At the meeting of the Public Service Commission of the State of Montana held using Zoom remotely from Helena, Montana, with no video recording for the meeting, on Tuesday, September 22, 2020, at 9:30 a.m., the following members were present via remote connections:

Bob Lake, Chairman
Brad Johnson, Vice Chairman
Roger Koopman, Commissioner
Tony O’Donnell, Commissioner
Randy Pinocci, Commissioner

PUBLIC COMMENT
None.

APPEARANCE
Vicki LaFond-Smith, Paralegal/Commission Secretary, Legal Division

(159) In the matter of the approval of Commission Minutes for the week of September 7, 2020.

Vice Chairman Johnson moved to APPROVE the Minutes for the week of September 7, 2020. Commissioner O’Donnell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS
Bob Lake, Chairman

The two Action Items for Docket Nos. 2020.07.086 and 2020.07.087 were removed from the Agenda as action was previously taken for both.

APPEARANCE
Haylee Gobert, Regulatory Division

(160) In the matter of 2020.08.090 – NorthWestern Energy (“NorthWestern”) – NorthWestern’s Application for Approval of its BPA Residential Exchange Credit. To discuss and decide on the Application to adjust its BPA Residential Exchange Program Credit rate beginning October 1, 2020.

Vice Chairman Johnson moved to APPROVE NorthWestern’s Application as requested and as recommended by Staff. Commissioner Pinocci seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

APPEARANCE
Zachary Rogala, Legal Division

(161) In the matter of 2019.12.101 – NorthWestern Energy – NorthWestern’s Application for Pre-Approval of a Capacity Resource. 1) To discuss and make a decision on Southeastern Montana Development Corporation’s request to withdraw as an Intervenor in this docket; and 2) To discuss and make a decision on NorthWestern’s Motion in Limine.
Commissioner O’Donnell moved to GRANT Southeastern Montana Development Corporation’s request to withdraw as an Intervenor in this docket, as recommended by Staff. Commissioner Pinocci seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Vice Chairman Johnson moved to HOLD NorthWestern’s Application in abeyance until after the hearing. Commissioner O’Donnell seconded the motion, which passed with a vote of 4 to 1, with Commissioner Koopman dissenting.

APPEARANCE
Bob Decker, Regulatory Division


Commissioner Pinocci moved to GRANT NorthWestern’s Petition, as Staff recommended, regarding the hydro generation upgrades at Ryan Dam and Hauser Dam. Vice Chairman Johnson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

APPEARANCE
Joel Tierney, Regulatory Division
Lucas Hamilton, Legal Division

(163) In the matter of 2020.07.088 – Havre Pipeline Company – Havre Pipeline Company’s Application to Adjust Rates and Charges to its Direct Rural Farmstead Customers. To consider and decide on Havre Pipeline’s request for an interim rate increase from $0.8628 cents per thousand cubic feet (“Mcf”) to $0.9475 Mcf.

Commissioner Pinocci moved to APPROVE Havre Pipeline’s request for an increase of $0.9475 to be effective October 1, 2020, on an interim basis, as recommended by Staff. Vice Chairman Johnson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

APPEARANCE
Mandi Hinman, Administrator, Centralized Services Division

(164) In the Commission initiated matter of the Montana Public Service Commission’s (“MPSC”) and Montana Consumer Counsel’s (“MCC”) Annual Tax Rates. To request approval of the MPSC’s Tax Rate of 0.347 of 1% (down from 0.439 of 1%); and MCC’s Tax Rate of 0.048 of 1% (down from 0.127 of 1%), to be effective October 1, 2020, through September 30, 2021.

Vice Chairman Johnson moved to APPROVE the MPSC Tax Rate of 0.347 of 1% and MCC Tax Rate of 0.048 of 1% as calculated by the Montana Department of Revenue. Commissioner O’Donnell seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.
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APPEARANCE
Robin Arnold, Regulatory Division
Bob Decker, Regulatory Division
Zachary Rogala, Legal Division

(165) In the matter of 2019.08.053 – Montana Public Service Commission’s Small Generator Interconnection Rulemaking. To discuss and decide on NorthWestern’s Motion for Reconsideration. Staff recommendations are summarized as follows:

- The Commission has authority to define the term “premises.”
- Adopt definition of “premises” that “means a customer-generator’s service address that is identified in a utility’s billing system and that, in the case of net metering systems, is limited to one net metering system, with a maximum nameplate capacity of 50kW, for each classification of electric service that is provided by the utility at that service address.”
- Adopt NorthWestern’s definition of “small generator facility” to ensure that it allows for storage-only facilities.
- Eliminate part (c) of the reporting requirements and clarify part (d) to refer to generation exported to the utility’s distribution system.

Vice Chairman Johnson moved to GRANT NorthWestern Energy’s Motion for Reconsideration. Chairman Lake seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Vice Chairman Johnson moved to APPROVE Staff recommendations. Commissioner Pinocci seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

APPEARANCE
Tony O’Donnell, Commissioner, District 2

(166) In the Commission initiated matter regarding Electricity Capacity and Adequacy in the Pacific Northwest and any impacts on Montana Electricity Customers. To discuss whether the Commission should initiate a docket to study or investigate electricity resource adequacy and capacity in the Pacific Northwest and impacts on Montana; and whether to send out letters to request responsive information.

Following discussion, it was decided that Commissioner O’Donnell will work with Robin Arnold, Regulatory Division, and draft a letter and distribution list for consideration by the Commission at its next Business Meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 10:58 a.m.

Bob Lake, Chairman

Brad Johnson, Vice Chairman
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ROGER KOOPMAN, Commissioner

TONY O’DONNELL, Commissioner

RANDALL PINOCCI, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Vicki LaFond-Smith, Commission Secretary