

July 24, 2009

Larry Hartman, Project Manager
Minnesota Office of Energy Security
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101



Mr. Hartman,

We are writing in regards to the proposed wind farm by New Ulm Public Utilities Commission in Nicollet County. All successful wind farm projects are developed with willing participants, but the landowners in Lafayette Township of Nicollet County do not want the proposed wind farm on our land or in our neighborhood. The NUPUC has 237 acres under lease agreement and need a total of 547 acres for their wind farm project. NUPUC basically “strong armed” and threaten eminent domain to obtain the present 237 acres of land under the present lease agreement.

The NUPUC continually states to the media, to the State of Minnesota PUC, at the NUPUC meetings and to who ever will listen that “the NUPUC is currently negotiating with the local landowners in proximity to the project site to obtain lease and easement agreements to meet Minnesota PUC setback requirements”. There is no truth that NUPUC is currently negotiating with local landowners at the present time. The following are the landowners that the NUPUC need lease agreements with in order to meet the Minnesota PUC setbacks requirements. I have also included the time lines of contact that the NUPUC had with the landowners.

1. Cletus and Ronda Goblirsch—New Ulm PUC contacted us in the fall of 2007 regarding erecting one turbine and the MET tower on our land. We immediately responded informing the NUPUC that we did not want any towers on our land, will not sell our wind rights and that we do not want the NUPUC project in our neighborhood. That was the last time the NUPUC contacted us about entering in a lease agreement with wind rights or setback requirements. Towards the end of April 2009, Earl Cummings from Turning Point Management of Mankato, MN contacted us in regards to entering in a lease agreement for wind rights with the

NUPUC and we once again stated “no” and that we do not want the project in the neighborhood.

2. Dennis and Jeanette Wilson—NUPUC never contacted or had any conversations about the wind turbine project with the Wilson’s. The NUPUC never contacted the Wilson’s about a lease agreement in regards to setback requirements. Towards the end of April 2009, Earl Cummings contacted the Wilson’s in regards to selling a “wind lease” and the Wilson’s responded with a “no”.
3. Hilly and Cathy Bianchi—NUPUC never contacted or had any conversations about the wind turbine project with the Bianchi’s. The NUPUC never contacted the Bianchi’s about a lease agreement in regards to setback requirements. Towards the end of April 2009, Earl Cummings contacted the Bianchi’s in regards to selling a “wind lease” and the Bianchi’s responded with a “no”.
4. Dan and Chris Wendinger—NUPUC never contacted or had any conversation about the wind turbine project with the Wendinger’s. The NUPUC never contacted the Wendinger’s about a lease agreement in regards to setback requirements. Towards the end of April 2009, Earl Cummings contacted the Wendinger’s in regards to selling a “wind lease” and the Wendinger’s responded with a “no”.
5. Scott and Kim Schwab—NUPUC never contacted the Schwab’s about the wind turbine project. The NUPUC never contacted the Schwab’s about a lease agreement in regards to setback requirements. Towards the end of April 2009, Earl Cummings contacted the Schwab’s in regards to selling a “wind lease” and the Schwab’s responded with a “no”.
6. Greg and Tami Stadtherr—The Stadtherr’s had no contact or conversation with the NUPUC or Earl Cummings since the beginning of this wind turbine project.
7. Peter and Sandy Altmann—The NUPUC contacted the Altmann’s in the Fall of 2007 about erecting a wind turbine on their land and the Altmann’s responded “no”, the Altmann’s were never contacted by the NUPUC again. Towards the end of April 2009, Earl Cummings contacted the Altmann’s in regards to selling a “wind lease” and the Altmann’s responded with a “no”.

8. Brad and Diane Franta—The Franta's have an agreement with the NUPUC to erect two turbine towers on their land. The Franta's do not want the NUPUC project and they stated that the only reason that they signed an agreement was because of fear of losing their land to the NUPUC under the threat of eminent domain. The last contact the Franta's had with the NUPUC was in the Fall of 2008. Towards the end of April 2009, Earl Cummings contacted the Franta's in regards to selling an additional "wind leases" and the Franta's responded with a "no".

The NUPUC never had an informational meeting in regards to the proposed wind turbine project for the land owners. In February 2009 NUPUC had a "listening session" for concerned citizens about the wind turbine project and the NUPUC did not respond that evening on any of our concerns instead sent a written response one month later.

As you can see there has been very little conversation and contact in the past and present with the NUPUC in regards to the proposed wind farm project. The NUPUC wind farm project started and continues with parties involved as adversaries and not as friendly business partners.

Mr. Cummings represented the three landowners who signed a lease with the NUPUC in 2007 and 2008 and now it appears that Mr. Cummings is working for the NUPUC to obtain additional wind leases, is that a conflict of interest? Is Mr. Cummings acting in an illegal manner working on both sides of the fence?

The NUPUC has threaten eminent domain to obtain the remaining wind leases that are required by the State of Minnesota PUC if the surrounding owners do not willing sell their wind rights to NUPUC. The NUPUC has many alternatives besides the Nicollet County site to develop alternative energy with willing participates.

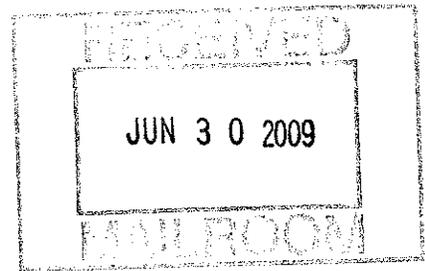
We, the local land owners and residences of Nicollet County, ask you the Minnesota PUC to deny the permit for the NUPUC wind farm project in Lafayette Township, Nicollet County.

Sincerely,

Cletus V Goblirsch
Ronda H Goblirsch
Cletus Goblirsch and Ronda Helling Goblirsch

June 29, 2009

Larry Hartman
Energy Facility Permitting
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198



Mr. Hartman,

We are writing in regard to the wind farm that is being proposed by New Ulm

Public Utilities Commission located in Lafayette Township of Nicollet County.

We are opposed to this wind farm project and we believe that New Ulm has chosen the wrong location. As adjacent landowners we have the following concerns which we bring before you and the State of Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.

All successful wind farm projects start with willing participants and a neighborhood that supports a wind farm project. We do not support, nor do we want a wind farm located in our neighborhood.

We have three reluctant land owners who signed a lease with New Ulm under the threat of their property being obtained through eminent domain if they were non cooperative. Two of the three land owners, Roger Klossner and Sharon Hacker, who signed the lease with New Ulm own property within our neighborhood, but do not live in the neighborhood near the proposed wind farm. Brad Franta, the third landowner to sign with New Ulm currently lives within the proposed wind farm vicinity. A conversation with Brad Franta on June 25, 2009, Mr. Franta stated that he is **100% against** the New Ulm wind farm project. Mr. Franta stated that he signed the lease agreement because of fear of losing his land to eminent domain and being "strong armed by New Ulm."

Also on June 25, 2009 I spoke to the land owner's attorney, Jeremy M. Berg, from the law offices of Berens, Rodenberg & O'Conner, he has advised them not to talk about the wind project due to the possibility of a potential law suit.

The New Ulm Public Utilities Commissions have approximately 40% of the wind rights under the lease agreements signed by the three land owners. The neighborhood land owners who are opposed to the wind farm project have the remaining 60% of the wind rights and are not interested in selling these wind rights to the New Ulm Public Utilities Commission. The New Ulm Public Utilities Commission has indicated that they will eminent domain for the remaining wind rights if we do not cooperate or the State of Minnesota does not waive the wind right requirements for this project.

Will the New Ulm Public Utilities Commission eminent domain our land in order to obtain the needed wind rights for their project?

Is the City of New Ulm regulated by the 25 by 25? 25% renewable energy by the year 2025?

Does the New Ulm Public Utilities Commission have a source (power line) to carry the electrical power from the wind farm to the source of need? The information that we are familiar with is that New Ulm does not have an agreement with Xcel power "to dump" the electrical power into the Xcel grid. Nicollet County has refused to issue a permit for the New Ulm Public Utilities Commission to construct a power line from the proposed wind farm site to the city of New Ulm.

Is the New Ulm wind farm project a CREB project? What qualifications are needed for a CREB project? How is the permitting by the State of Minnesota Public Utilities Commission affected if this is a CREB project or not?

Is the New Ulm wind farm project the start of a larger wind farm with additional turbines, a peaking station? The gas line which runs from New Ulm, to Hutchinson is less than a mile from the proposed site of the New Ulm wind project.

How does the present moratorium on the wind farm projects in Nicollet County affect the State of Minnesota's permitting of the New Ulm wind farm? Nicollet County is writing a new wind turbine ordinance for the county, how will this affect the New Ulm's proposed project? If the Nicollet County ordinance is more restrictive than the State of Minnesota's ordinance will the Nicollet County's ordinance apply for the proposed New Ulm wind farm?

What affect will the "White Pages", Public Health Impacts of Wind Turbines prepared by the Minnesota Department of Health Environmental Health Division dated May 22, 2009 have on the permitting and set back from residences and property lines?

The lease that Brad and Diane Franta signed stated that the wind turbines cannot enter their property from the north which adjoins County Rd 7, but needs to enter from the south which crosses the neighbor's land and a county drainage ditch. The New Ulm Public Utilities Commission does not have an agreement to cross the adjoining land and drainage ditch. Can the New Ulm's Public Utilities Commission eminent domain entrance from the south and alter the drainage ditch without the cooperation from neighboring residences?

We are opposed to any wind farm in our neighborhood public or private. New Ulm Public Utilities Commission has many opportunities for alternative energies and locations and do not need our neighborhood location.

We are asking your help and the assistance of the State of Minnesota's Public Utilities
Commission in addressing our concerns in stopping the New Ulm Public Utilities
Commission wind farm project.

Sincerely,

Cletus Goblirsch 6-29-09

Ronda N. Goblirsch 06-29-09

Cletus and Ronda Goblirsch

6-29-09

This map indicates the location of County Rd 7, Brad Franta's property, the drainage ditch and the property (green) that New Ulm does not have under lease. The Franta lease states that New Ulm cannot enter from County Rd 7, but needs to enter his property from the south. How is New Ulm going to gain enter to this property without willing landowners selling a lease? Eminent Domain?

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Firm seeks wind project near Morgan

Turbines would be in Eden Township

By Fritz Busch Journal Staff Writer

POSTED: June 24, 2009

NEW ULM - Brown County Commissioners learned Tuesday that a Minneapolis-based firm wants to build a 21-turbine, 31.5 megawatt Large Wind Energy Conversion System (LWECS) southeast of Morgan in Brown and Redwood counties.

With construction and project commissioning planned for this year, Morgan Wind seeks expeditious review and issuance of a site permit, according to a letter addressed to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, dated May 22, 2009, signed by Jeff Wright.

Brown County Administrator Chuck Enter said 1,200-foot residential setbacks are part of the project that includes 10,880 acres (17 square miles).

Enter said he would keep commissioners advised on when the Minnesota PUC would hold a hearing on the wind project.

Project site elevation ranges from 1,001-1,056 feet above sea level, between State Highway 68 and County Highway 30 in Eden Township, Brown County and Morgan Township, Redwood County.

Most of the turbines would be located north and northwest of Evan in Brown County.

County commissioners approved a resolution to support a small-scale wind project by a 5-0 vote on April 4, 2006.

In other action, commissioners approved:

A revised Home Health Aide and Homemaker Service Policy, according to state requirements, supervising once every 6 months instead of every 3 months.

In her report, Brown County Public Health Director Karen Moritz said \$6,000-\$8,000 in federal stimulus money will be available in 2010 for local public vaccine distribution. Services may include H1N1 Novel Influenza Virus vaccine.

Moritz said most people with the H1N1 flu are aged 5-30. Very few people older than 50 have the virus, she added.

\$925,000 for Brown County Family Services and Probation out-of-home placements.

\$7,048.98 under state contract with General Office Products Company to buy furniture for the Energy Assistance Program office in the Family Services building.

Set aside deciding how many years to allow a tax abatement for Charles Henle, Milford Township, due to an incomplete application. It was determined that his deeded acres were about 13 acres less than what was recorded in the Brown County Recorders Office.

The purchase of software upgrades and a three-year maintenance contract for the Sentinel 911 Call-Taker System. The 911 fund will cover the three-year cost of \$22,763.33.

Participation in the PERA Phased Retirement Option (PRO) from June 16, 2009 to June 30, 2011 and consider PRO requests on a case-by-case basis.

2009 legislation allowed Coordinated and Basic members age 62 and older the option to begin receiving a PERA pension without formally resigning. Employees seeking PRO must agree to substantially reduce working hours.

(Fritz Busch can be e-mailed at fbusch@nujournal.com).

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Boiler update may cost \$5 million less than planned

Savings would be in not installing some advanced pollution control equipment

By Ron Larsen Staff Writer

POSTED: June 24, 2009

NEW ULM - A ruling from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on whether the modifications needed to convert Boiler No. 4 to burn coal and bio-fuel instead of natural gas can be considered "routine maintenance, repair and replacement should be imminent," Planning and Development Engineer Pat Wrase told the New Ulm Public Utilities Commission Tuesday.

"Examination of the existing permit for the Boiler No. 4 has found that if major modifications are not implemented and the boiler is modified minimally in order to simply repair items that have suffered from deferred maintenance, it may be possible to meet emissions regulations for the [Powder River Basin] coal utilization project with only the installation of a baghouse for the removal of particulate matter," Wrase reported.

"This minor work would be considered 'routine maintenance, repair and replacement,'" he said.

Consequently, the initial estimate of the capital cost reduction for the project - if the reduced permitting strategy is accepted - is approximately \$5 million, Wrase said.

As Director Gary Gleisner noted, the savings would be in not having to install some of the advanced pollution control equipment.

The commission also adopted an appendix to the City of New Ulm/Public Utilities Commission Personnel Policy Manual that is titled "Appendix N Driver's License Retention Policy."

Basically, the policy outlines the potential punishment for a PUC employee whose job requires that the employee needs a driver's license to perform assigned duties will be in for if that employee's license is suspended for any reason.

"The issue is that they get one shot, but if it happens a second time, they're out," City Manager Brian Gramentz told the commission.

As the utility nears the mid-point of its fiscal year, the utility's net margin through five months trails the net margin in 2008 by \$32,268. However, the net margin after in lieu of taxes this year, \$891,975, is nearly \$30,000 ahead of budget, as was last year's net margin of \$924,243.

Ron Larsen can be reached at rlarsen@nujournal.com

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July 28, 2009

Larry Hartman, Project Manager
Minnesota Office of Energy Security
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101

Questions for the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission concerning the New Ulm Wind Farm Project.

