest agreements;
    - iii. the terms under which MP will lease its land for the solar projects, and why those terms are reasonable;
    - iv. copies of the lease agreements;
    - v. the structure and terms of the power purchase agreements (PPAs) and why those terms are reasonable;
    - vi. the impact the proposed ownership structure has on the cost of each project;
    - vii. the potential risks the proposed ownership structure may pose to ratepayers; and
    - viii. how the projects will be affected if Minnesota Power is unable to find tax equity investors to partner with, or if a partner drops out before the project is completed.
  - c. A detailed explanation of the proposed accounting and ratemaking treatment of the solar projects.
  - d. A detailed discussion of all alternatives to the three proposed projects that MP considered but rejected, including but not limited to:
    - i. alternative ownership structures for the three proposed solar projects;
    - ii. alternative projects at sites inside and outside of Minnesota Power's territory under any ownership structure; and
    - iii. any cost/benefit or other analyses that resulted in the rejection of all alternatives considered.
- 2. Require that all interested parties be provided, at a minimum, the standard 30 days to file initial comments.

3. Require that Minnesota Power's filing to be submitted by February 4, 2021, include individualized project costs and LCOEs for each of the Laskin, Sylvan, and Duluth Solar projects.
4. Delegate authority to the Executive Secretary to set the procedural schedule through a notice which will contemplate a four-month timetable to hear and decide the proposals.

The motion passed 5–0.

**E,G-002/CI-02-2034**

**In the Matter of an Investigation and Audit of Northern States Power Company's Service Quality Reporting**

**E,G-002/M-12-383**

**In the Matter of the Petition of Northern States Power Company d/b/a Xcel Energy for Approval of Amendments to its Natural Gas and Electric Service Quality Tariffs**

Commissioner Sullivan moved that the Commission take the following actions:

1. Accept Xcel Energy's 2019 QSP filing as in compliance with the annual filing requirement included in the Section 1.9.D of the Company's tariff.
2. Deny Xcel Energy's request to dismiss the 129 complaints from counting toward the Company's Quality Service Plan performance threshold for "Customer Complaints."

The motion passed 3-2.

Commissioner Tuma moved that the Commission take the following actions:


1. Require Xcel Energy to work with stakeholders to develop, outside the QSP customer complaint metrics, a different mechanism or tariff to resolve solar installation issues before they become QSP complaints, that provides clear transparency to the installers and customers for tracking and holding accountable Xcel Energy's compliance with the MN DIP timelines. Require Xcel, by June 1, 2021, or another date agreed upon with the Executive Secretary, to propose such a tariff or mechanism.
2. Establish, beginning with the first quarter of 2021, an Xcel Energy quarterly reporting requirement detailing the number of interconnection requests received, the number and status of interconnection requests in process, the number of interconnection requests withdrawn and the reason, and the number of interconnection requests successfully completed. The reports shall include, at a minimum, a detailed assessment of compliance with required timelines, the number and status of any disputes or

complaints, and a description of any work in progress to improve the interconnection process. The Commission delegates authority to the Executive Secretary to establish the specific details for quarterly reporting of Xcel Energy's compliance with the interconnection process. The quarterly reporting will be guided by the updated temporary annual reporting required in Docket No. E999/CI-16-521.

The motion passed 5–0.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

**APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION: August 11, 2021**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Will Seuffert", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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**Will Seuffert, Executive Secretary**