1	FEBRUARY 11, 2025 - PREHEARING					
2	PUC E-017/GS-24-309 - OAH 23-2500-40576					
3	BEFORE THE OFFICE OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS					
4	FOR THE MINNESOTA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION					
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7	In the Matter of the Application of Otter Tail Power					
8	Company for a Site Permit for the up to 66 MW Solway Solar Project in Beltrami County, Minnesota					
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11	OAH DOCKET NO. 23-2500-40576					
12	PUC DOCKET NO. E-017/GS-24-309					
13						
14	Held Remotely via Teams					
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18	Met, pursuant to Notice, at 11:00 a.m.					
19	in the morning on February 11, 2025.					
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23						
24	BEFORE: Judge Suzanne Todnem					
25	STENOGRAPHIC REPORTER: Jonna Schrupp					

1	APPEARANCES:
2	CHRISTY BRUSVEN, Attorney at Law,
3	Fredrikson and Byron, Preston Riewer, Otter Tail
4	Power Company, appeared for and on behalf of the
5	Applicant.
6	AMRIT HUNDAL, Assistant Attorney General,
7	and LOGAN HICKS and Tessa Kothlow, Energy
8	Environmental Review and Analysis, appeared for and
9	on behalf of the Minnesota Department of Commerce.
10	
11	PUC Staff:
12	Trevor Culbertson
13	Cezar Panait
14	
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17	WHEREUPON, the following proceedings were
18	duly had and entered of record, to wit:
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1	JUDGE TODNEM: It is 11:00, so we can
2	begin.
3	We are here in the matter of the
4	Application of Otter Tail Power Company for a site
5	permit for the up to 66 megawatt Solway Solar
6	Project in Beltrami County, Minnesota.
7	This is OAH Docket No. 23-2500-40576 and
8	PUC E-017/GS-24-309. Today is February 11th, 2025,
9	and the time is 11:01 a.m.
10	My name is Suzanne Todnem and I'm an
11	Administrative Law Judge with the Office of
12	Administrative Hearings and we are here today for a
13	Prehearing Conference pursuant to the Amended Order
14	for a Prehearing Conference issued on February 10th,
15	2025, to discuss scheduling and other preliminary
16	matters.
17	At this time I'd like the parties to
18	please state your names for the record, spelling
19	your first and last names, stating whom you
20	represent and your gender designations, beginning
21	with the PUC.
22	MR. CULBERTSON: Trevor Culbertson with
23	Public Utilities Commission, the energies facility
24	planner. My name is spelled T-r-e-v-o-r
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1	MR. PANAIT: Good morning, Cezar Panait.							
2	I'm the public advisor for this project, C-e-z-a-r,							
3	last name is Panait, P-a-n-a-i-t.							
4	JUDGE TODNEM: Thank you. Before we move							
5	on, if you could also please include your gender							
6	designations.							
7	MR. CULBERTSON: Trevor is he/him.							
8	MR. PANAIT: Me too, he.							
9	JUDGE TODNEM: Thank you, and the							
10	Department of Commerce.							
11	MS. HUNDAL: Good morning, Your Honor.							
12	This is Amrit Hundal, that is spelled A-m-r-i-t							
13	H-u-n-d-a-1, gender designation she/her, and I am							
14	representing the Department.							
15	MR. HICKS: I am here with the Department							
16	of Commerce as well, with the Energy Environmental							
17	Impact Review and Analysis team, and that is Logan							
18	Hicks, L-o-g-a-n H-i-c-k-s, pronouns he/him.							
19	JUDGE TODNEM: Anyone else with the							
20	Department of Commerce?							
21	MS. KOTHLOW: Tessa Kothlow, T-e-s-a							
22	K-o-t-h-l-o-w, with the EERA as well, gender							
23	designation she/her.							
24	JUDGE TODNEM: Thank you. And for the							
25	Applicant.							