PUC Docket Number E282/WS-09-178

1. Why did the NUPUC pick the Lafayette Township site in Nicollet County for the wind project?
2. What need does the NUPUC have to develop a wind farm in Lafayette Township?
3. Do all successful wind farm projects start with willing participants?
4. Are all signees of the leases with the NUPUC willing participants?
5. Are the surrounding landowners willing to sign wind lease agreements with NUPUC?
6. What are the benefits to the Lafayette Township residence from the NUPUC wind farm project?
7. What are the benefits to the Nicollet County residence from the NUPUC wind project?
8. Will the NUPUC wind farm project pay taxes to Nicollet County?
9. Will Nicollet County residence subsidize the wind farm and subsidize the electric power to New Ulm?
10. Why does the NUPUC not develop the wind farm in Brown County (location of New Ulm)?

11. Why doesn't the NUPUC join in a wind farm project with willing participants?
12. Why does not NUPUC join the proposed wind farm in western Brown County and Eastern Redwood County?
13. Does the NUPUC need the requirement of 25% alternative energy by 2025?
14. Does the NUPUC have transmission lines to carry the electrical power from the wind turbines to the place of need?
15. Does the NUPUC have an agreement with X-Cel energy to join in X-Cel transmission lines?
16. Will the refusal of Nicollet County of a power line for the NUPUC wind farm project be considered?
17. Will NUPUC eminent domain wind lease agreements if surrounding landowners will not sell freely their wind rights?
18. Will the State of Minnesota waive the need for wind rights for the NUPUC?
19. Will the State of Minnesota PUC honor the Nicollet County moratorium on wind farm projects until the new Nicollet County zoning ordinance is completed?
20. Will the State of Minnesota PUC honor the new zoning ordinance for wind farm projects that Nicollet will have in effect in the future?
21. Will the State of Minnesota PUC use more restrictive zoning ordinances of Nicollet County or use the State of Minnesota's ordinance to permit the NUPUC project?
22. If the State of Minnesota does not use the zoning ordinance of Nicollet County wind turbine farms, what is the purpose of county government?

23. What is the maximum and minimum need of mega watts for the City of New Ulm?
24. What is the average mega watt usage at the present time for the NUPUC?
25. What is the projected usage of mega watts by 2030 for the NUPUC?
26. What is the projected population in the future for the city of New Ulm?
27. How many mega watts can the NUPUC produce within the city of New Ulm?
28. How many mega watts of electric does the NUPUC buy from Heartland Consumer Power in South Dakota and the Central Minnesota Municipal Power Agency?
29. How many mega watts of **green energy** does NUPUC purchase for Heartland Consumer Power in SD and Central Minnesota Municipal Power Agency?
30. How many mega watts of power does NUPUC plan on selling to X-Cel energy for the next 5 years?
31. Why is NUPUC selling electrical power and also wanting to produce more electrical power?
32. How many mega watts of power can NUPUC produce in the City of New Ulm of green energy with boiler number 4?
33. If the Nicollet County site is a good wind farm location why are we not contacted by private investors to build a wind farm for profit?
34. Is the NUPUC intent to build the wind farm project with no regards to how marginal the wind is in Nicollet County compared to other sites?

35. Will the Nicollet County wind farm lower or increase the electrical rates for the customers of NUPUC?
36. Why is the proposed NUPUC wind farm spread over a large area? Marginal wind? Are the proposed turbines spread over a large area because this is the start of a larger project? Many more turbines?
37. Will the NUPUC project add a peaking station in the future? A gas line is within one half mile of the proposed site.
38. Is NUPUC partnering with outside investors for this project and expansion into the future?
39. Has the NUPUC spoken to John Deere to partner in this wind farm project?
40. What constitutes a C-BED?
41. Is the NUPUC wind farm project a C-BED project?
42. Did the NUPUC project start as a C-BED and is it still a C-BED project?
43. What is the relationship of the NUPUC project if it is a C-BED and the permitting process?
44. Did Yusef Orest from "Windlogics" give a case study presentation on NUPUC's C-BED project? Where? When?
45. Did NUPUC plan to make phase II a C-BED after getting approval of their phase I project?
46. Why did NUPUC want both phases under 5 mega watts?
47. Does NUPUC plan to retire CT's (combustion turbines) 51 mega watts in 2014?

48. If CT's are retired, what does NUPUC's resource plan call for? Additional wind generation?
49. NUPUC continually state that "the NUPUC is currently negotiating with local land owners in proximity to the project site to obtain leases and easements agreements to meet Minnesota PUC setback requirements". Who are these landowners? When did the NUPUC make these contacts?
50. Earl Cummings from Turning Point Management, Mankato, MN contacted local landowners at the end of April 2009 to obtain wind lease agreements. How many acres did Mr. Cummings obtain for lease agreements for NUPUC?
51. For whom is Mr. Cummings working when he contacted the local landowners to obtain wind lease agreements? Is he working with the NUPUC?
52. Mr. Cummings was working with three local land owners to negotiate a lease agreement with the NUPUC for the wind farm project in 2008? Is this a conflict of interest in regards to working for local landowners in 2008 and for the NUPUC in 2009?
53. If a large portion of the rural landowners in Nicollet County are against the NUPUC wind farm project when they understand how the NUPUC deals with local landowners, why would the Minnesota PUC permit the NUPUC project?
54. What are the ramifications if the NUPUC wind farm fails or is sold after it is built?
55. If the NUPUC wind farm is less than 10 mega watts, why built a 30 mega watt collection station?
56. Has the Minnesota State PUC considered the recommendations regarding wind turbine setbacks as prepared by the Minnesota Department of Health, Environmental Health Division (White Pages) dated May 22, 2009?
57. Is the Minnesota PUC wind turbine setbacks from residence based mainly on noise? Are other health concerns considered regarding setbacks from residences?

58. Is the Minnesota PUC aware of the last page of recommendations of the White Pages that state “Any noise criteria beyond current state standards used for placement of wind turbines should reflect priorities and attitudes of the community”?
59. Do the Minnesota PUC setbacks for wind turbines consider the health effects of livestock?
60. What constitutes a municipality in Minnesota?
61. How many municipalities are there in Minnesota?
62. Since a municipality has never applied to have their own “wind farm”, is this a precedent setting case that other cities are watching? New Ulm plans to use eminent domain to obtain the wind rights and easements that they need to make this project work. Has this ever been done? Who is going to decide whether they can use eminent domain to obtain wind rights and easements? Until that is decided, can the permitting process continue as usual? Or should it?
63. If NUPUC can obtain wind rights by eminent domain, then any project that needs any wind rights or easements in the future can use eminent domain. Why would any city or wind development company negotiate lease agreements if they can obtain what they need by eminent domain?
64. We believe that the NUPUC has not obtained or been negotiating for wind rights or easements. Will a timeline or date be set for the NUPUC to obtain these leases? If the NUPUC does not obtain wind rights or easements is the project dead? Can the NUPUC change the project and re-apply for a permit?
65. What is the reason or reasons that the NUPUC wants to build a wind turbine farm? And why in Lafayette Township in Nicollet County?

We thank you for taking the time and effort to review and consider each question. We believe each question carries a important issue and concern when the Minnesota PUC evaluates the NUPUC wind project in Lafayette Township, Nicollet County.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us.

Respectfully submitted,

Cletus Goblirsch
Ronda H. Goblirsch
Cletus and Ronda Goblirsch

July 29, 2009

Larry Hartman, Project Manager
Minnesota Office of Energy Security
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101

Mr. Hartman,

Enclosed is a short newspaper article from the New Ulm Journal dated July 29, 2009, concerning a wind energy forum. A few observations:

1. A potential wind farm project is being proposed in the Springfield area which is located in Brown County, the county in which New Ulm is located.
2. An informational meeting in which participates will have the opportunity to ask questions from attorneys, and wind energy industry representatives.

This article appears to be making the attempt to recruit willing participates for a wind farm project.

Sincerely,



Cletus Goblirsch

Wind energy forum set Aug. 11 in Springfield

SPRINGFIELD — Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF), in partnership with the City of Springfield and others, is hosting a Utility Scale Wind Energy Forum on Tuesday, Aug. 11 at 5:30 p.m. at the Springfield Community Center.

The forum will help participants understand general concepts of utility-scale wind energy development. Topics include:

- Risks and rewards of involvement in wind energy projects

- Considerations for

wind energy leases and agreements

- Wind energy development best practices

Participants will have the opportunity to ask questions of attorneys and wind energy industry representatives. Representatives from Windustry, Horizon Wind Energy, WindLogics and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will also attend. The forum is open to the public without charge.

June 24, 2009

Larry Hartman
Energy Facility Permitting
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198



Mr. Hartman,

Enclosed you will find information about the New Ulm Public Utilities Commission position regarding the following issues:

1. New Ulm Public Utilities Commission's current electrical production capacity in the City of New Ulm.
2. Electrical power being purchased from Heartland Power Firm in South Dakota
3. A graph of the high and low megawatts usage of electrical power utilized in the City of New Ulm
4. The sell agreement that the city of New Ulm has to sell 25 megawatts of capacity to X-Cel Energy starting June 1, 2009 with additional sell agreement of 19.2 megawatts for July and August of 2009
5. The projected study that indicates only 10 additional megawatts will be needed by 2030 for the City of New Ulm
6. A map depicting the power lines and substations in Nicollet and Brown counties

I hope you will find this information usefully, if you have any questions please feel free to contact me at 507-276-3753.

Sincerely,

Cletus V. Goblirsch 6-24-09

Cletus V. Goblirsch
59507 370th St
Lafayette, MN 56054

LONG-TERM POWER COMMITTEE

October 24, 2006 – 4:00 p.m.

Present were: Public Utilities Commissioner Hogen; Public Utilities Director Gleisner; City Attorney Nierengarten; Customer Service Coordinator Fischer; City Manager Gramentz; and Utility Planning and Development Engineer Wrase and Finance Director Vorwerk. Absent were City Councilor Beranek, City Councilor Webster, and Public Utilities Commissioner Hendel.

Public Utilities Director Gleisner made a motion to approve the minutes of September 26, 2006, meeting and City Manager Gramentz seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Utility Engineer Wrase reported to the Commission that the Power Supply Alternatives Project is under budget and Director Gleisner followed with a brief history of the Committee's progress to this point.

John Yost and Tony Lunardini, representatives from Sargent and Lundy, then made their presentation regarding generation resources. Their load and demand forecasts indicate that New Ulm's electric sales and peak demands will grow at a rate of 0.2-0.3% per year and that if our existing combustion turbines remain in service, only 10 mega watts of new capacity will be required to meet our demands through the 2030 study period.

① The lowest cost option is adding 33.5 MW of wind power, however, wind is not available a large portion of the time, exposing the utility to open fluctuating market costs. The next lowest cost option is adding an additional 10 MW of new combustion turbines to the existing CT's in service. However, the CT's would again require purchasing the majority of our power needs on the market.

② The study also showed that sharing a 250 MW coal/biomass-fired generating unit with other utilities was the lowest cost energy supply option but that depended on the availability of this type of project. ③ Converting Boiler #4 to a 15 MW coal/biomass unit would provide low-cost steam at only 2% more than the 250 MW option.

Following the presentation, the Committee and Sargent and Lundy staff answered questions from the audience. Three residents, Tom Furth, Ron Fleischmann, and Mark Lindquist questioned and received answers regarding the size of a wind farm, the future of the downtown steam system, transmission costs, renewable requirements, carbon costs and demand side management.

The Committee then reviewed the Selection Criteria that had been put in ranking order by the PUC staff members. With #1 being the most important, the list included:

1. Annualized cost of the generation alternative;
2. Extent that alternative provides for system redundancy;

NOW THEY HAVE
THEIR NEW CAPACITY
? RPS
IF IT'S
BIOMASS?

LONG-TERM POWER COMMITTEE

April 25, 2006 – 4:00 p.m.

Present were: Public Utilities Director Gleisner; Public Utilities Commissioner Hogen; Public Utilities Commissioner Hendel; City Councilor Webster; City Councilor Beranek; City Attorney Nierengarten; City Finance Director Vorwerk; Customer Service Coordinator Fischer; City Manager Gramentz; and Utility Planning and Development Engineer Wrase.

Councilor Beranek made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 28, 2006, meeting and Director Gleisner seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Engineer Wrase updated the Committee on the project schedule for the Power Supply Alternatives Study. At this point, the detailed analysis from Sargent and Lundy should be completed by August 15, 2006.

After recapping the April 5 Public Information meeting, Councilor Webster made a motion to have Sargent and Lundy pursue the four options recommended for further analysis which included: (1) wind energy; (2) retrofit of Boiler #4 to burn both coal and biomass; (3) a new 250 MW coal/biomass unit; and (4) retrofit current peak load generator to burn natural gas. Commissioner Hendel seconded the motion. Motion passed. It was noted that though it is not listed as an option from Sargent and Lundy, PUC staff will continue to monitor the long term contract options rather than pay Sargent and Lundy to do this type of work.

The Committee then reviewed the Criteria for the Generation Alternative Selection. Two changes were made to the criteria list. The first one was to include analysis of demand side management in conducting the financial assessment of the busbar costs. The second was posing the question of whether or not we can afford to continue cogeneration obligations. Councilor Beranek made a motion to approve the list with the two noted changes and Councilor Webster seconded the motion. Motion passed.

The Public Relations/Communication Program has a list of educational activities to explore, however, due to the number of items on the agenda, Tom Hendel made a motion to table this matter until the next meeting. Councilor Webster seconded the motion. Motion passed.

The Committee received updates on the Key Accounts Meeting that was held on April 21, 2006 and the League of Women Voters meeting at the New Ulm Public Library on April 22.

The PUC Commission agenda for tonight includes a three-year contract with Xcel to provide our electric generation. This contract will provide stability to our electric rates for the next three years. Councilor Webster made a motion to recommend acceptance of

the contract to the PUC Commission. Councilor Beranek seconded and the motion carried.

Engineer Wrase explained that the staff has been looking into ways to make the electric generation more efficient in supporting our steam system. There are several ways to do this including: stop using the condensing cycle on our existing boiler; utilizing the existing boiler and installing a back pressure turbine; or stop using our generator altogether and purchase a boiler only for steam production. Tonight staff is asking the PUC for authorization to do an evaluation of these alternatives to determine if the existing facility could be operated with greater efficiency.

Director Gleisner notified the Committee that he had just received word that there may be an opportunity to join the Big Stone II coal fired plant in South Dakota. The plant is now in the permitting stage for approximately 600 megawatts with a proposed service date of 2011. Estimated costs are \$38 per megawatt plus transmission.

The next meeting will be at 4:00 p.m. on May 23.

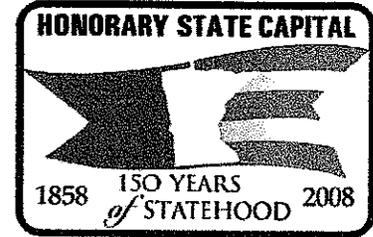
The meeting was adjourned at 5:08 p.m.



