

MINUTES
of the
LEGISLATIVE CONSUMER COMMITTEE
April 5, 2019
State Capitol, Room 350, Helena, Montana

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Mike Cuffe – Chair
Representative Andrea Olsen - via phone

Senator Mark Blasdel – President Pro Tempore – Senate Leadership - appearing for
Senator Fielder.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED

Senator Jennifer Fielder
Senator Sue Malek – Vice Chair

MONTANA CONSUMER COUNSEL STAFF PRESENT

Robert A. Nelson, Consumer Counsel
Suzanne Snow, Secretary

VISITORS PRESENT

No visitors were present.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Cuffe called the meeting to order at 7:00 a.m.

CONTRACTED SERVICES

Bob requested authorization to retain the following consultants –

FERC No. RP-165-000 –WBI Energy Transmission - affiliate of MDU –
Gas Transmission Rate Increase:

- George Donkin (*cost of allocation and rate design*)
- Technical Associates, Inc. – David Parcell (*cost of capital*)
- Duncan and Allen (*legal*)

D2018.2.12 - NorthWestern Energy – Application to Increase Electric Rates

- Dennis Lopach (*legal*)

D2018.7.45– NorthWestern Energy – Annual Electric Tracker

- Acadian Consulting – David Dismukes (*supply procurement*)
- George Donkin

D2018.7.46 – NorthWestern Energy – Annual Gas Cost Tracker

- George Donkin

D2018.9.57 – MDU Application to Discontinue Natural Gas Service to Saco/Bowdoin

- George Donkin

D2018.10.65 – NWE Application to Discontinue Service

- George Donkin

MOTION: Representative Olsen moved to approve the retention of consultants as requested by the Consumer Counsel.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously.

BUDGET UPDATE

In response to Chair Cuffe’s request for an update on the agency’s budgeting process through the legislature, Bob noted that HB2 is waiting to be brought to the Senate floor and that no questions, concerns, or changes had been made to the budget as submitted so far. With respect to the revenue fund, Bob advised that it had decreased by about \$200,000, with the expectation that it would decrease further by the end of the year.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was offered at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Committee, Representative Olsen moved that the meeting be adjourned, and the motion was unanimously passed.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

_____, Robert Nelson, Consumer Counsel

Accepted by the Committee this ____ day of _____,

_____, Chairman.