

The Commission met on **Thursday, September 17, 2020** with Chair Sieben and Commissioners Means, Schuerger, Sullivan, and Tuma present.

The following matters were taken up by the Commission:

G-011/M-20-563

In the Matter of the Petition of Minnesota Energy Resources Corporation for Approval of Proposed Modifications of Tariffs in Section 9, Extension of Natural Gas Service

Commissioner Sullivan moved that the Commission:

1. Approve MERC's proposal to change the application deadline from November 30 to September 30 for customers to complete all requirements for service or main installation to guarantee avoidance of base winter construction charges assessed for construction occurring between December 1 and April 1;
2. Require that MERC continue to include the specific winter construction charges in its tariff;
3. Authorize MERC to implement the 2021, 2022, and 2023 winter construction charges effective March 1, 2021; and
4. Require that MERC continue to actively negotiate winter construction charges to ensure that they are reasonable and competitive and regularly undertake a competitive bidding process to ensure that its blanket construction contract and pricing are reasonable.

The motion passed 5–0.

E-017/PA-19-533

In the Matter of the Petition of Otter Tail Power Company for Approval of a Transfer of Property

Chair Sieben moved that the Commission:

1. Grant OTP a variance or waiver regarding the filing requirements for items F, I, and J under Minnesota Rule 7825.1400;
2. Approve OTP's proposed purchase of certain transmission assets from Central Power Electric Cooperative; and

3. Require OTP to submit final journal entries supporting the final purchase in a compliance filing within 60 days after the closing of the transaction.

The motion passed 5–0.

E-111/GR-19-478

In the Matter of the Application of Dakota Electric Association for Authority to Increase Rates for Electric Service in Minnesota

E111/M-20-613

In the Matter of the Petition of Dakota Electric Association to implement a New Resource and Tax Adjustment at the same time new, final rates are implemented in the general rate case, in Docket No. E-111/GR-19-478

Commissioner Tuma moved that the Commission accept and approve Dakota Electric Association's two August 3, 2020, Compliance Filings in Dockets No. E-111/GR-19-478 and E-111/M-20-613.

The motion passed 5–0.

IP-7039/CN-20-646

In the Matter of the Application of Louise Solar Project, LLC for a Certificate of Need for the 50 MW Louise Solar Project in Mower County, Minnesota

Commissioner Means moved that the Commission:

1. Approve the following exemptions as proposed:
 - a. 7849.0240, subp. 2 (B): Promotional Activities;
 - b. 7849.0250 (B) 1, 2, 3, and 5: Description of Certain Alternatives;
 - c. 7849.0250 (C) 1 to 6, 8 and 9: Availability of Alternatives to the Facility;
 - d. 7849.0250 (C) 7: Effect of Project on Rates System-wide;
 - e. 7849.0290: Conservation Programs; and
 - f. 7849.0330: Alternatives Involving a LHVTL; and

2. Approve the following exemptions conditioned upon Louise Solar Project, LLC providing alternative data:
 - a. 7849.0250 (B) 4: Description of Certain Alternatives;
 - b. 7849.0250 (D): Map of Applicant's System;
 - c. 7849.0270: Peak Demand and Annual Consumption Forecast;
 - d. 7849.0280: System Capacity;
 - e. 7849.0300: Consequences of Delay—System; and
 - f. 7849.0340: The Alternative of No Facility.

The motion passed 5–0.

P-999/PR-20-8

In the Matter of Annual Certification Related to Eligible Telecommunications Carriers' (ETCs) Use of the Federal Universal Service Support Required Pursuant to C.F.R. 54.313

Commissioner Tuma moved that the Commission:

1. Recertify the ETCs listed on Attachment 1 of the Department's August 31, 2020 Comments and Attachment A of the OAG's September 1, 2020 comments, including the ETCs that operate and have their study area codes registered in other states but have some operations in Minnesota.
2. Order that the ETCs serving tribal lands continue cooperation with the Commission and the Department in encouraging meaningful tribal engagement.
3. Open a new docket to investigate high-cost ETC offerings of Lifeline services including but not limited to the issues relating to advertising and outreach.
4. Require Jaguar Communications, Inc. by January 4, 2021 to make a compliance filing in a separate docket describing its Lifeline discount program, number of recipients, and the methods, materials, website, and other means for making customers aware of the Lifeline program.

5. Make no determination regarding whether the locations listed by companies receiving funds that rely on specific location deployment are sufficiently accurate.

The motion passed 5–0.

E-002/M-20-421

In the Matter of Advanced Energy Management Alliance’s Petition Requesting a Miscellaneous Docket to Direct Xcel Energy to Implement 400 Megawatts of Demand Response by 2023

Commissioner Schuerger moved that the Commission:

1. Dedicate this docket to monitor Xcel’s compliance toward fulfilling the 400 MW requirement under the Commission’s 2017 IRP Order.
2. Require Xcel to file a compliance filing in Docket Nos. 19-368 and 20-421 by February 1, 2021, and an annual report thereafter. The topics addressed in the filing shall include the following:
 - a. the status of stakeholder meetings (if any);
 - b. a list of expected product offerings and how they will address the relevant order points of the January 2017 IRP order;
 - c. the status of product offering development;
 - d. a date, or estimated date, of regulatory filing;
 - e. demand response implementation status;
 - f. demand response subscription level status and forecasts;
 - g. time-of-use and critical peak pricing product status or learnings from Advanced Metering Infrastructure pilots; and
 - h. details of its demand response programs that qualify for cost recovery through the Company’s Conservation Improvement Plan (CIP).
3. Require Xcel to file its interruptible tariff as a miscellaneous docket.

4. Require Xcel to include in its interruptible tariff filing details of its programs that qualify for cost recovery through the Company's CIP.

The motion passed 5-0.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION: February 17, 2021

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

Will Seuffert, Executive Secretary