New Ulm Public Utilities

City of New Ulm

310 First North Street
New Ulm, Minnesota 56073
Telephone: (507) 359-8264
Fax: (507) 354-7318
Web Site: www.ci.new-ulm.mn.us



During 2007, New Ulm Public Utilities (NUPU) continued to invest in infrastructure to maintain and provide dependable and reliable service to our customers, and ensure that NUPU can support City of New Ulm growth. The major projects included: (1) construction started on the Wastewater Treatment Phosphorous Removal and Improvement Project to comply with Minnesota Pollution Control nutrient removal standards; (2) construction began on the Cottonwood water booster station to provide adequate water service and pressure to a new residential subdivision and the entire Cottonwood growth area of New Ulm (these projects are scheduled for completion during 2008); (3) installation and extension of utility services along North Highland Avenue and new County Road 27; (4) completed installation of infrastructure to provide electric and natural gas services to several new residential developments; and (5) upgrades to several electric feeders/extensions. In addition, work continues on the GIS Mapping System and on the installation of meters for the Automated Meter Reading (AMR's) project to automate meter reading activities.

Work and analysis continues on the Electric Division – Long Term Power Project. Major components of the Long Term Power Project include: (1) Development and construction of a 5 – 10 MW Wind Energy Project. Total project costs are estimated at \$12.5 million and will be funded with \$2.975 million in low interest Clean Renewable Energy Bonds and the remainder through General Obligation Public Utility Revenue Bonds; (2) Conversion of Boiler No. 4 from natural to coal/biomass fuel. Project costs are estimated at \$11 million and will be funded by General Obligation Public Utility Revenue Bonds; (3) Wholesale Electric Power Purchase contract for 15 MW of base load electric power; and (4) Market sales of the energy and capacity of the existing Nos. 5 and 7 Combustion Turbines. These units have total generation capacity of approximately 51 MW.

Other projects and analysis include: (1) Electric Distribution Twenty (20) Year System Plan; (2) Wastewater Treatment and Water Systems Comprehensive Plans; and (3) Water Treatment Plant Operations.

NUPU staff is dedicated to providing reliable and economical utility services to our customers. Our "customer first" focus continues as an objective for the health of the community and New Ulm Public Utilities.

Since 1903, New Ulm Public Utilities has met the challenges with the guidance of the community. We look to the community for their continued support as we move forward to accept and meet the many challenges and opportunities of the future.

Sincerely,

Brian D. Gramentz
City Manager

Gary J. Gleisner
Director of Utilities

LONG-TERM POWER COMMITTEE

September 25, 2007 – 4:00 p.m.
PUC Conference Room at 310 First Street North

Present were: City Attorney Nierengarten; City Councilor Webster; City Councilor Beranek; Citizen Appointee Hogen; Citizen Appointee Hendel; Public Utilities Commissioner Melville; Public Utilities Director Gleisner; Customer Service Coordinator Fischer; City Manager Gramentz; Utility Planning and Development Engineer Wrase; and Finance Director Vorwerk. Absent was Public Utilities Commissioner Fix.

Citizen Appointee Hendel made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 28, 2007 meeting and the motion was seconded by City Councilor Webster. Motion carried.

The City Attorney sent a revised draft of the power provider contract to Heartland Consumer Power District early last week for their review. The staff felt it was advantageous to have a comprehensive power provider contract that included renewable energy requirements, the conversion of the #4 boiler, and the building of our own wind farm as opposed to having separate contracts for each item.

Sargent and Lundy representatives Tim Libson and Sean Hagen were on hand to present the executive summary and overview of the proposed wind farm project. Their recommendation is to proceed with the project because it is considered to be technically sound and financially viable.

The two main benefits of this project are that New Ulm can avoid purchasing power from Xcel or Heartland and receive revenue from the sale of Renewable Energy Certificates for power generated. The project is expected to produce about 17,345,455 kWh annually. ✓

The overall projected cost is estimated to be \$10,930,205 with \$2.98 million of that coming from Clean Renewable Energy Bonds (CREBs) and \$7.96 million of General Obligation Bonds. The projected payout was as short as 7.5 years when using the Xcel base case with renewable energy certificates. ✓

There had been some concern about finding a company to provide turbines for such a small project but staff is now confident that those companies are out there. The wind study had been based on Vestas turbines; however, that company did not care to work on this size project.

Nicollet County zoning officials have expressed their support of the project as it complies with their WECS ordinance. At this time there are no known fatal flaws from an environmental standpoint which would reasonably prevent the project from being constructed.

The S&L representatives also covered various economic projections and sensitivities that showed the wind project to be a good addition to our energy generation mix. As a result, Citizen Appointee Hendel made a motion to authorize staff to proceed forward with the wind project. City Councilor Webster seconded the motion and the motion carried.

The Sargent and Lundy representatives will also make this presentation to the Commission tonight. On the PUC agenda is a request to authorize the City Manager to develop plans and specifications for the implementation of the New Ulm Wind Farm.

A verbal coal supply offer from Rio Tinto Mining and Energy was received today and a company representative will be here to provide more details on the offer in the next couple of days. Until a cost effective coal supply is located, the boiler conversion process for #4 is on hold.

We are negotiating with Heartland as to the price they may be willing to pay for the output from the #4 boiler.

There was a failure of Xcel's main transformer at Fort Ridgely last week that resulted in our plant needing to come on line to supply power for New Ulm. The backup transformer for Xcel is limited to 17 MW of power which is not enough to supply all of New Ulm. Without our ability to generate, portions or all of New Ulm would have been without power. Staff will be addressing the cost issue of this generation with Xcel. The initial power from the gas turbines was estimated to be \$250/MW to produce and then the steam power was brought on to reduce the cost to approximately \$70/MW. Xcel installed a temporary transformer a couple of days after the failure.

There has been no movement on the MISO metering of the combustion turbines because we are still waiting on more information.

Lisa Fischer reported that we are continuing the radio ads promoting the long term power project that were begun last month. Public Power Week is October 7-13 and the PUC is planning an open house at the Water Filter Plant on October 10 from 1-7 p.m.

The next regular meeting will be October 23 at 4:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

Prepared by Holly Postel
Clerical Assistant

Wind Energy

Local Wind Project

The permit application was formally submitted to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (MnPUC) through the eDockets system on May 5th. The project was submitted with a request for an exception to the MnPUC guidelines with respect to wind rights requirements. The MnPUC has 30 days to either accept or reject the application. In addition, MISO has determined that the New Ulm Wind Project cannot connect to the existing transmission system without first taking part in a regional planning study that would determine upgrades to the transmission system necessary to accommodate the project. The transmission consultants believe that this process would take from three to five years to develop an interconnection agreement. In order to keep the project on a more reasonable development schedule, a transmission permit has been applied for with Nicollet County. This self build option would allow for the energy from the system to feed directly into the New Ulm distribution system.

meters or 84% have been converted to the Automated Meter Reading system. Most of the remaining meters (3,165) will be scheduled for installation during the fourth quarter of 2009 and first quarter of 2010.

Final reviews were completed on the 2008 Annual report for the New Ulm Public Utilities. The report is scheduled for presentation to the City Council and Public Utilities Commission on June 2nd. The Assistant Finance Director-Utilities completed the set up of the Gas Department on the MaintStar Work Order system. At this point, all departments are using this system.

PUC ENGINEERING ACTIVITIES

Long Term Power Project

Power Provider Contract

Heartland Consumer Power District (HCPD) staff is assisting NUPUC with daily load projections and demand bids and settlements within the Midwest Independent System Operator (MISO) market. HCPD is also assisting in developing a transmission request for the delivery of WAPA hydropower to New Ulm.

Existing Combustion Turbine's (CT's)

NUPUC staff has developed a capacity sale to Xcel Energy for an additional 19.2MW for July and August of 2009. This transaction will provide NUPUC with additional revenue of \$48,000 during 2009. The transaction is in addition to the 5-year capacity sale of 25MW to begin on June 1, 2009 and run through May 31, 2014. NUPUC and Xcel have arrangements to account for the capacity transactions within the MISO framework.

Boiler No. 4 Conversion to Coal/Biomass

The decision of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) regarding the Boiler No. 4 "Letter of Applicability" (LOA) has not yet been rendered. The LOA asks that the USEPA concur with our opinion that the Boiler No. 4 improvements are routine type projects and thus will not require the Boiler No. 4 to be permitted under New Source Review (NSR) rules.

A permit application being prepared for the MPCA under the scenario of reduced improvements to the Boiler No. 4 and a draft version was distributed for review to the project team on May 19th. It is anticipated that the reduced project permit application will be submitted to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency in late May.

**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
SEPTEMBER 23, 2008 ~ 7:00 P.M.**

The **REGULAR MEETING** of the Public Utilities Commission of the City of New Ulm, Brown County, Minnesota was duly called and held in the City Hall Council Chambers on the 23rd day of September 2008 at 7:00 p.m. Present at said meeting was Commissioners Fix, Melville, Schuetzle, Steinke and President Lynn. Also present at said meeting were Director Gleisner, Assistant City Attorney Nierengarten, Accountant Asmus and Utility Engineer Wrase.

Commissioner Schuetzle moved to approve the minutes from the Regular Public Utilities Commission Meeting held on August 26, 2008. The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Fix and passed by the unanimous vote of all members.

Commissioner Fix moved to receive and order filed the report from the Director of Utilities regarding utility operations during the month of September 2008. Director Gleisner reviewed the report and made special note to Official Minutes of the Planning & Zoning Advisory Commission of the County of Nicollet regarding to a motion that no application shall be made for the wind turbines for 10 months upon the date that the meteorological tower begins collecting data. The applicant (New Ulm Public Utilities) shall submit the first 9 months of data to the Planning & Zoning Advisory Commission for review. Gleisner stated that this provision was dropped at the Nicollet County Board of Commissioners at their meeting held on September 23, 2008. The Board of Commissioners, however, did approve a motion to put a 12 month moratorium on the construction of wind turbine for 12 months in Nicollet County until they have time to review the wind energy ordinance. At the Nicollet County Commission meeting this morning they did approve a Conditional Use Permit for the erection of the meteorological tower on the property of Sharon Hacker with a three to zero vote with two commissioners abstaining from the vote. The Commissioners questioned our time frame and how this affects our schedule. Utility Engineer Wrase did state that it will delay the project about a year. President Lynn recognized the following individual as "Employee of the Month":

◆ *Kris Manderfeld, Assistant Finance Director/Utilities, PUC Administrative Department*

The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Melville and passed by the unanimous vote of all members.

Director Gleisner provided a short overview of projected natural gas costs for the next winter heating season (November 2008 through March 2009). Gleisner stated energy costs, including natural gas have been very volatile since early 2008 based on higher crude oil prices, natural gas used in electric generation and ethanol production, draw down of inventory levels and price speculation. He stated according to the Energy Information Administration (EIA) estimates, natural gas prices for the upcoming winter heating season are projected to increase approximately 22 percent from 2007-2008 levels. Staff has locked in approximately 44 percent of the natural gas for the upcoming winter heating season. The weighed average cost of natural gas for the 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 winter heating seasons were \$8.60/Mcf and \$7.99/Mcf respectively. Commissioner Steinke moved to receive and order filed the report regarding

natural gas costs for the 2008-2009 winter heating season. The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Melville and passed by the unanimous vote of all members.

Utility Engineer Wrase gave a presentation on updated power supply portfolio economic model recently conducted by Sargent & Lundy and specifically the implications for Boiler No. 4. Wrase indicated Boiler #4 conversion from natural gas to solid fuel has proven to be an economically advantageous project under either the current Xcel supply scenario or the anticipated HCPD supply scenario. In addition, by following through with the coal only conversion at this time, it would be possible to add an RDF or biomass fuel supply in the future that could further help to moderate power costs in New Ulm. We are therefore recommending that the PUC solicit a proposal from Sargent & Lundy to conduct the detailed engineering design for the Boiler No. 4 conversion to Powder River Basin Coal (PRB), incorporate expandability to utilize RDF with future project, continue working with fuel suppliers to secure the PRB required for boiler #4 operation, prior to ordering the design of the project, and review the impact of the two major power projects (wind and Boiler #4) on the PUC/City bonding capacity. Much discussion ensued among the Commission regarding the project costs. Commissioner Melville is concerned about timeline for the proposed conversion and potential delays in the project. Commissioner Melville moved to authorize staff to solicit a proposal from Sargent & Lundy to develop detailed engineering including preparation of plans and specifications for the conversion of Boiler No. 4 from natural gas to solid fuel. The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Schuetzle and passed by unanimous vote of all members.

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Commissioner Fix moved to receive the REPORT OF CLAIMS PAID as presented by President Lynn in the amount of \$7,039,499.87. The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Steinke and passed by the unanimous vote of all members.

Commissioner Schuetzle moved to receive and order paid the REPORT OF CLAIMS TO BE PAID as presented by President Lynn in the amount of \$342,063.64 including the following construction estimate:

<i>Draw No. 14</i>	<i>Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements Project</i>	<i>\$ 53,428.95</i>
	Robert L. Carr Co.	

The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Melville and passed by the unanimous vote of all members.

The Commission thereupon adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Catherine J. Asmus
Secretary-Public Utilities Commission

Director Gleisner summarized the Utility Lien on property with a service address of 1509 North Jefferson Street. Commissioner Melville moved to authorize the recording of a Utility Lien on property with a service address of 1509 North Jefferson Street in the amount of \$577.89 and authorize the Assistant Finance Director/City-Clerk Treasurer to sign and execute the lien documents on behalf of the New Ulm Public Utilities Commission. The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Fix and passed by unanimous vote of all members.

Director Gleisner summarized the Minnesota Water Agency Response Network (MnWARN) Mutual Aid Agreement. Some discussion ensued regarding regions and fund reimbursement. Commissioner Steinke moved to approve the Minnesota Water Agency Response Network (MnWARN) Mutual Aid Agreement and recommended adoption by the New Ulm City Council. The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Fix and passed by unanimous vote of all members.

Utility Engineer Wrase summarized an Agreement between New Ulm Public Utilities (New Ulm) and Northern States Power (NSP) to sell Twenty Five (25) Megawatts of the capacity of Combustion Turbine No. 7 to NSP for the five year period beginning June 1, 2009 and ending May 31, 2014 and the payment to New Ulm would be \$1.35/kW-month. The agreement would provide NUPUC \$2,025,000 in revenue over the 5-year term of the agreement or \$405,000 per year. The estimated fixed operations and maintenance expense associated with Combustion Turbine No. 7 is approximately \$25,000 per year. Wrase explained that the equipment would need to be tested and certified periodically to assure that it is available. Commissioner Schuetzle moved to approve the Confirmation Agreement between New Ulm Public Utilities (New Ulm) and Northern States Power (NSP) to sell Twenty Five (25) Megawatts of the capacity of Combustion Turbine No. 7 to NSP for the five year period beginning June 1, 2009 and ending May 31, 2014 and authorize President David Lynn to execute the Confirmation Agreement on behalf of New Ulm Public Utilities. The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Melville and passed by unanimous vote of all members.

