

DRAFT
MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
ENERGY TRANSITION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA
REGULAR MEETING
HYBRID OVER TEAMS AND PHYSICALLY AT THE
SHERBURNE COUNTY GOVERNMENT BOARD ROOM

Tuesday, September 30, 2025

1) Call to Order and Roll Call

The Energy Transition Advisory Committee met in Regular Session and ETO Director Carla Vita welcomed all in attendance and called the meeting to order at 10:00am at the Sherburne County Government Center Board Room. Roll call was taken.

Representing	Name	Status
Voting		
Senate Majority Appointment	Grant Hauschild	Absent
Senate Minority Appointment	Karin Housley	Absent
Speaker of the House Appointment	Duane Quam	Present
House Minority Appointment	Larry Kraft	Present
Prairie Island Member	Michael Childs Jr	Absent
Impacted Communities - County Representative #1 - Vacant		
Impacted Communities - Municipal Representative #1	Marshall Hallock	Absent
Impacted Communities - County Representative #2	Gregg Felber	Present
Impacted Communities - Municipal Representative #2 - Vacant		
Impacted Worker at Impacted Facility #1	Mike Hoppe	Absent
Impacted Worker at Impacted Facility #2	Kristin Renskers	Absent
Impacted Worker at Impacted Facility #3	Luke Lallement	Absent
Impacted Worker Employed by Company under Contract	Richard Sackett	Present
Professional Economic Development or Workforce Retraining Experience Representative	Abigail Wozniak	Present
Utilities that Operate an impacted Facility #1	Trisha Duncan	Present
Utilities that Operate an impacted Facility #2	Joshua Skelton	Present
Nonprofit Organization with expertise and experience delivering energy efficiency and conservation programs	Alyssa Eilers	Present

Coalition of Utility Cities Representative	Shane Zahrt	Present
Non-Voting		
Commissioner - Department of Employment and Economic Development (or Designee)	Matt Varilek (Kevin McKinnon)	Present
Commissioner - Department of Commerce (or Designee)	Sydney Lieb	Absent
Commissioner - Department of Labor and Industry (or Designee)	Jeremy Parker	Present
Commissioner - Department of Revenue (or Designee)	Holly Soderbeck	Present
Executive Secretary of the Public Utilities Commission (or Designee)	Sasha Bergman (Mike Bull)	Present
Commissioner - Pollution Control Agency (or Designee)	Frank Kohlasch	Present
Chancellor - Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (or Designee)	Logan Schrader	Present
Governor (or Designee)	Nicauris Heredia Rosario	Absent

DEED Staff also present: Kevin McKinnon (representing DEED Commissioner Varilek), Catalina Valencia, Neela Mollegard, Beth Frederickson, Colleen Eddy, Brad Brzezinski and Carla Vita.

2) Call for Nominations

A) ETAC Chair

Vita opened the floor to nominations. Felber nominated himself. Nominations closed.

Motion by Felber, seconded by Duncan to approve Felber as Chair. Motion carried unanimously.

B) ETAC Vice-Chair

Vita opened the floor to nominations. Sackett nominated himself. Nominations closed

Motion by Sackett, seconded by Wozniak to approve Sackett as vice-chair. Motion did not carry as not enough voting members present responded to the vote after repeated attempts.

DEED Deputy Commissioner Kevin McKinnon educated on DEED's modification of roles within the Energy Transition Department. He informed that Mike McCrownsey took a role in a different department and Carla Vita will be taking on the additional role of Childcare Director starting tomorrow. He offered anyone with questions to contact him.

3) Welcome & Community Transition Power Plant Presentation by Sherburne County

Brian Felber of Sherburne County, Jacob Sanders of the City of Becker, and Michelle Schmitz of Xcel Energy provided a presentation on the transition within the County. Topics covered the power plant, economic development efforts and projects. Xcel Energy discussed the power plant, solar fields, battery storage and the sheep that grazing in the solar fields.

4) Welcoming of New Member Sasha Bergman, PUC Executive Secretary

Vita provided a welcome to the newest member, and her meeting designee.

5) Approve June 5, 2025 Minutes – Roll Call

The item did not receive a vote due to the lack of a present voting members responding to the previous vote.