1 MS. BRUSVEN: Good morning, Your Honor. 2 Christy Brusven from the law firm of Fredrikson and Byron appearing on behalf of Otter Tail Power 3 4 Company, the Applicant. My name is spelled 5 C-h-r-i-s-t-y, last name is B-r-u-s-v-e-n, and I use the she/her pronouns. 6 MR. RIEWER: Preston Riewer with the 7 8 Otter Tail Power, spelling is P-r-e-s-t-o-n, last name is R-i-e-w-e-r, he/him. 9 10 JUDGE TODNEM: Is that everyone? Looks like it, thank you. 11 12 I do not see any but I will just check, are there any members of the public who would like 13 to note their attendance on the record? Seeing none 14 15 we can move on. 16 It looks like the parties have proposed 17 one in person hearing and one online public hearing. 18 Do the parties wish to state or make a statement as to how that or why that would satisfy Minnesota rule 19 Part 7850.3800? 20 21 MS. BRUSVEN: Your Honor, I think the 22 application is proceeding in an informal process, 23 with the alternate review, given that it is a solar 24 project and the rules would account for the public 25 hearing.

1	It has been the Commission's practice,
2	and I can let Mr. Culbertson speak to that if
3	needed, to have both in-person and online meetings
4	to facilitate additional public participation. We
5	have landed on the in-person date on May 14th
6	because that's when the school in Solway, which is
7	the venue that we have previously used, is
8	available. Wednesday nights they were able to clear
9	their schedule for us to use that meeting space, and
10	then we would follow it with the online version the
11	next day.
12	JUDGE TODNEM: Thank you. Anything to
13	add, Mr. Culbertson?
14	MR. CULBERTSON: No, I concur with all
15	that, nothing else to add. Thank you.
16	JUDGE TODNEM: Thank you. So I did
17	receive a proposed schedule and we can kind of start
18	there. I did have a couple of comments.
19	So, first, the close of public hearing
20	comment period that is proposed is May 23rd, 2025,
21	however, that is not ten days from the close of the
22	public hearing on May 15th. So my calculation,
23	based on weekends and holidays, looks like May 27th
24	would be the close of the comment period.
25	MS. BRUSVEN: Your Honor, I noticed that

as well just before we joined. We had originally 1 2 thought we were going Tuesday/Wednesday, for the public hearings, and when the school availability 3 shifted we missed the shift in that close of date. 4 I would agree with you that the 27th would fulfill 5 that ten day period, and I don't think the Applicant 6 needs any additional time to file our proposed post 7 8 hearing comments and findings of fact, I propose we leave the remainder of the schedule, accounting for 9 that shift in the later public hearing date. 10 JUDGE TODNEM: Great, that was actually 11 going to be my next question. 12 Then the only other adjustment that I 13 would like to discuss is, let me see here, I made a 14 lot of notes about the adjusted dates, if that was 15 what you wanted to do. 16 17 I wanted to discuss the due date of the 18 administrative law judge report, just due to my availability. It would be very helpful for me if we 19 could move it to July 22nd, which is a Tuesday. 20 21 MS. BRUSVEN: We don't have any objections, Your Honor. 22 23 JUDGE TODNEM: So then we would just have to adjust the exceptions due date after that. 24 days after July 22nd would be August 6th. 25

1	MS. BRUSVEN: I agree.
2	JUDGE TODNEM: And that should still give
3	plenty of time between the exceptions filing date
4	and the tentative Commission meeting on August 28th.
5	MR. CULBERTSON: I would say it would
6	probably be pertinent to maybe push I know it's a
7	tentative Commission date, but maybe at least a week
8	after the original date if we're pushing it from the
9	original schedule, if that makes sense.
10	JUDGE TODNEM: So are you saying that the
11	tentative Commission meeting date on the site permit
12	would be more in early September?
13	MR. CULBERTSON: Yes.
14	JUDGE TODNEM: So it would be
15	approximately September 4th.
16	MR. CULBERTSON: Yeah, it's typically 30
17	days after exceptions.
18	JUDGE TODNEM: Oh, I see what you're
19	saying. Okay.
20	MR. CULBERTSON: Roughly.
21	JUDGE TODNEM: I think that is something
22	that I typically don't include in my orders anyway,
23	but just for reference, for all the parties involved
24	here, I think it is helpful to still discuss this.
25	So just to kind of recap, I'm going to go