Commissioner Melville moved to receive the REPORT OF CLAIMS PAID as presented by President Hogen in the amount of \$2,166,007.55. The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Schuetzle and passed by the unanimous vote of all members.

Commissioner Fix moved to receive and order paid the REPORT OF CLAIMS TO BE PAID as presented by President Lynn in the amount of \$369,913.97 including the following construction estimate:

<i>Draw No. 15</i>	<i>Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements Project</i>	<i>\$ 11,821.80</i>
	Robert L. Carr Co.	

The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Steinke and passed by the unanimous vote of all members.

Commissioner Fix moved to suspend the rules for action on the addendum. The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Schuetzle and passed by the unanimous vote of all members.

Utility Engineer Wrase summarized a contract with Sargent & Lundy estimated at \$1,895,000 to conduct detailed engineering including the preparation of plans and specifications for

the conversion of Boiler No. 4 from natural gas to solid fuel. The estimated cost of the Boiler No. 4 improvements is estimated at \$18,119,984 for the coal only project with 'time of use' coal deliveries. The cost was estimated by Jansen Combustion and Boiler Technologies during the feasibility study conducted earlier this year. The estimated cost includes engineering design services imbedded in the estimated project cost. Sargent and Lundy have developed a proposal to conduct the engineering plans and specifications for the conversion of the Boiler No. 4 generating system to solid fuel. The upgrades are mainly related to pollution control equipment and will also include internal boiler modifications, fuel delivery system additions and upgrades to the boiler control systems. Some discussion ensued regarding cost with original estimates and the current timeline. Commissioner Schuetzle moved to authorize contract with Sargent & Lundy estimated at \$1,895,000 to conduct detailed engineering including the preparation of plans and specifications for the conversion of Boiler No. 4 from natural gas to solid fuel. The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Steinke and passed by unanimous vote of all members.

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The Commission thereupon adjourned at 7:53 p.m.

Scott J. Schaefer
Assistant Secretary-Public Utilities Commission

Approved November 25, 2008

David Lynn, President
Public Utilities Commission

Commission Schedule of Fees Changes to be effective January 1, 2009. The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Fix and passed by unanimous vote of all members present.

Commissioner Melville moved to authorize attendance at the 2009 Legislative Rally sponsored by American Public Power Association in Washington, DC on February 23-26, 2009. The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Steinke and passed by unanimous vote of all members present.

Director Gleisner summarized Western Area Power Administration Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program. Commissioner Melville moved to authorize Public Utilities Commission staff to submit application to Western Area Power Administration Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program-Eastern Program for Post-2010 Resource Pool Electric Power Allocation. The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Fix and passed by unanimous vote of all members present. ✓

Commissioner Steinke moved to authorize the City Manager to execute a contract with the Howard R. Green Company: (1) for Environmental Assessments, Cultural and Archeological, Avian, Noise, Beam Path, Flicker Analysis Public Outreach and Permitting Support as necessary for the permitting; (2) conduct Land Surveying and Geotechnical Analysis in support of the project design being carried out by Sargent and Lundy; and (3) conduct Construction Management and Support during the construction process, all tasks necessary for the New Ulm Wind Project. The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Fix and passed by unanimous vote of all members present.

Commissioner Steinke moved to receive the REPORT OF CLAIMS PAID as presented by President Lynn in the amount of \$2,179,395.61. The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Fix and passed by the unanimous vote of all members present.

Commissioner Fix moved to receive and order paid the REPORT OF CLAIMS TO BE PAID as presented by President Lynn in the amount of \$254,065.97. The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Melville and passed by the unanimous vote of all members.

Commissioner Melville moved to suspend the rules for action on the addendum. The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Fix and passed by the unanimous vote of all members present.

Commissioner Melville moved to declare Unit No. 1 – a 1988 Dodge Van in the Administration Department and miscellaneous computer equipment in the Water/Steam Department as surplus property and authorize disposition pursuant to the requirements of the City Code and Charter. The motion was duly seconded by Commissioner Fix and passed by unanimous vote of all members present.

The Commission thereupon adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

News

Meteorological tower gets approval; Nicollet County puts one-year moratorium on wind projects

By a 3-0 vote Tuesday, Nicollet County commissioners approved a request from New Ulm Public Utilities (NUPU) to erect a 198-foot meteorological tower in Lafayette Township. ...Earlier in the meeting, commissioners unanimously approved a one-year moratorium, effective immediately, on Nicollet County wind turbine projects. Beatty told The Journal the moratorium was created so commissioners could gather more data on the issue for the health, safety and welfare of county residents and ensure "we're doing the right thing." Speaking on behalf of concerned citizens, Jeff Franta read a petition against the project signed by 77 rural residents he said was sent to the NUPU Commission more than two months ago.

September 24, 2008 by Fritz Busch in The Journal

By a 3-0 vote Tuesday, Nicollet County commissioners approved a request from New Ulm Public Utilities (NUPU) to erect a 198-foot meteorological tower in Lafayette Township.

Commissioners Bruce Beatty and Jack Kolars abstained on the vote, which came in front of about 50 rural residents.

The guyed, tubular, steel tower will be placed on Sharon Hacker's property for 3-5 years, according to the Conditional Use Permit. It will be used to collect weather data for a possible future NUPU wind turbine project.

Conditions included relocating the tower at applicant's expense if it interferes with existing electromagnetic communications.

After the meeting, Beatty and Kolars said they abstained on the vote after learning that NUPU would not make weather data public until they are ready to apply for a wind turbine project permit.

The issue arose after Commissioner Judy Hanson and acting Nicollet County Attorney Jerry Lucas asked NPUC when the weather data would be made public.

"You can't force us to release it," said New Ulm City Attorney Hugh Nierengarten. "It will be made public after we decide to do the project." ✓

Earlier in the meeting, commissioners unanimously approved a one-year moratorium, effective immediately, on Nicollet County wind turbine projects.

Beatty told The Journal the moratorium was created so commissioners could gather more data on the issue for the health, safety and welfare of county residents and ensure "we're doing the right

thing."

Speaking on behalf of concerned citizens, Jeff Franta read a petition against the project signed by 77 rural residents he said was sent to the NUPU Commission more than two months ago.

"A MET tower means wind turbines are imminent," said Franta. "...The three landowners that signed leases did it for fear of implied threat of eminent domain. They aren't here, they're afraid."

Nierengarten disputed that, however. "There was no threat to condemn property," he said. "Land owners broke off negotiations with us, then came back to us to negotiate leases. Anybody that says anything else about that is lying."

Franta called NUPU's plans for five wind turbines "only the start of a wind farm in an area with some of the richest farmland in the world."

Franta suggested building wind turbines in southwestern Brown County, where there's more wind and fewer buildings, people and crops.

Franta said underground power lines (between wind turbines) could harm tiled fields. Other concerns he mentioned were light flicker, noise, taxes and other available "green" energy.

"Excel Energy already has "green" energy available to New Ulm," said Franta.

"It's hard to imagine even one resident burdened with all these concerns. ... None of us want these towers. ... We'll use all legal options against this project," added Franta.

Kim Reinhart mentioned numerous chronic health effects caused by wind turbines on humans and livestock.

Nierengarten said the City of New Ulm hired "true" experts to research the issue.

"You can find whatever you want on the Internet," he added. "...It's the same reactionary response when the hog industry began here decades ago.

"It's NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard)."

Nierengarten said his daughter attended college in Northfield where wind turbines are used on Carlton and St. Olaf campuses.

"She said there were no issues with them," he added.

Nierengarten said NUPU has not decided if and when the wind turbine project would begin.

He compared erecting the MET tower to getting an x-ray before surgery.

Nierengarten said the three property owners who signed three-year leases that could be expanded for up to 60 years with NUPU were not constrained by any judicial "gag orders," as one news report in the Lafayette Ledger indicated.

Regarding the question of whether or not NUPU wind turbines would be built in a place without enough wind, Nierengarten said most people would not sell wind turbines unless sites have enough wind resources.

"There are many ifs to be answered before NUPU does a wind turbine project," he added.

Web link: <http://www.nujournal.com/page/content.detail/id/50...>

Filed under : [Minnesota](#) : [Zoning/Planning](#)

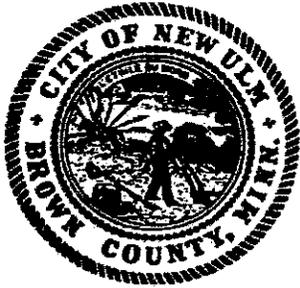
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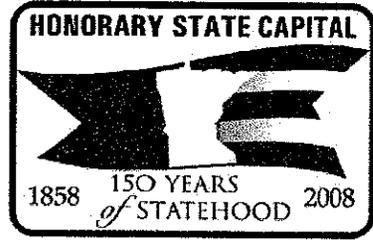
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New Ulm Public Utilities

City of New Ulm

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New Ulm, Minnesota 56073
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Fax: (507) 354-7318
Web Site: www.ci.new-ulm.mn.us



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Work and analysis continues on the Electric Division – Long Term Power Project. Major components of the Long Term Power Project include: (1) Development and construction of a 5 – 10 MW Wind Energy Project. Total project costs are estimated at \$12.5 million and will be funded with \$2.975 million in low interest Clean Renewable Energy Bonds and the remainder through General Obligation Public Utility Revenue Bonds; (2) Conversion of Boiler No. 4 from natural to coal/biomass fuel. Project costs are estimated at \$11 million and will be funded by General Obligation Public Utility Revenue Bonds; (3) Wholesale Electric Power Purchase contract for 15 MW of base load electric power; and (4) Market sales of the energy and capacity of the existing Nos. 5 and 7 Combustion Turbines. These units have total generation capacity of approximately 51 MW. ✓ VCEL

Other projects and analysis include: (1) Electric Distribution Twenty (20) Year System Plan; (2) Wastewater Treatment and Water Systems Comprehensive Plans; and (3) Water Treatment Plant Operations.

NUPU staff is dedicated to providing reliable and economical utility services to our customers. Our "customer first" focus continues as an objective for the health of the community and New Ulm Public Utilities.

Since 1903, New Ulm Public Utilities has met the challenges with the guidance of the community. We look to the community for their continued support as we move forward to accept and meet the many challenges and opportunities of the future.

Sincerely,

Brian D. Gramentz
City Manager

Gary J. Gleisner
Director of Utilities

News

Nicollet County panel OKs permit for meteorological tower

After more than two hours of discussion Monday night, the Nicollet County Planning and Zoning Advisory Commission approved a Conditional Use Permit for the New Ulm Public Utilities to erect a 198-foot meteorological (met) tower several miles southwest of Lafayette. The resolution came on a 49-11 criteria vote with 13 conditions. ... "I seriously believe you're seriously impacting the lives of many people here," he told NUPU. In their Findings of Fact criteria votes on 10 questions, Commissioners voted 4-2 that given the nature of the land, the requested use was not compatible with the general welfare, public health and safety, the surrounding area and will depreciate nearby properties.

September 16, 2008 by Fritz Busch in The Journal

After more than two hours of discussion Monday night, the Nicollet County Planning and Zoning Advisory Commission approved a Conditional Use Permit for the New Ulm Public Utilities to erect a 198-foot meteorological (met) tower several miles southwest of Lafayette.

The resolution came on a 49-11 criteria vote with 13 conditions.

Perhaps the most noteworthy of which was the final one, that a wind turbine project could not be approved until 10 months after the met tower is collecting data.

The first nine months of met tower data must be sent to the Nicollet County Environmental Services Office.

Commissioner Tim Waibel had reservations about the met tower and wind turbine project that could follow.

"I seriously believe you're seriously impacting the lives of many people here," he told NUPU.

In their Findings of Fact criteria votes on 10 questions, Commissioners voted 4-2 that given the nature of the land, the requested use was not compatible with the general welfare, public health and safety, the surrounding area and will depreciate nearby properties. ✓

Commissioner Jim Gleisner abstained since NUPU Director Gary Gleisner is his brother.

Nicollet County resident Nancy Reinhart said she was concerned about taxes, land values and health.

"Setbacks are being re-written after residents suffered from many health issues," Reinhart said. ✓

Jeff Franta and Clete Goblirsch gave a detailed Powerpoint presentation on wind turbine shadow effects (light flicker) caused by blades moving between the sun or moon and nearby residences and

other issues.

"It's like turning a light switch on and off. We need responsible (wind turbine) setback parameters," Franta said.

Pat Wrase, NUPU Engineer, said the Nicollet County wind turbine setback was 750 feet while the state requirement was 500 feet.

Kim Reinhart said wind turbine health affects included chronic sleep disturbance, depression, vertigo, nausea and more seizures for people so afflicted.

Others at the meeting talked about livestock issues including stray voltage, cancer, low milk production and still births.

Wrase said the met tower was needed for more data to determine if the site near Lafayette would provide enough wind for turbines to be productive.

"All we're asking for is a met tower permit. Wind turbines would have to go through another permit process. We'd be willing to do a flicker analysis," Wrase said.

Gary Gleisner said NUPU is under "constant pressure" from local 3M and Kraft plants to reduce energy costs and that many rural residents work at the plants.

Wrase added that state conservation mandates require cities to use more and more renewable energy in five-year increments beginning in 2006.

He added that solar and biomass energy including burning RDF (refuse-derived fuel) is being considered by NUPU but other renewable fuels are currently less cost-effective than wind energy.

Wrase said NUPU buys non-renewable power from Excel Energy. Renewable power is available from Excel but at a higher rate, he added.

Nicollet County Commissioners plan to act on the Planning & Zoning recommendation on Tuesday, Sept. 23.

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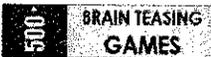
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Energy 'heavy-hitters' weigh in

Xcel, NGK partner on 'huge' battery

By FRITZ BUSCH, Journal Staff Writer

POSTED: April 19, 2008

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SLEEPY EYE — The future of electrical energy was discussed by industry experts, elected and appointed official Friday at Bridging Brown County's Brown County Congress in the Rural Electrical Association (REA) auditorium.

Three years ago, Outland Renewable Energy (ORE) was created by five Southwestern Minnesota farmers.

Now, the firm develops, maintains, owns and operates renewable wind and solar energy projects in Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois, Montana, Texas and New York.

The company employs 60 full-time people in its Canby and Chaska offices and plans to hire 50 more employees within a year.

The firm recently got a \$2 million RTF grant from Xcel Energy to develop solar electricity at sites to be determined in Cottonwood County.

Power transmission is one of the biggest barriers for wind developers, according to Tim Carlsgaard, Communications Manager at Xcel Energy.

