

Minutes of the
EMPOWER NORTH DAKOTA COMMISSION

December 2, 2020
2:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
ND Department of Commerce
TEAMS Conference Meeting

Members present:

James Leiman, Vawnita Best, Jason Bohrer, Ron Ness, Dale Niezwaag, Mark Nisbet, Mike Rud, Jay Skabo, David Straley, Danette Welsh, Jeff Zueger.

Ex Officio Members:

Lt. Governor Sanford, Gerald Bachmeier, Wade Boeshans, Stacey Dahl, Julie Voeck,

Public present:

TEAMS call in via Microsoft TEAMS platform

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

James Leiman, proxy for Interim Chairman Shawn Kessel, called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and welcomed commission members and guests.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Rud and seconded by Nisbet to approve the minutes of October 12, 2020. Motion carried unanimously.

ENERGY INNOVATION CENTER

James Leiman

The ND State Legislature and private industry have generously invested in programmatic activity and entrepreneurial development and it is time to accomplish a different approach, similar for the energy sector and create the Energy Innovation Center.

This center will work with EmPower, private industry, public organizations and universities to advance state energy prospects, giving ND the opportunity to capitalize on accessing private equity focused on Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG).

The concept is focused on three areas:

- R&D – solving challenges to promote innovation
- Business Development – streamlined approach to ensure efficiencies
- Competitiveness – adding value, promoting more investment in ND.

LEGISLATIVE STRATEGY RECAP

This session will be a time to be innovative, educational, and the time for establishing new opportunities is awaiting in the upcoming legislative session. This session hopes to deliver a better budget, that delivers a path to grow the energy sector.

INDUSTRY UPDATES FROM MEMBERS

Stacey Dahl – Minnkota Power Coop.

The Federal Tax Credit, 45Q will help drive Project Tundra. Working on policies at the federal level and with the Lignite Energy Council.

Jeff Zueger – Midwest AgEnergy Group

Blue Flint Ethanol plan is conducting geology core samples that are being researched at the EERC. A bill is being created that excludes CO₂ that is geologically stored from the Sales and Use Tax. sales and use tax. Proposing legislation

Mark Nisbet – Xcel Energy

Having discussions with utility groups regarding the electric grid reliability.

Jason Bohrer –Lignite Energy Council

Looking for new sources to advance the energy technology fund.

Danette Welsh – Oneok

Natural gas volume production has increased, and natural gas capture is meeting and exceeding the percentage required by the industrial commission.

Dale Niezwaag – Basin Electric Coop

Working with Public Service Commission regarding wind turbine issues.

Mike Rud – ND Petroleum Marketers Assoc.

Decreased demands are still happening due to COVID.

Gerald Bachmeier - Red Trail Energy

Working on a final draft for permitting, that will be submitted to the Department of Mineral Resources.

Ron Ness – ND Petroleum Council

Production levels are doing well, \$44 a barrel with 1.25 million barrels of oil per day, and 14 rigs completed. Allocation is for 80 wells for completion, with the need for 50 wells, or production falls. The CARES ACT funding is being used to plug and reclaim wells.

Julie Voeck – NextEra

Looking to submit legislation for adjustments to the lighting mitigation bill that passed last session.

Lt Governor – Reminded commission members to listen to the Governor’s budget address, scheduled for tomorrow. The Governor is proposing to put a healthy amount of Legacy Funds into Economic Diversification, Community Building and Strategic Initiatives, Research and Innovation, Government Transformation, Legacy Bond Repayment, and Legacy projects.

PUBLIC COMMENT

John Weeda – ND Transmission Authority

Working on a goals document, that relays the future of the electric grid for ND. Grid stability is a state responsibility, not belonging to MISO or FERC. This drafted document can be shared with members, if interested.

FUTURE MEETINGS

Legislative Session weekly EmPower ND Commission bill tracking meetings in 2021:

- First meeting, to happen via TEAMS platform, will be the second week in January with the scheduling of the following weekly meetings to be discussed.

EmPower ND Commission meetings in 2021:

- Q1 March 10
- Q2 June 9
- Q3 September 8
- Q4 December 8

ADJOURNMENT

Motion carried by Welsh and seconded by Straley to adjourn the meeting. Meeting was adjourned unanimously at 3:25 p.m.

James Leiman	06/09/2021
<hr/>	
James Leiman, Proxy for Interim Chairman	Date
Shawn Kessel	

Sherri Frieze	06/09/2021
<hr/>	
Sherri Frieze, Boards and Commissions E.A.	Date