1	over the entirety of the schedule as proposed and
2	then here modified.
3	So environmental assessment scoping
4	decision that was issued January 30th. The EA
5	issued or notice of EA availability and public
6	hearings will be published April 30th, 2025.
7	Applicant direct testimony and exhibits due May 6th,
8	2025. In-person public hearing May 14th. Online
9	public hearing May 15th. Close of public hearing
10	comment period May 27th. Applicant responses to
11	hearing comments and proposed findings of fact June
12	6th, 2025. The Department of Commerce, EERA,
13	response on comments on EA, technical analysis and
14	replies to Applicant proposed findings due June
15	13th, 2025. The administrative law judge report
16	will be due July 22nd, 2025, exceptions filed August
17	6th, 2025, and then the commission meeting
18	approximately 30 days after that.
19	Is that a correct recitation of the dates
20	proposed and modified?
21	MS. BRUSVEN: It is, Your Honor.
22	JUDGE TODNEM: All right. Thank you.
23	Are there any other issues to discuss while we are
24	on the call? Ms. Brusven.
25	MS. BRUSVEN: I mentioned before that the

1	Applicant has reserved the venue for the public
2	hearing, so I think we are set in terms of the
3	information needed for the public notice when we get
4	to that point. But we'll continue to coordinate
5	with PUC staff on the notice, make sure it gets to
6	the newspaper and support the logistics on that in
7	any other way that would be requested.
8	JUDGE TODNEM: Great. Anything from the
9	Commission?
10	MR. CULBERTSON: Nothing else from us at
11	this time. Thank you.
12	JUDGE TODNEM: And anything from the
13	Department I'm sorry, anything from Commerce?
14	MS. HUNDAL: No concerns, Your Honor.
15	JUDGE TODNEM: All right. Thank you.
16	Then I will issue a scheduling order following this
17	Prehearing Conference with the dates discussed,
18	along with some other information, including how
19	interested members of the public may participate,
20	the parties responsibility to provide the primary
21	exhibit list, and are the parties in agreement that
22	all filing will be done through the eDocket system?
23	MS. BRUSVEN: We are, Your Honor.
24	JUDGE TODNEM: And Commerce?
25	MS. HUNDAL: Yes, Your Honor.

1	JUDGE TODNEM: And Mr. Culbertson,
2	anything from the Commission:
3	MR. CULBERTSON: Nothing else. Thank
4	you, Your Honor.
5	JUDGE TODNEM: All right. Then with
6	that
7	MS. BRUSVEN: I'm sorry, I should have
8	asked this before. Are there any hard copies you'd
9	like sent as a courtesy, either the application or
10	anything else that might be in the record that would
11	be helpful to you?
12	JUDGE TODNEM: You know, I actually do
13	most of my review electronically. However, if there
14	are, you know, I'll be honest, I haven't looked at
15	anything closely yet. So if there are certain
16	exhibits that you feel would be helpful to have in
17	paper form please feel free to submit that, but I do
18	typically use electronic copies for like 95 percent
19	of my review.
20	Once we get a little farther along, quite
21	frankly, that might change, as sometimes I will take
22	home a copy of the printed copies after the hearing
23	because they're there. But I do typically do use
24	electronic, but thank you for asking.
25	MC PRICUEN. And then we would also as

1	a courtesy, usually send a copy of the Applicant
2	proposed findings of facts to all the participants
3	on this call, so Your Honor and then the Department
4	and PUC staff, so you have that as well.
5	JUDGE TODNEM: So are you referring to
6	filing the copy in the eDocket system and then
7	providing like a word version?
8	MS. BRUSVEN: Yes.
9	JUDGE TODNEM: That is greatly
10	appreciated. In particular because formatting can
11	get pretty convoluted if we're converting from a
12	PDF.
13	MS. BRUSVEN: We'll plan to do that.
14	Thank you.
15	JUDGE TODNEM: Thank you. Anything else
16	before we conclude? Hearing none then with that we
17	are adjourned. Thank you so much.
18	(Proceedings were adjourned at 11:15
19	a.m.)
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    STATE OF MINNESOTA
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    COUNTY OF HENNEPIN
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                 REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE
 6
                  I, Jonna Schrupp, do hereby certify
 7
    that the above and foregoing transcript, consisting
 8
    of the preceding 12 pages is a correct transcript
 9
    of my stenographic notes of the proceedings to the
10
    best of my ability.
11
                  Dated February 21, 2025
12
13
                        /s/ Jonna Schrupp
                        JONNA SCHRUPP
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                        Stenographic Court Reporter
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