"Think of wind as a crop for export, all the way to the East Coast," Carlsgaard said. "We need 90,000 MW of wind for Minnesota and South Dakota by 2020. Capx2020 (a joint initiative of 11 transmission-owning utilities building 345 kV transmission lines across Minnesota) is a great start."

Proposed project corridors include State Highway 19 from the S.D. line to Hampton, US 52 to Rochester and I-90 to La Crosse; I-94 from Fargo to Monticello; and US 2 from Bemidji to Grand Rapids.

Following required mailings, meetings, hearings and public comment periods, the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission will decide if the lines are needed to meet electrical growth needs and support renewable energy expansion.

Pat Wrase, New Ulm Public Utilities Planning and Development Engineer, said his department began a study to find more affordable energy resources after power rates climbed steeply in 2005.

Proposals include converting power plant Boiler #4 to generate 15 MW from cleaner-burning Wyoming coal and biomass plus building three wind turbines near New Ulm.

Brown County REA Manager Wade Hensel urged people to talk to their legislators about streamlining renewable energy development.

"I'm concerned about future energy supplies and our ability to provide the best possible service at the lowest cost. With all the regulations that take longer than other nearby states, It's getting tougher to do," said Hensel.

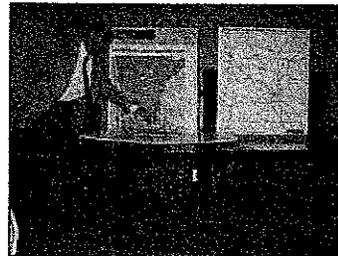
Carbon taxes and Cap & Trade laws will hike future coal energy costs while wind energy costs will drop, according to Ingrid Bjorklund, ORE VP of Government Affairs & Associate General Counsel.

She predicted that the proposed Big Stone II coal-fired power plant project near Ortonville would be the last of its type in the Upper Midwest.

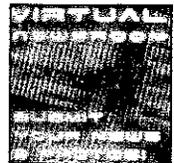
"It's getting tough to produce any type of energy. We need the state to support wind and solar energy," said Bjorklund.

Carlsgaard said Xcel Energy and a Japanese firm, NGK Insulators, are partnering on a "huge" one MW, sodium-sulfur battery project to store direct wind energy and move it to the electricity grid when needed.

Article Photos



Staff photo by Fritz Busch
 Tim Carlsgaard, Xcel Energy Communications and Public Affairs Manager, presents CapX2020 transmission line project details Friday at Bridging Brown County Congress in Sleepy Eye.



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PUC approves bonds to finance wind project

Bonds would be in form of Clean Renewable Energy Bonds

By RON LARSEN Journal Staff Writer

POSTED: March 26, 2008

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NEW ULM — The New Ulm Public Utilities Commission Tuesday recommended issuing \$2,975,000 worth of General Obligation Public Utility Revenue Bonds to help finance its long-term power wind-energy project.

The bond issue would be in the form of Clean Renewable Energy Bonds (CREBs) with an arbitrage yield of 1.00001 percent that would fund roughly a fourth of the 5-megawatt wind farm project which is estimated to cost from \$10 million to \$12 million to build, staff said.

"Why would anyone buy these bonds with such a low yield?" Commissioner Norm Melville asked.

"It's because U.S. taxpayers support these bonds," Director Gary Gleisner answered.

With a sale date of May 6, at 10 a.m., the bond issuance now goes to the City Council for final approval.

The commission also voted to extend the current deadline of April 1, 2008 to June 1, 2009 for termination of the gas supply contract between New Ulm Public Utilities Commission and Minnesota Municipal Gas Agency.

"We haven't been able to go forward with the initial contract [because there has not been a beneficial discount available] because we haven't been able to obtain a beneficial discount, mostly because of the mortgage situation. So, we're asking for approval of this extension in the hopes that the market situation will get better by then," Gleisner said.

"We haven't laid out any funds on this?" Commissioner James Schuetzle asked.

"Other than staff time, no," Gleisner said.

And, there was some encouraging news regarding New Ulm Public Utilities' negotiation with Heartland Consumers Power District on an agreement for supplying power to NUPU.

Representatives of HCPD met with NUPU staff Monday to discuss provisions of the proposed contract, Utilities Engineer Patrick Wrase reported.

"Heartland is having trouble getting approval for supplying primary power to NUPU, but they also have a possible solution for meeting the green energy requirement. If they get approval, they're offering a block of power providing 15 megawatts of power that would include 2 1/2 megawatts of wind energy," Wrase said.

"We will be bidding [power from] a combustion turbine into the MISO market in July. We're hoping for a \$2 million profit over the 'peak' season," Wrase added.

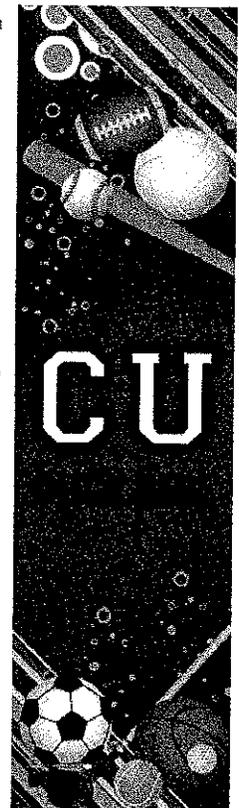
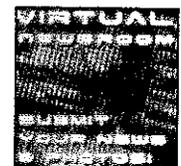
It also was reported that NUPU has contracted with "property experts" to devote more time to obtaining site easements for the utility's wind energy project.

In other action, the commission set a public hearing date of April 22, 2008 at 7 p.m. on a PUC Regulation 110 amendment that would allow requiring a deposit on utilities by certain customers.

Commissioners also learned that through the end of February, the utility has an accrued net margin of \$101,107 — which is less than half the amount of net margin for the same period in 2007 and is 14.1 percent of the 2008 budgeted net margin of \$715,915 for the two-month period.

Ron Larsen can be reached at rlarsen@nujournal.com

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Member Comments



PEAK ALERTS

Throughout the summer NUPU may issue "Peak Alerts" due to extremely warm weather and abnormally high demand for electricity is expected.

We can all help control peak demand by limiting or changing our power usage in the following ways:

- ✓ Use electricity for laundry, the dishwasher, ironing, in the early morning or late evening. Preferably before 9 a.m. or after 9 p.m.
- ✓ Avoid using the oven during the heat of the day.
- ✓ Unplug unnecessary appliances.
- ✓ Turn off indoor and outdoor decorative lighting.
- ✓ Set your air conditioner thermostat to no lower than 78 degrees.

Peak Alerts will be announced on KNUJ, Radio One station on the day these actions should be taken.

2008 NUPU Capital Projects Schedule

Utility installation crews will be working in the following areas throughout the summer. Visit www.ci.new-ulm.mn.us and click on 2008 Public Utilities Construction Map to view locations.

- Sara Hills 2nd
- Dakota West
- Milford Addition
- Somers and Beltrons
- County Road 27
- Sunnyside
- Pleasant Hillcrest Addition
- Cedar Hill

Long Term Power Project Plans Underway

Key reasons for project Higher than average electric bills, the current high price of generating power and the continuing expansion of New Ulm, prompted New Ulm Public Utilities (NUPU) and the New Ulm City Council to form a Long Term Power Committee (LTPC) to address electric prices.

They have identified NUPU's needs for electric capacity and energy for the future and the best, most cost effective generating resources to meet those needs. Developing a long-term generation resource plan, they have forecasted energy needs through 2030 and plans are now underway to include existing facilities as well as new renewable energy resources.



Control Room at NUPU

Need for Capacity and Energy

The New Ulm peak customer load is about 50 MW, with an average load of about 22.5 MW. Existing energy capacity is 51.5 MW from two combustion turbines and 27 MW from three natural gas-fired cogeneration units. The reality of these fuel and natural gas-fueled resources is that they are not cost effective for base load (continuous output of energy) but rather should only be relied on for emergencies and peak times.

Long-Term Power Supply

In order to obtain the lowest possible electricity costs and to meet state of Minnesota renewable energy standards, New Ulm must rely on a combination of internal generating options and energy contracts. Developing combinations of resources to minimize the cost of electrical energy to New Ulm customers include amounts of contract energy with various reliance on New Ulm's generating assets. By 2025, 25% of total energy sales must be from renewable fuels. NUPU is striving to meet that goal.

Resource Options and Conclusions

Wind Power - Renewable energy in the form of New Ulm's wind power project will help to moderate electric prices. The local project, which will include the wind turbine sites located in close proximity to New Ulm, is scheduled to get underway in late 2008 or early next year. Partially funded by a nearly \$3 million, Zero-emission Green Renewable Energy Bond (CREB), the New Ulm's good wind resources make wind power a low cost source of energy.

Boiler #4 Upgrade - This unit will be modified to utilize coal and biochips with upgrades to the pollution control and fuel handling equipment. Electric rates are anticipated to be further moderated with this conversion. The boiler #4 operation also provides thermal energy for downtown industry plus cost effective heating to the buildings in the downtown area.

Existing Combustion Turbines (CTs) - In the past, the NUPU CTs have been utilized solely for the capacity needs of New Ulm. With the advent of the regional electrical markets, the energy from these units can be sold into the markets for an additional source of revenue for NUPU. NUPU will maximize the profit potential in the market with the Midwest Independent Systems Operation (MISO).

Power Provider Contract - Contracting with other providers helps cover what our internal resources can't provide in a more cost effective manner. NUPU is negotiating a contract with good terms with approval on the horizon for late this summer.

High electrical power costs necessitated developing new power sources. NUPU's wind project, boiler #4 upgrades, market operations and power provider contract will benefit New Ulm with the optimum overall power cost for New Ulm customers.

Check out the New Ulm Public Utilities summer conservation rebate programs listed below to help you save money when purchasing high energy efficient appliances and to conserve on your summer energy usage.

For more detailed information and applications visit www.ci.new-ulm.mn.us or contact Lisa Fischer at 359-8228. For your convenience applications are also available at our billing office at 100 N. Broadway, New Ulm.

Releaf Tree Reimbursement Program



This program offers a rebate for shade trees planted on the east or west side of Windows and Windbreak trees on the north/northwest side of a home. Rebate is 75% cost of the tree not to exceed \$75, limit 5x trees. Trees must have a one-year-guarantee and be on the list of eligible tree species. Application must be pre-approved before trees are planted.

Energy Star Appliance Rebate Program



NUPU offers rebates on the new Energy Star (ES) appliances:

- ES Clothes Washers \$50
- ES Dishwashers \$25
- ES Refrigerators \$30
- ES Room Air Conditioner \$25

A copy of the original receipt must accompany the rebate application.

Central Air Conditioning Rebate Program

New Ulm Public Utilities electric customers are eligible for a \$200 rebate or more when purchasing a new qualifying energy-efficient central air conditioner with SEER (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Rating) of 14 or greater.

The program is applicable only for new central air conditioners sold for installation in new or retrofit (replacement) applications where the electricity is supplied by the New Ulm Public Utilities.

Central Air Conditioning Cleaning Discount Program

This program will run for three months each year from May 1 to August 31. Participating vendors will check blower, motor, and bearings on furnace (oil) if necessary; check filter - replace if needed; check drain line for restriction; check humidifier damper (closed for summer mode); check condenser fan and bearings; oil; check electrical wiring and connections; check refrigerant charge; check condenser coils and check thermostat. The customer is responsible for any parts or filters that need replacement.

- To take advantage of this program contact one of these participating vendors:
 - Ahrens Heating, Inc.
 - Comfort Heating & Air Conditioning
 - Pugh's Heating & Air Conditioning
 - Greg Sider Meib
 - Klassen Plumbing & Heating
 - Air Conditioning
 - Kraus Appliances & Repair
 - Nelson Heating & Air Conditioning

Keep Your COOL This Summer!

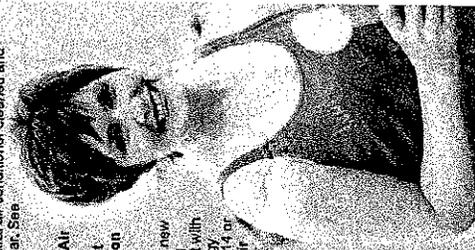
The most important factor in cooling your home is not to let it heat up. Good insulation, caulking and weather-stripping, as well as overhauled windows and shades serve to keep heat outside during the summertime.

The following tips will also help you cool this summer as well as help save on your energy bill:

- ✓ Keep windows closed during the heat of the day.
- ✓ Draw blinds and draperies during the day to keep heat out.
- ✓ Change your air filter regularly. Dirty filters can use 5 to 10 percent more energy than necessary.
- ✓ Use small fans, box fans or ceiling fans instead of the central air conditioning unit when possible.
- ✓ Avoid keeping unnecessary lights turned on. They give off heat.
- ✓ Limit the use of ranges and stoves, dishwashers, dryers, washing machines and other heat-producing equipment as they produce heat.
- ✓ Have your central air conditioner cleaned and checked each year. See

New Ulm Public Utilities' Central Air Conditioning Cleaning Discount Program information in this newsletter.

- ✓ When purchasing a new central air conditioning system, purchase a unit with a SEER (seasonal energy efficiency ratio) rating of 14 or better. See the Central Air Conditioning Rebate Program information in this newsletter.



- ✓ Plant trees to protect your house from the morning and afternoon sun. Check out our ReLeaf Program. Tree Reimbursement information in this newsletter.

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Wind farm set in motion

Leases OK'd for turbine sites

By RON LARSEN Journal Staff Writer

POSTED: August 27, 2008

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NEW ULM - Like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle, the elements needed to put together a 5-megawatt wind energy farm northwest of New Ulm are all coming together for the New Ulm Public Utilities Commission.

Giant steps were taken at the NUPUC meeting Tuesday as the commission approved the land and wind easement leases with three landowners in southwestern Nicollet County to provide space for the wind turbines needed to generate that amount of "green" energy.

In all, New Ulm Public Utilities would be leasing a total of 237.03 acres just off Highway 7, about 5 miles northwest of Klossner.

The 60 acres being leased from Brad and Diane Franta would provide space for two turbines while the 40 acres being leased from Roger Klossner will hold one.

In the case of landowner Sharon Hacker in which 137.03 acres will be leased, the commission authorized an option to purchase an additional 5 acres that would serve as a "support" site for, in the very near future, an anemometer to "pattern" the wind in the next two years or so.

The land also would serve as a possible site for other hardware and a substation, if needed, Director Gary Gleisner said, in urging commissioners to support the purchase. As City Attorney Hugh Nierengarten outlined the purchase, Hacker would be paid \$500 a year until the option is exercised, "at which time [Hacker would be paid] twice the fair market value of the property."

Then, the commission authorized the city manager to prepare requests for proposals, advertise for bids and set a bid opening date for wind turbine supply, equipment and delivery of the needed items for the New Ulm Public Utilities Wind Energy Project.

