

**ELECTRIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**08/09/2006**

The regular meeting of the Electric Advisory Committee was called to order at 5:15pm by Chairman, Tony Westerberg, in Room 101 of City Hall.

**Present:** Larry Arkens, W.A. Baker, Ron Beauchamp, Ann Bissell, John Mellinger, Sonja Skerbeck, and Tony Westerberg

**Absent:** Pat Fulsher

**Also Present:** Gil Cheves, Mike Furmanski, City Manager Doug Terry, Council Liaison Leo Evans, WPPI Representatives: Tim Noeldner, Andy Kellen, Neil Palmer

**Approval of Minutes:**

Westerberg called for a motion to approve the minutes of the July 12, 2006 meeting. A motion was made by Arkens to approve the minutes seconded by Baker and carried unanimously.

**Adjustments to the Agenda:**

Gil Cheves requested that Old Business be conducted before New Business. No objections to this request.

**Conflict of Interest Declarations:**

None

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**Time of Use-Furmanski, Terry**

Furmanski reported to members that 10 residential customers had signed up to be part of the program. As of yet, Hereford and Hops was the only Commercial customer to show interest. City Manager Terry pointed out that the Commercial and Industrial customers would be selected by the City to be part of the program. The time of use meters would monitor usage in a 24 hour period at different times during the day. This could eventually help the City develop a rate design that could lead to conservation.

### **Generating Plant Operations-Fulsher**

Pat Fulsher was absent from the meeting due to other obligations. He had forwarded the Generating Station's actual vs budget statistics to members ahead of time so they would have them. Baker went over briefly another sheet from Fulsher with coal contract information and CT performance in July.

### **Escanaba Power Generating Project Update-Cheves**

Members had been e-mailed the Consultant's Status Report on the Escanaba Generating Project prior to the meeting. The report was gone over with members. Cheves reported to members that the RFP for the Engineering Feasibility Study was sent out to 6 firms on the 28<sup>th</sup> of July. These firms were agreed upon by both WPPI and the City of Escanaba.

Cheves advised members that the next key date is set for August 15<sup>th</sup>. This will be a pre-bid meeting for the Feasibility Study. EAC members are invited to attend this meeting to listen in if they wish. The meeting will consist of the RFP presentation, Power Plant tour, and ending with a lunch meeting and questions and answers.

An 08/01/06 meeting with the City of Escanaba and WPPI representatives dealt with planning for Third party partners and also public outreach strategy.

Baker questioned Cheves as to whether or not any third parties have been talked to yet and Cheves advised no formal discussions have taken place. Everything to this point has been very informal. Third parties have expressed an interest but nothing is expected to be firmed up until after the Feasibility Study is completed.

### **PR Forum-Cheves**

Cheves reported to members that discussions have been ongoing with WPPI on the topic of Public Relations. It is agreed that a strategy has to be established so all parties are on the same page and the right information is getting out to the Public. Cheves asked for members from the EAC who would like to help in getting a policy put together for dealing with the PR for the project. John Mellinger, Ann Bissell and Pete Baker volunteered to help as well as Sonja Skerbeck who said she would also be available if needed starting in October.

Neil Palmer was introduced at this time to the committee. Palmer works with WPPI on many projects. Palmer has experience on siting, permitting and communicating on a vast number of projects. He has worked on a number of projects that have been very complex and tend to be controversial.

Palmer reported to the EAC that the first information that people get is what sticks in their minds. He said it is important to be first. Talk first, don't let people hear it from somewhere else. Also, he said to anticipate problems. He stressed that being open, honest and flexible in dealing with people on complex projects is important. Also, the

more opportunities that you give people to participate the more trusting they are. He said to be responsive-acknowledge errors, things happen; treat all stake-holders with respect; and take all complaints seriously.

Good PR, he pointed out, was to have valid, timely information. Also, be the best source of information at all times. If you don't have it, you will give it to them when you do have it.

Palmer reported that you cannot rely on the press to disseminate all the information. Make use of direct mailings, websites and other sources.

Palmer said that the City of Escanaba and WPPI plan to develop a detailed strategic plan, and this has already started. The plan will be put together within 2 weeks, although it is never done.

Baker questioned Palmer if he would be staying with the project through completion and he advised that he would be.

Baker expressed his view that it was "unfair" that possible 3<sup>rd</sup> parties interested in the project were waiting until the study was in before a decision was made to join in. He said the City of Escanaba and WPPI are at risk right now on their own.

Baker also felt that the PR ad-hoc committee should include someone from the Chamber of Commerce. Cheves reported that he has already been in communication with the Chamber and we do have their support.

Cheves pointed out to the EAC that 3<sup>rd</sup> party participation goes beyond just cost and leverage. Depending on who the 3<sup>rd</sup> party is, they may bring something to the table with them that could have some serious advantages to the project.

Noeldner expressed that they want to approach some of the highest levels of the companies to see if they are interested. Timing has to be right.

Bissell commented that with WPPI's involvement, we are able to reach the CEO's of the companies with whom we are dealing.

### **Public Comment**

Glendon Brown, audience member, volunteered to be on the PR ad-hoc committee if he was so needed.

Meeting adjourned at 6:48pm.