

At the meeting of the Public Service Commission of the State of Montana held at the Commission's Offices in Helena, Montana, on Tuesday, March 6, 2012, the following members were present:

Travis Kavulla, Chairman
Gail Gutsche, Vice Chair
Bill Gallagher, Commissioner
Brad Molnar, Commissioner
John Vincent, Commissioner

APPEARANCE

Aleisha Solem, Commission Secretary

(57) In the matter of the approval of Commission Minutes for the week of February 27, 2012.

Commissioner Vincent moved to APPROVE the Commission Minutes for the week of February 27, 2012. Commissioner Gutsche seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

APPEARANCE

Kate Whitney, Administrator, Regulatory Division
Nickie Eck, Transportation Unit

(58) In the matter of Motor Carrier Liability Insurance Limits:

Commissioner Gutsche moved to OPEN an informal comment period until March 28, 2012. Chairman Kavulla seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

APPEARANCE

Dagan Lynch, Regulatory Division
Justin Kraske, Legal Division

(59) In the matter of D2011.6.45: NorthWestern Energy's application for propane supply cost account balance and rate adjustment for Townsend propane supply.

Commissioner Vincent moved to APPROVE the Final Order. Commissioner Gutsche seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

APPEARANCE

Jason Brown, Legal Division

(60) In the matter of D2010.2.12: Complaint of Chris Frideres against NorthWestern Energy.

Chairman Kavulla moved to APPROVE the order inserting that this order relates to NorthWestern Energy's requirements and not otherwise applicable law, and adding the words, who individually self installs. Commissioner Gutsche seconded the motion, which passed 4 to 1.

Commissioner Molnar dissenting.

APPEARANCE

Dennis Lopach, Administration, Legal Division

(61) In the matter of Sterling Bank Services, Inc.'s complaint against Qwest/CenturyLink:

Commissioner Gutsche moved to CERTIFY the complaint and REQUIRE CenturyLink to respond to the complaint. Commissioner Gallagher seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

APPEARANCE

Commissioner Gallagher

(62) In the matter of ARRA Grant Funds:

MAIN MOTION: Commissioner Gallagher moved to RELEASE \$300,000 of the ARRA funds that are available to the Department of Energy, the amounts as described in the informational section of the work session. Commissioner Molnar seconded the motion.

MOTION TO AMEND: Commissioner Gutsche moved to ALLOW the ACT team, the Agency Coordination Team, to make staffing decisions related to ARRA funding based on outstanding electricity related dockets, and other tasks that could use ARRA staff's attention and to DECIDE in 2014 on the return of any unused funds if there are any to the Department of Energy. Commissioner Vincent seconded the motion. The motion passed 3 to 2. Commissioners Molnar and Gallagher dissenting.

MOTION TO AMEND: Commissioner Molnar moved to EXTEND the grant to cover existing open positions, once filled the grant money would be returned to the Department of Energy. Commissioner Gallagher seconded the motion. The motion failed 3 to 2. Commissioners Gallagher and Molnar dissenting.

The MAIN MOTION AS AMENDED, passed 3 to 2. Commissioners Gallagher and Molnar dissenting.

APPEARANCE

Staci Litschauer, Administrator, Centralized Service Division

Kate Whitney, Administrator, Regulatory Division

(63) In the matter of Career Ladder and other staff pay increases:

Commissioner Vincent moved to ACCEPT the career ladder and general competency pay increased for staff effective pay period beginning March 10, 2012. Commissioner Gutsche seconded the motion, which passed 4 to 1. Commissioner Molnar dissenting.

There being no further business to come before the Commission the meeting was adjourned.

TRAVIS KAVULLA, Chairman

GAIL GUTSCHE, Vice Chair

W. A. GALLAGHER, Commissioner

BRAD MOLNAR, Commissioner

JOHN VINCENT, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Aleisha Solem
Commission Secretary

(SEAL)