As for the number of RFPs expected to be returned, "as we have mentioned before, there's quite a demand for wind energy equipment," Utility Planning and Development Engineer Pat Wrase said.

"We got responses back [from an initial contact] from about five suppliers, but we will be sending out RFPs to seven or eight suppliers [including the five original respondents]."

RFPs also would be sent out to any suppliers who have indicated they might have turbines on hand that were ordered but not used, Wrase added.

However, there was more good news for commissioners to consider. While the staffs of NUPUC and Heartland Consumer Power District continue to work on final terms of a contract that calls for HCPD to provide a block of 15 megawatts of power to NUPUC, Xcel Energy has prepared a draft contract for 25 megawatts of NUPU's existing combustion turbines' output over a five-year period that would have Xcel Energy paying NUPUC \$400,000 a year for a total of \$2 million over the contract period.

The end result is that NUPUC now finds itself in the enviable position of having unexpected revenue from its combustion turbines, a likely backup in Xcel, a current provider, if Heartland doesn't come in with a satisfactory price for its block of 15 megawatts, and a possibility, however remote, of being able to pick up turbines that were ordered and not installed to speed development of its wind energy farm.

Ron Larsen can be reached at rlarsen@nujournal.com

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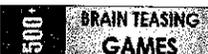
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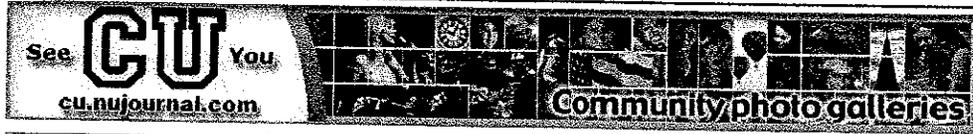


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PUC approves 2009 budget, tables contract OK

By RON LARSEN, Journal Staff Writer

POSTED: December 24, 2008

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NEW ULM - Although the Public Utilities Commission approved Tuesday a \$43.2 million budget for 2009 with hardly any comments, a 20-year contract with Heartland Consumer Power District in South Dakota had commissioners almost literally sweating by the time City Attorney Hugh Nierengarten got listing all the "cautions."

The utility's 2009 budget anticipates operating revenues totaling \$42,122,072 and non-operating revenue, like interest income, penalties and miscellaneous income, totaling \$1,153,321 for a grand total of \$43,275,393.

Operating expenses are predicted to total \$42,213,115, resulting in a net income for the utility of \$1,062,278, Director Gary Gleisner told the commission.

The budget also anticipates a "debt service coverage ratio of 2.09 times which compares to the 2008 budget of 1.86 times and to the 2007 actual ratio of 2.01 times," Gleisner explained.

The budget also plugs in unrestricted cash reserves of \$12,746,358, or 101 percent of target projected reserves "as recommended by financial analysts based on the Utility's A1 credit rating," Gleisner noted.

To help reach that financial goal, the budget includes a 3 percent increase in District Energy's steam rates for 2009, as well as "various increases in Wastewater Treatment rates to provide additional revenue to fund increased operating costs associated in the treatment of phosphorous removal," Gleisner explained.

"Variances will occur in most of the general ledger accounts. It is, however, staff's intention and goal to keep overall controllable costs in line with expenses below budgeted expectations. Some of the accounts, especially those affected by customer patronage, are greatly impacted by weather, market conditions and/or growth," Gleisner said.

However, when it came to approving wastewater rates for parts per pound of biological oxygen demand and total suspended solids, Commissioner Norm Melville expressed concern about the increase because even a few cents "can cause [a big increase] for the few big users," he said.

So, the wastewater treatment increases were delayed while NUPU staff researches the impact on those big customers.

When Nierengarten had finished listing the cautions on the Heartland Consumer Power District, it was obvious that the commissioners were taken aback by his remarks.

After learning that there wasn't a real urgency to approve the contract at this meeting, the commissioners decided to table the decision until the PUC's meeting in January to study the proposed contract.

NUPUC's quest for wholesale electric power began in August 2006 with a request for proposals from 25 electric power suppliers. However, as Wrase noted, only four responded, and HCPD was one of them.

"Since the time of our initial discussions with HCPD staff, the supply offer has evolved from a full requirements supply in which HCPD would purchase the output of NUPUC's converted No. 4 Boiler and schedule around the New Ulm Wind Project output, to a fixed block supply of electrical power," Wrase explained.

"The fixed block will allow New Ulm to utilize the output of Boiler No. 4 for its own use or for sales into the MISO market and will allow New Ulm to develop a local wind project to meet state mandated renewable energy requirements," he continued.

"The 15MW block of power offered by HCPD consists of 12.5 MW of the organizations fossil based resources and 2.5 MW of renewable energy from the newly commissioned Wessington Springs Wind Farm in central South Dakota. The anticipated rate offered by HCPD is approximately 20 percent lower than the current wholesale power rate through Xcel Energy."

In other action, the commission:

Approved a 2 to 2.5 percent wage increase for the utility's non-union employees. Under the agreement, salaried employees would get a 2 percent increase and the hourly workers would get the 2.5 percent



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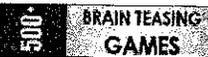
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Bernard pins down top spot in Top Ten news list

Olympic trip is judged top local story of 2008

By KEVIN SWEENEY, Journal Editor

POSTED: January 2, 2009

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NEW ULM - She may have finished fifth in Beijing, but Ali Bernard came in first in The Journal's Top Ten Stories of 2008 list.

Her Olympic odyssey was selected as the top local news story of 2008 in a poll of Journal staffers.

Bernard, the daughter of Rocky and Sue Bernard of New Ulm, grew up wrestling all comers in the local Rolling Thunder youth wrestling program, and made a splash as the only girl on the New Ulm High School wrestling team. She has pursued opportunities in the sport of women's wrestling since high school. She has competed in and won national and world tournaments on the junior and senior levels, and accepted a scholarship to the University of Regina in Saskatchewan, Canada, to compete in its wrestling program.

In April, Bernard went into the U.S. National Olympic trials in Las Vegas, competing in the 158.5 pound class. She upset World bronze medalist Katie Downing to win a spot on the Olympic Team.

While a number of supporters, known as the Ali Cats, were able to travel to Beijing for her matches, many more back home stayed up on Saturday night, Aug. 16, to watch her wrestle on the Internet. They cheered as she pinned her first opponent in 42 seconds, and groaned as she lost in the quarterfinals. She wrestled back to win a spot in the Bronze Medal match, but lost to five-time world champion Kyoko Hamaguchi of Japan.

Bernard has returned to the University of Regina for her final season and is continuing to work toward a return trip to the 2012 Olympics.

Following Bernard's Olympic journey in The Journal area's top ten stories are:

2. New Ulm hosts State Capital for a Day.
3. City contends with state funding cuts
4. New Ulm PUC proceeds with wind farm project
5. New Ulm Medical Center breaks ground on Surgical Center project
6. The Rev. John M. LeVoire is ordained as the fourth bishop of the Catholic Diocese of New Ulm.
7. District 88 explores the future of the New Ulm Middle School building.
8. Former Brown County Sheriff Tim Brennan dies of cancer.
9. The Marktplatz Mall property changes hands.
10. New Ulm Police Chief Erv Weinkauff announces his retirement.

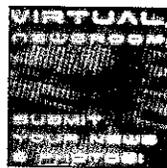
Capital for a Day

Selected as one of eight regional Capitals for a Day through a statewide Internet vote, New Ulm had its day on May 15. Despite a relatively short planning period, the city came through with a day full of activities, starting with a New Ulm Farm-City Hub Club pancake breakfast attended by Gov. Tim Pawlenty to an evening picnic in German Park attended by Lt. Gov. Carol Molnau, who was schooled in the finer

Article Photos



Kyoko Hamaguchi of Japan, in blue, wrestles against New Ulm's Ali Bernard of the US for the bronze medal decider of 72kg women's freestyle wrestling competition of the Beijing 2008 Olympics in Beijing on Sunday, Aug. 17. Bernard's Olympic experience was judged as the top local news story of 2008. (AP Photo/Saurabh Das)



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points of firing cannons by the New Ulm Battery. Molnau also muscled a 35-pound, specially tagged catfish, dubbed "Big D", back into the Minnesota River for some lucky angler to catch.

State Funding Cuts

As the state's revenue projections followed the economy into a downspin, Gov. Tim Pawlenty took action in December to help fill a \$400 million deficit in the current state budget. Part of the balancing act included the unallocation of Local Government Aid funds to cities over 1,000 in population. New Ulm's share is \$383,862 in lost aid. The city is working on a plan to deal with that shortfall.

Wind Farm Project

As part of the city's long-range energy plan, the New Ulm PUC is pursuing the construction of three wind-powered electrical generating turbines. Utilities staff identified an area in nearby Nicollet County, and pursued negotiations with three landowners for sites to build the towers. The landowners signed leases with the PUC, granting easements to build towers on their land, but the decision is not popular with neighboring landowners, who contend the towers will have a deleterious impact on their lives and property values. The city is building a test tower to measure the winds at the site before continuing with the construction of the towers.

Surgery Project

The New Ulm Medical Center conducted a successful capital campaign to raise \$750,000 in local donations to help finance a \$2.75 million remodeling and expansion program at the hospital, designed primarily to increase the size of the three operating rooms and provide more privacy for post-operative surgical patients.

Allina Hospitals & Clinics, In.c., the parent company of the New Ulm Medical Center, also announced a special project, "The Heart of New Ulm," which has the lofty goal of reducing the number of deaths due to heart attacks in town to zero in ten years.

A New Bishop

Following the appointment of New Ulm Bishop John C. Nienstedt as the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, the New Ulm Diocese operated with a special administrator, Msgr. Doug Grams, in charge. That changed in July, when Pope Benedict XVI selected a parish pastor in Stillwater, Fr. John M. LeVoir, to fill the New Ulm position.

Bishop LeVoir, who has a unique background after working as a licensed CPA before entering the seminary, said his appointment took him completely by surprise. He had anticipated finishing out his remaining years before retirement at the two parishes he served in Stillwater.

Archbishop Nienstedt returned to New Ulm in September to ordain his successor as a bishop, and install him as the head of the New Ulm Diocese.

Middle School Situation

District 88 became the full owner of the New Ulm Middle School building and the property is sits on, after a condemnation proceeding and land swap with the City of New Ulm, which had owned the land. The question still remains - what to do with the building?

A district ad-hoc committee continues to examine the building's options, including the idea of turning it, or part of it, into some kind of arts center. Meanwhile, the District administration offices were moved to the building to allow the annex building to be used for classrooms.

Sheriff Brennan dies

Former Brown County Sheriff Tim Brennan retired in 2006, remarried and moved to Sleepy Eye. However, less than two years later, on May 23, 2008, he lost a battle with cancer that had been diagnosed after he left office.

Brennan was remembered as a dedicated and professional law officer.

"After a long, dedicated career he deserved a long, happy retirement," said Bob Christensen, his former chief deputy.

In August, Brennan's widow, Sharon Brennan, dedicated the home she owned in Mankato as the Timothy House, a residence for families of cancer patients receiving treatment at Immanuel-St. Joseph Hospital in Mankato.

Marktplatz Mall

changes hands

After several years as owner of the Markplatz Mall, and a failed attempt to convert a portion of it into condominiums, Robert Petroff sold the building to new owners. The southern third was sold to Randy Danielson, owner of George's Ballroom, in June. In October, the rest was sold to Marktplatz Retail & Development LLC, a division of Wilshire Financial of Los Angeles, Calif.

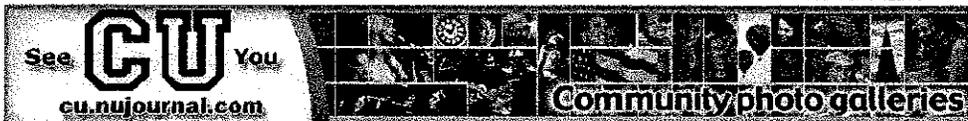
The new owners have expressed a desire to reposition the mall, and increase the traffic in the building by opening unleased portions to non-profits for various uses.

Chief retires

In September, New Ulm Police Chief Erv Weinkauff announced he would be retiring from the position as of

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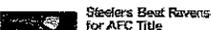
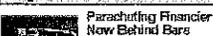
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PUC approves power pact with Heartland

By RON LARSEN Journal Staff Writer

POSTED: January 13, 2009 [Save](#) | [Print](#) | [Email](#) | [Read comments](#) | [Post a comment](#)

NEW ULM - With their doubts erased, New Ulm Public Utilities commissioners voted unanimously Monday night to enter into a 20-year agreement with Heartland Consumers Power District during which time, the South Dakota-based utility is to provide a 15-MegaWatt block of electric power.

Although the HCPD's president's planned trip to New Ulm Monday to provide assurances was scuttled by the weather, a Power-Point presentation explained the make-up of the organization, how Heartland determines its rates and identification of its customers including those in Minnesota. That presentation answered the commissioners' questions and gave them insight into how the firm prices its power, commissioners agreed during a discussion period.

Approval of the pact means that Heartland will begin delivering that block of power to NUPUC, starting Jan. 1, 2010 and will continue to provide that amount of power to the utility until Dec. 31, 2029.

The contract provides for renewal at the end of the initial term for successive five-year periods unless terminated by either party.

The commissioners' first review of the proposed contract, during the commission's December 2008 meeting, bogged down over Heartland's rate terminology.

"As described in the agreement, the W-2 rate will be equivalent to the W-1 rate (which is Heartland's rate to provide full or supplemental requirements power and energy), but without any of Heartland's costs to provide generation reserves," John Knofczynski, Heartland's manager of engineering and operations, wrote in a letter to Gary Gleisner, NUPU's director.

"At this point, the W-2 rate is known. The cost of the reserves (a fixed cost) will then be assigned to the demand charge for the customers taking service under the W-1 rate (i.e., cost of reserves divided by the total annual demand under the W-1 rate)," Knofczynski wrote.

That meant there would be about \$10 difference between what NUPUC currently is paying Xcel Energy for its power, NUPU's Planning and Development Engineer Patrick Wrase said.

In other action, the commission authorized the purchase of a new Water Main Emergency Line Tapping/Stopping Unit in the Water/Steam Department.

The commission voted to award the purchase to E Z Valve Technologies with its bid of \$50,610.31, including sales tax and shipping. The other bidder, HydraStop Company, was about \$11,000 higher, and that bid did not include sales tax and shipping.

Ron Larsen can be reached at rlarsen@nujournal.com

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PUC may save \$5 million on boiler

By Ron Larsen Staff Writer

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NEW ULM - The New Ulm Public Utilities Commission learned Tuesday that an error on the current Boiler No. 4 permit may help the utility to save upwards of \$5 million in converting the boiler from burning natural gas to burning coal and/or bio-fuels.