6) Grant Opportunities

- a. Minnesota Climate Innovation Finance Authority (MN CIFA) Executive Director Kari Groth Swan, presented on the work of MN CIFA and opportunities for impacted communities.
- b. Minnesota Technical Assistance Collaborative, Molly Zins who is the Executive Director UMN Central Regional Sustainable Development Partnership
 - i. Stacy Grant, a member of the Minnesota Technical Assistance Collaborative, informed on the resources that they provide.
 - ii. Molly Zins informed on the UMN Sustainable Development Partnership and how it can help transition communities.
- c. Federal Economic Development, Darrin Fleener, Minnesota & Illinois Representative
Vita informed that earlier in the day Fleener emailed indicating he would not be able to attend the meeting and once she receives any relevant information from Fleener she will forward it.
- d. Just Transition Fund, Rachael Young, Deputy Director of Partnerships
Young updated the Board on the National Convening for Coal Transition Leaders – Just Transition Fund, which is coming to Minnesota in October. She also informed on the recent grants available to communities and partnerships that are available in general.
- e. Don Hickman, Initiative Foundation
Hickman provided numerous resources for the Board. He spent time educating on how Lottery Funds can be used for economic development purposes and encouraged impacted communities to check it out.
- f. Department of Employment & Economic Development, Brad Brzezinski, Northeast Business Development Representative
Brzezinski provided elucidation on the services and grants that DEED has to offer. He also informed that he and his teammates are in each impacted community and meet regularly with them.

7) Energy Transition Plan 2025

- a. Presentation of the Plan
Sackett provided the Board with a page-by-page overview of the work that the ETAC Plan sub-committee have been working on for three months. He and Vita fielded questions. The plan will be presented for a vote at the last ETAC meeting of the year.
- b. Bill Sparks, Department of Revenue – Discussion on Transition Aid
Sparks provided insight to the Transition Aid as it relates to communities and the ETAC plan. He showed the spreadsheets to provide aid and if a location qualifies. Sparks was clear to state that his advice is not policy-related, only to ensure the proper implementation of State Statute.
- c. Questions, Comments
Vita offered if ideas or questions occur, to please let her know.

8) IRP & Other Utility Updates

- a. MN Power
Kate Van Daele informed the Board about the MN Power Foundation and how impacted cities and counties can apply for funds for applicable projects. The Positively Powerful Grant has given over \$140,000 to date, with 280 grants, marking the second year in a row they've exceeded their goals since the pilot program started.
The foundation has allocated funds across the following main areas: Health and Human Services, Community Engagement, Education, Arts, and Culture. With Health and Human Services, and Community Engagement being the areas of most need, followed by Education, Arts, and Culture. These figures do not include United Way allocations, for which the Foundation Board allocates matching funds based on employee contributions. The total impact being that over the past 19 years, the foundation has allocated over \$14 million to 870 local organizations. For the future, Minnesota Power is currently undergoing its first-ever strategic planning process to reevaluate community needs, ensure continued relevance, and maximize impact. They are planning to roll out a new website and program changes in 2026.

Josh Skelton, and Jennifer Kuklenski provided updates to the MN Power acquisition and IRP. The IRP proceeding is focused on two requests from the PUC to run additional scenarios that would: (1) Reduce the need for natural gas, and (2) Focus primarily on more clean firm technology. The MN Power representatives illustrated their potential future actions which is working on combining these two decision options and planned to file them by the end of the current day, as requested by the Commission. However, the company does not yet know if the acquisition will be approved by the Commission on Friday. If approved, Minnesota Power anticipates running additional analysis and engaging in more stakeholder engagement work. The comment period for the IRP is expected to be extended, and initial comments will likely not be due toward the end of October as initially planned, leaving the current timeline "questionable." Jennifer Kuklenski did offer to share the outcome of the acquisition decision with Carla Vita, who could then share it with the rest of the group. Brian Fleming accepted this offer.

Note: Public comments for the Minnesota Power 2025-2039 IRP (Docket No. 25-127) are due November 15, 2025.

b. Xcel Energy

Trisha Duncan provided information on Xcel Energy, noting most was already covered earlier in the welcome.

9) Updates

Vita requested if anyone had anything to discuss from the memos provided. There were no requests.

- a. Emerging Issues Sub-Committee
- b. Workforce Sub-committee
- c. MN State Colleges and Universities
- d. Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
- e. Department of Revenue
- f. Department of Labor and Industry
- g. Department of Commerce
- h. Public Utility Commission
- i. Other ETO updates
- j. Next Meeting

Vita reminded that a survey on the meeting would be sent out along with various items presenters offered.

10) Adjourn – Roll Call Vote

Motion by Sackett, seconded by Zahrt to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously at 12:53pm.