Commissioners also learned a draft permitting document for NUPUC's Wind Farm was completed last week and has been submitted to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission.

Boiler

Commissioners were told the error in the permit "may allow for the use of coal fuel in the boiler after only minor improvements to the boiler's pollution control system," Director Gary Gleisner reported in his monthly report to the commission.

The utility's "permitting" consultant for the project "is examining the situation and preparing a letter of applicability to the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency in order to formalize the potential for this option," Gleisner reported.

The NUPUC staff also will be meeting Thursday "to help inform the MPCA more completely regarding the Boiler No. 4 project," Gleisner said.

Wind farm

"The New Ulm Wind Farm Project has been designated as Docket#E282/WS-09-178 by the MnPUC," Planning and Development Engineer Pat Wrase told the commission.

"In 2007 when the project was initially developed, NUPUC staff had anticipated that the project would be reviewed for permitting by the Nicollet County Board of Commissioners," Wrase explained.

"The project is now anticipated to be slightly larger than the 5 megawatts [originally planned], and thus be designated as a Large Wind Energy Conversion System and, therefore, greater than the ultimate size for which counties have permitting authority," Wrase explained.

"In addition, Nicollet County has placed a 12-month moratorium on the permitting of Wind Energy Conversion Systems to allow for review of the WECS ordinance," he continued.

"It is anticipated that the new Nicollet County WECS requirements will mirror the permitting standards practiced by the MnPUC. Although it is possible that Nicollet County could develop more restrictive requirements than the MnPUC, the MnPUC has final permitting authority for wind projects in Minnesota," Wrase explained.

In other action, the commission:

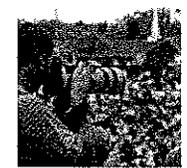
- Awarded a \$340,100 contract to Magney Construction, the low bidder, for replacing the failing clarifiers at the New Ulm Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The existing clarifiers were installed in 1976, and "the center rim cast iron feed lines on both clarifiers are severely pitted with holes in the structure," Wrase said.

- Received a report from Wrase on the utility's performance under reliability standards adopted by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission in November 2007. It showed that, thanks to NUPU's backup systems, the utility performed very well in the three different categories, Wrase said.

- Learned that, after the first two months of 2009, the utility is showing a net margin of \$394,789 which is 45.8 percent of the annual budgeted net margin.

Ron Larsen can be reached at rlarsen@nujournal.com



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July 25, 2007
Minnesota

PUC sells bonds

The New Ulm Public Utilities Commission Tuesday authorized the issuance of \$2,375,000 in general obligation revenue bonds that will fund various projects including construction of the Cottonwood booster station and design work on the proposed New Ulm Wind Farm.

The bonding issue now goes to the City Council for ratification. It also would provide about \$700,000 for the Boiler No. 4 conversion project. The commission acted after discussing the utility's bonding capabilities with the city's bonding consultant during an informational meeting that preceded the PUC's regular meeting.

Maintaining a satisfactory level of unrestricted reserve cash has greatly enhanced the utility's ability to the best possible interest rate on its bonds, bonding consultant Jon Burmeister of Des Moines said.

"New Ulm is in the enviable position of maintaining an A1 bond rating while giving New Ulm almost triple-A rates," Burmeister said.

The commission took another step in securing less expensive electrical power by voting to apply for at least a portion of the 20 megawatts of Pick Sloan federal hydroelectric power being offered to new customers by the Western Area Power Administration.

New Ulm Public Utilities would be in line for the cheaper power because Heartland Consumer Power District, which becomes NUPU's primary power supplier in 2009, will act as the conduit for obtaining the power, commissioners were told.

While he couldn't give specifics yet, Director Gary Gleisner said obtaining the cheaper hydroelectric power should cut the utility's product costs "quite a bit."

Although Sargent & Lundy's estimate of NUPU's wind farm project costs, at \$12.5 million, was considerably higher than the utility's own estimate of around \$10 million, "Sargent & Lundy's estimate includes \$3.8 million for a new substation [for transmission of power generated on the wind farm] which may or may not be necessary," NUPU's Planning and Development Engineer Patrick Wrase told the commission.

Wrase said the utility's estimate was based on sending its generated power through the substation owned and operated by Xcel Energy near New Ulm.

"We will have to depend on Xcel's substation to get the wind generation power into New Ulm. [To get more independence] we would have to put in a new transformer, but it would have to be built next to the present substation on Xcel land so we'd still have to work through Xcel," Wrase said.

Otherwise, the prognosis for a wind energy farm just gets better and better, Wrase reported.

According to Wrase, WindLogics Inc. has completed the wind resource assessment of sites for the utility's local wind project, and "the wind resource assessment has indicated an average gross capacity factor of 44 percent is likely for the site."

That's about 10 percent higher than the assessment calculations used by NUPU staff for the preliminary assessment for the project, Wrase said.

"The project continues to be economically attractive, especially if we're successful at obtaining Clean Renewable Energy Bonds for a portion of the project costs," Wrase said. The utility is applying for \$2.975 million in CREB funding "which would be zero percent interest," Wrase said.

✂ The reason that the utility's net margin of \$309,880 after the first six months is only 28 percent of the utility's budgeted annual net margin of \$1,093,165 is that the utility's customers are getting really serious about conserving on energy and water, Gleisner told the commission.

✂ "Our sales are flat in almost every department," Gleisner said.

"Even though we have more homes now, the number of people in each house is smaller. We're not seeing four or five kids in a house any more," City Manager Brian Gramentz added.

By Ron Larsen
Journal Staff Writer

The Journal ^[1]

25 July 2007

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PUC moves ahead with boiler,

THE JOURNAL, New Ulm, MN Wednesday December 31, 2008

wind farm plans

OCT.

28 — The New Ulm Public Utilities Commission took a giant step forward in converting Boiler No. 4 from natural gas to burning coal and other solid fuel by authorizing Sargent & Lundy to prepare plans and specifications needed for the conversion. That action followed the commission's approval of an agreement with Northern States Power [division of Xcel Energy] to sell 25

megawatts of capacity from Combustion Turbine No. 7 to NSP for a five-year period, starting June 1, 2009.

29

PUC approves new fees for 2009

By **KREMENA SPENGLER**
Journal Staff Writer

NEW ULM — The New Ulm Public Utilities Commission on Tuesday approved a new schedule of fees and charges for next year, mostly to reflect increases in costs.

The account transfer fee goes up from \$15 to \$20 and the re-connect charge from \$50 to \$55 to reflect normal inflationary increases.

The fee to reconnect (unseal) a meter as removed and an analogous fee to disconnect (seal) is added. This change is intended to charge a customer if they want their meter sealed. The cost to unseal the meter will be covered under the transfer charge.

The PUC is also increasing the rebate to customers for relocation of an electric meter, from \$350 to \$425, and for a customer installed disconnect meter combination from \$380

to \$455. These increases are due to normal inflationary increases in charges to relocate meters to the outside, by electricians, said PUC staff.

The flat water main tapping charges inside the city increased from \$85 to \$150 for 3/4" to 1" mains, and from \$130 to \$250 for 1 1/2" to 2" mains.

The hydrant connection and disconnect fees went up from \$30 to \$45, and the hydrant stop charges (which concern other municipalities) doubled from \$1,000 to \$2,000, to reflect industry standards.

The rest of the fees did not change.

Missouri Basin Program application

The PUC authorized an application to the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program for a post-2010 resource pool electric power allocation.

Until recently, the New Ulm service territory did not extend west of the 94 1/2 meridian, so it was not eligible to receive WAPA power. With recent growth along Highway 14, it is.

The portion of New Ulm that extends into WAPA territory is small, and the allocation would likely be based on this small portion, said officials.

However, if growth continues, New Ulm may be eligible for future re-allocations of electric power resources. The WAPA resources are considerably lower cost than New Ulm's current supplies, said officials.

Wind project

The PUC authorized a contract with Howard R. Green

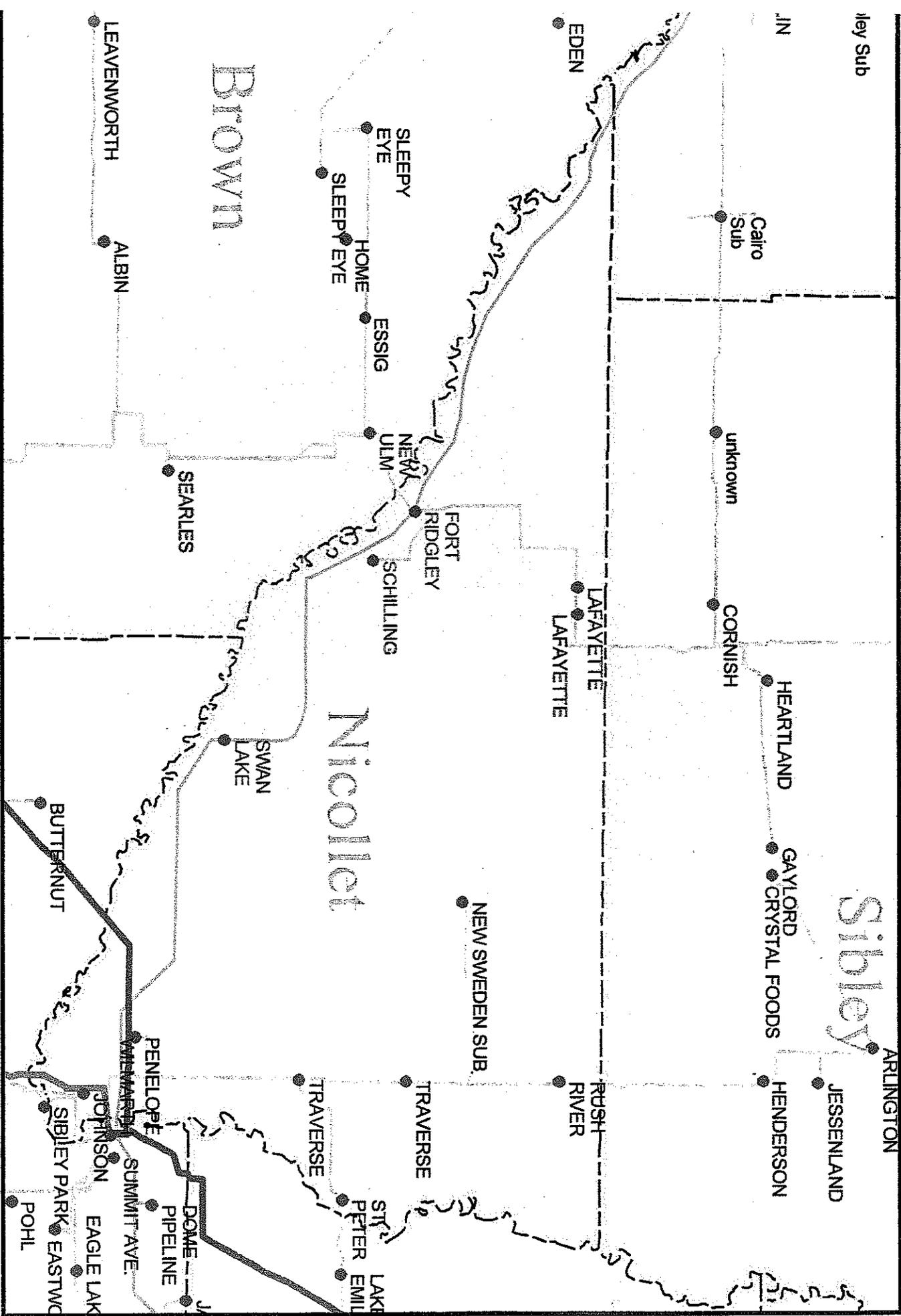
Co. to conduct environmental and other studies associated with the permitting and delivery of the New Ulm Wind Project.

This firm will do tasks such as: an environmental site assessment, cultural, historical and archeological survey, avian, bat and endangered species screening, beam path study, noise emissions study, flicker study and visual impact analysis, etc.

These are expected to be done within four to six months, for a fee of up to \$225,000, officials said.

The main technical consultant, Sargent and Lundy, would still do the project design, equipment specs and bidding documents as part of an existing contract.

Power Lines and Substations in Nicollet and Brown County



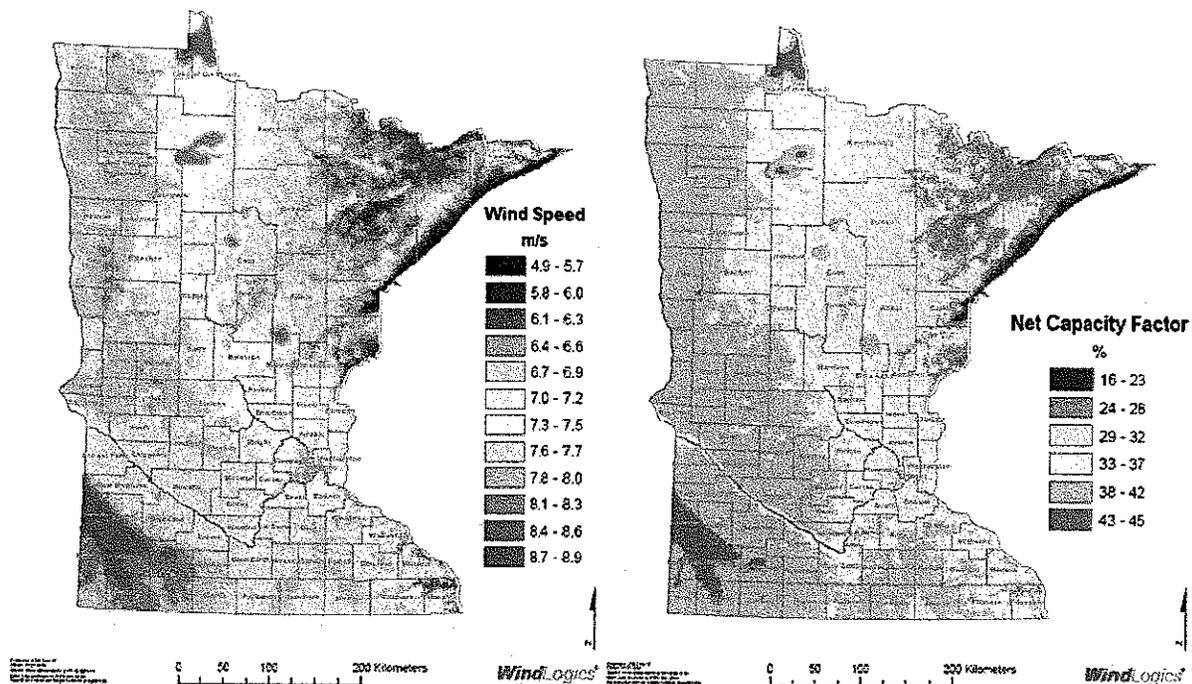


Figure 6: Mean annual wind speed at 80 m AGL (r) and net annual capacity factor (l).

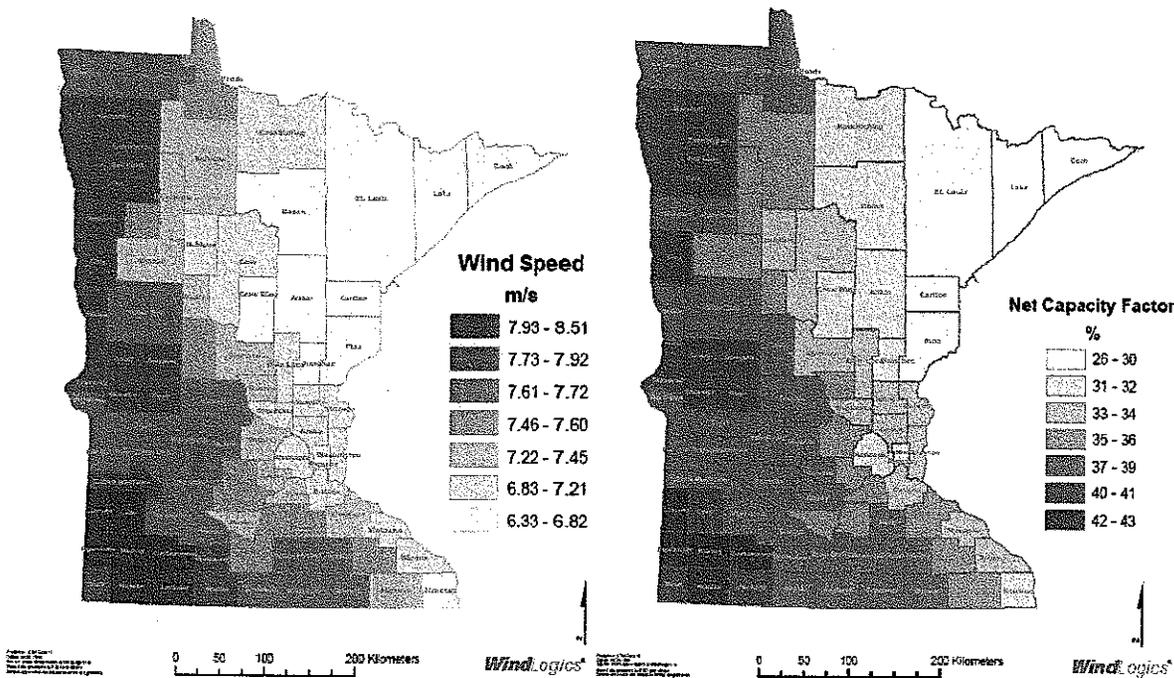


Figure 7: Mean annual wind speed at 80 m AGL (r) and net annual capacity factor assuming 1.4% losses from gross and Vestas V82 1.65 MW MkII power curve, (left) by county.



1. INITIAL SCREENING OF GENERATION OPTIONS

New Ulm Public Utilities Commission (NUPUC) commissioned Sargent & Lundy, L.L.C. (S&L) to provide a study to identify:

- NUPUC's needs for electric capacity and energy for the future
- The best generating resources to meet those needs

NUPUC currently has 27 megawatts (MW) of steam electric generation and 51.5 MW of gas turbine generation, for a total installed capacity of 78.5 MW. The 27 MW of steam electric power is generated by Steam Turbine No. 3 (6 MW), Steam Turbine No. 4 (15 MW), and Steam Turbine No. 6 (6 MW), with steam produced by three natural gas-fired steam boilers. The steam electric power plant exports 15,000 pounds per hour (lb/hr) of steam at 140 psig to industrial users and 15,000 lb/hr of steam at 7 psig for district heating. The 51.5 MW of gas turbine power is generated by Combustion Turbine Generator (CTG) No. 5 (24 MW) and CTG No. 7 (27.5 MW).

The first major task associated with this project was an initial screening of various generation resource options. This report discusses the development and evaluation of these options and S&L's conclusions and recommendation with regard to the best options for further evaluation.

A forecast of NUPUC customer electric demand and load requirements is being developed concurrently with the screening study. The customer load forecast will identify the need for and the timing of new electric generation resource additions. ✓

The generation resource options selected by NUPUC will then be used to develop several resource plan cases. Each resource plan case will consist of generation resource options that will be added over the course of the 25-year study period, as needed to meet the forecasted customer load growth. The various cases will then be analyzed under a base case set of assumptions in order to identify the least-cost portfolio of generation resources. Several scenarios will also be conducted that adjust the base case assumptions in order to test whether the rankings of the resource cases change in relation to these input assumptions. These will include evaluating the impacts of higher and/or lower local and regional economic growth, fuel costs, interest rates, and inflation rates.

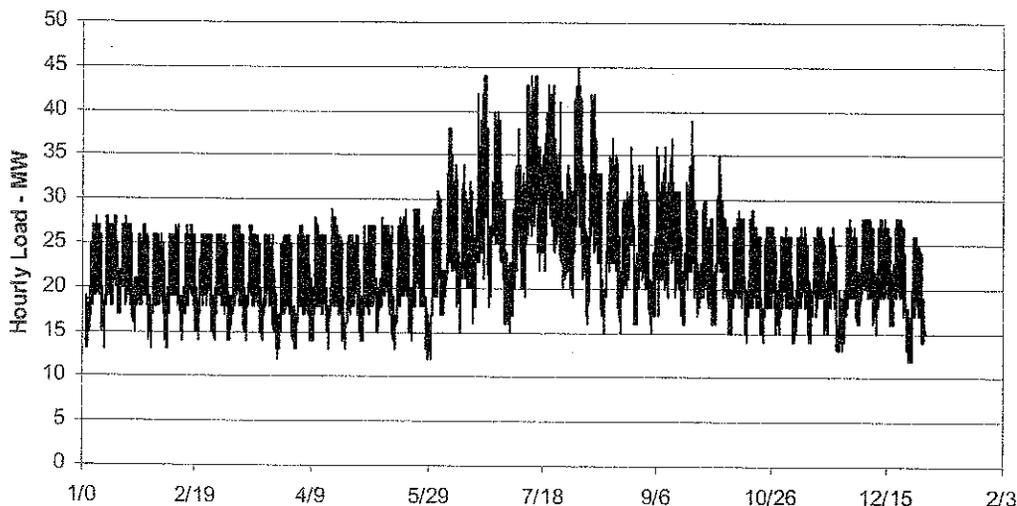


2. RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

2.1 HISTORICAL LOAD PROFILE FOR NUPUC

The 2005 load profile for NUPUC is shown below in Figure 2-1 and Figure 2-2. These figures illustrate the significant variations in the load requirements of NUPUC customers. The overall peak load was 45 MW in 2005, while the average load was only 22 MW and the minimum load for the system was 12 MW. NUPUC must be able to dispatch generation resources on a real-time basis in order to generate electricity to meet the current customer demand. These resources must provide sufficient generating capacity to meet the peak load plus the required reserve margin. The Midwest Independent System Operator (MISO) requires utilities in Minnesota to own or contract for electric generating capacity with reserves equal to 112% of the expected peak load. This equates to about 50 MW of capacity based on New Ulm's current peak load.

Figure 2-1. Annual Load (2005)



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would be insufficient fuel cost savings associated with being able to use either fuel oil or natural gas to offset the dual-fuel conversion costs. On the other hand, these units could be used to meet planning reserve requirements and as a hedge against high market prices due to localized transmission constraints provided that the fixed costs for on-going maintenance and operations support are less costly than the alternative of purchasing capacity from other providers.

Table 6-7 lists the nine resources options that were evaluated. A retirement date of 2007 was used for all the steam turbine retirement options. The 2009 date for new generation additions coincides with NUPUC's capacity needs after the steam units are retired. The 2009 date was used for all generation options to provide a common basis of evaluation. The CTs, wind turbine, and Boiler 4 conversion projects could probably be completed by 2009, but a new coal unit could not be permitted and built within that timeframe. Accordingly, more detailed engineering, permitting, and economic feasibility analyses would be required if NUPUC elected to pursue the new coal plant option. ✓

Options 1 through 5 are predicated on NUPUC's continuing to own or directly contract for all required capacity resources and to use those capacity resources in combination with wholesale energy purchases to supply the electric energy loads of NUPUC's customers. In all of these cases, capacity was added so that the capacity requirements would be balanced over the time period. In some years, there were small capacity deficits that would require annual capacity purchase agreements to meet planning reserve requirements. In the year after new capacity was added, there would be small capacity surpluses that could be sold to other utilities until NUPUC's peak load growth caught up to the capacity supply.

✗ Options 6 through 9 are predicated on NUPUC's having a power supply contract with Xcel or another service provider. NUPUC would no longer need to own or control any generating resource; however, the options include cases where NUPUC would continue to own the existing CTs (Options 7-9) and would also add wind generation to meet potential state requirements for the use of renewable energy. Since NUPUC's capacity requirements would be provided as part of the power supply contract, NUPUC would continue to maintain and operate the CTs and would contract to sell the capacity to other utilities. The revenue margins from the CTs' power sales would then reduce the NUPUC's customer revenue requirements. The energy from the wind units would be supplied to NUPUC's customers and would reduce the energy purchased under the power supply contract. ✓ *tab*

have been maintained to meet capacity requirements and have been operated to serve load only when transmission constraints limited import of electricity into New Ulm. Generation available from the wholesale market consists of excess generating capacity available from other utilities, along with generation from independent power projects. The wholesale market has been a relatively low-cost electric energy supply option over the last 20 years because of a surplus of low-cost baseload generation (i.e., coal, nuclear, and hydroelectric units) owned by other utilities. This surplus has diminished, and most utilities need to add new baseload generation within the next 5 to 10 years. This has resulted in rising prices for wholesale energy, as the available supply source has shifted towards higher-cost natural-gas-fired generation. ✓

In addition to initiating this study to evaluate long-term resource options, NUPUC has responded to the market conditions by the following actions: ✓

- Entering into a the full-resource supply contract with Xcel through May 2009
- Issuing a request for proposal for full-resource supply contract starting in June 2009

The responses to the RFP may provide better alternatives to the options evaluated in this study and should be evaluated against these options before a final decision is made.

6.5.2 Recommendations

The lowest cost resource option available to NUPUC would be wind turbine power generation, based on a capital cost associated with NUPUC self-building or taking a long-term ownership position in a large wind project. Given the uncertainty of wind conditions, wind should be limited to no greater than 10% of the energy supply (i.e., 9 MW of capacity resulting in average annual hourly generation of 2.7 MWh) unless new renewable portfolio standards require higher levels. This option could be implemented even if NUPUC continued with a full-resource contract. Under this arrangement, the wind generation energy would be sold into the wholesale market and the associated capacity sold to other utilities. Alternatively, NUPUC may be able to negotiate a full-resource option that would credit NUPUC for the energy and capacity from the wind power units in a similar manner to demand-side management programs offered by some utilities that have full-resource supply contracts. ✓ *tab*

The conversion of Boiler 4 could also provide an additional 15 MW of intermediate-load support that would operated whenever its variable operating costs are lower than the prevailing wholesale market rate. The ✓

economic viability of this option depends on the delivered coal cost vis-à-vis the average delivered cost of coal to the other generation units in the Minnesota region.

The combination of the wind power and the Boiler 4 unit would total about 18 MW, which would only supply NUPUC's hourly load requirement for less than 20% of the hours in the year. For this portfolio option to be viable from a market risk standpoint, NUPUC would need a partial resource supply of an additional 15 MW of baseload generation. This would supply the minimum load requirements and, in combination with the wind power and Boiler 4 conversion, would provide a firm source of generation to meet over 95% of NUPUC's load. The 15 MW could be supplied through a firm or unit contingent (i.e., supply dependent on the availability of the specified units) or an ownership position in a new or existing coal-fired generating unit. NUPUC may also consider a 30-MW supply in lieu of the Boiler 4 conversion, depending on the pricing of partial resource offerings.

In evaluating a partial resource option, NUPUC must consider the higher market risks when compared to the full-resource options. The Xcel tariff rate is a retail rate that is significantly higher than the partial resource options; however, it is a full-resource supply that provides a stable price-basis with delivery to New Ulm. Although this tariff rate is subject to fuel cost adjustment and other escalators, it is a cost-of-service-based rate that will not subject NUPUC to the much higher price volatility of the regional wholesale market. A partial resource option or ownership in a generation resource not located within the NUPUC system could provide a similar level of price assurance with regard to the power generation costs, but may include unit availability risk. Also, a partial resource supply generally would be based on delivery within the transmission system would be at the location of the generation, resulting in cost risk due to transmission system congestion pricing between the generator location and NUPUC.

6.5.3 Recommendations

- Continue to operate and maintain the existing combustion turbines and contract the capacity to other utilities, provided that contract payments are greater than annual operating and maintenance costs.
- Evaluate the proposals submitted in response to NUPUC's request for proposal for full-resource electricity supply against the resource options provided in this study.
- Pursue development and self-build or ownership interest in 9 MW of wind power to meet Minnesota's recommendation for a 10% renewable portfolio.

- If the full-resource options do not provide sufficient economic benefits, pursue the partial resource option with or without the Boiler 4 conversion.

- The sensitivity analysis evaluated the impacts of variations in the forecast values of key economic parameters. The sensitivity analysis showed that changing some of these values could significantly impact the PVR and PVS values; however, the relative rankings of the resource options did not significantly change with any of the scenarios.

NUPUC's current generating resources are fueled by natural gas and distillate oil. These fuels are considerably more expensive than the coal, nuclear, hydroelectric, and wind power units that provide most of the electric energy serving customers in Minnesota. For the past several years, NUPUC has been able to purchase most of their electric energy requirements through wholesale energy purchases. The steam and combustion turbine units have been maintained to meet capacity requirements and have been operated to serve load only when transmission constraints limited import of electricity into New Ulm. Generation available from the wholesale market consists of excess generating capacity available from other utilities, along with generation from independent power projects. The wholesale market has been a relatively low-cost electric energy supply option over the last 20 years because of a surplus of low-cost baseload generation (i.e., coal, nuclear, and hydroelectric units) owned by other utilities. This surplus has diminished, and most utilities need to add new baseload generation within the next 5 to 10 years. This has resulted in rising prices for wholesale energy, as the available supply source has shifted towards higher-cost natural-gas-fired generation.

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5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis of all the options using the process described in this report, S&L recommends the following options be selected for further evaluation:

- **Wind power.** Local and large-scale ownership interest options.
- **Boiler No. 4.** Conversion with coal/biomass.
- **250-MW coal/biomass.** Predicated on partnerships with other utilities.
- **Existing combustion turbines.** Conversion of to dual-fuel.

The final options selected by NUPUC will be evaluated in more detail and then used in identifying the best resource plan options to meet NUPUC's future resource needs.