

Wrapping up a productive fiscal year

The four organizations of NMPP Energy recently closed their respective books on the fiscal year, which ended March 31. It was a busy year for each of the organizations as staff continued to look for ways to provide value to the communities we serve.

From the Executive Director



By Bob Poehling

The following recap is far from a comprehensive list, but it highlights the wide range of complex issues and topics the NMPP Energy organizations address daily:

Nebraska Municipal Power Pool (utility-related services)

- NMPP's Cost of Service Study program continues to be a valued service to communities. There were several renewed and new contracts signed during the year. Overall, there are 53 communities that use the cost-based service.
- NMPP continued to administer the LED Commercial Lighting Program for long-term power participants of the Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska. There were more than 90 lighting projects in nearly 30 communities approved during the year.
- Staff continued to stay engaged with regional organizations to forge partnerships and increase advocacy and educational opportunities for members.

- Through NMPP's partnership with Salt Creek Software, PowerManager software continues to provide value to many communities with more than 93 percent using the Value Support Plan maintenance program. The conversion to a new back-end database server is nearing completion, which will provide a reliable platform for the future.

Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska (wholesale electric supply)

- Completed the decommissioning of the Kimball Wind Farm and will begin taking power from the newly-constructed Kimball Wind Farm under a power purchase agreement this summer.
- Held several meetings and worked with member communities to adopt an interconnection policy to accommodate customer-owned renewable generation.
- Completed the five-year Integrated Resource Plan which serves as MEAN's long-term road map for resource planning.
- Staff remained highly active with the Regional Transmission Organizations in the regional footprint where MEAN operates, including the potential integration of the Mountain West Transmission Group and any possible impacts it may have on MEAN's Participants.
- Successfully completed Unit Capability Testing on member generation units with nearly 95 percent of

the units passing on their first attempts.

- The MEAN Board further refined its Renewable Distributed Generation Policy. MEAN began taking surplus energy from its first project under this policy in Waverly, Iowa.
- The MEAN Executive Committee approved a 1.2 percent rate decrease in long-term wholesale electric energy rates and a 2.2 percent decrease in its overall targeted revenue requirement for its long-term wholesale power participants.

National Public Gas Agency (wholesale natural gas supply)

- Beth Ackland took over leading NPGA after Randy Devine retired as director of wholesale gas operations. Since taking over NPGA, she has been pursuing growth initiatives and getting acquainted with interstate pipeline representatives serving NPGA members. Staff also spent time visiting member communities and developing relationships with new gas suppliers and attending pipeline shipper meetings.
- NPGA signed its first Asset Management Arrangement (AMA) last fall, bringing benefits to three NPGA members. Additional AMA's are being investigated which will enable NPGA to create potential value out of members' underutilized pipeline assets.
- Staff closely monitored a proposed surcharge from a pipeline

Productive —

Continued from page 1

modernization project. The result would have been a combined negative financial impact of more than \$200,000 for two NPGA communities. NPGA is staying engaged on the issue and has joined a regional group of pipeline customers to lobby against the proposed surcharge.

- Staff evaluated a couple “pre-pay” opportunities to benefit members. The favorable pricing a pre-pay could provide would be a significant tool for NPGA growth and retention of members.

Public Alliance for Community Energy (retail natural gas supply)

- ACE successfully advocated to preserve the Nebraska Choice Gas program following the acquisition of the previous program administrator. ACE also had several meetings with Black Hills Energy, the new program administrator, to help improve the program for the benefit of customers.

- ACE’s competitive rates during the 2017 Choice Gas selection period resulted in gaining 22 percent of overall market share. ACE was the natural gas supplier to nearly 18,000 accounts.

- ACE upgraded its software and database to prepare for the 2018 selection period, which occurred in April.

- The ACE Board approved a distribution of \$250,000 to its ACE member communities. Overall, ACE has returned more than \$2 million to its member communities since it formed — a remarkable achievement.

Shoulder months means time for scheduled resource outages

Spring is here, at least that is what my calendar tells me.

As the weather transitions from Winter to Spring, the electrical industry begins its

transition from a “peak” season into the “shoulder” months.

These shoulder months (April-June and September-November) are when many electric generation resources

have scheduled outages. This is a normal occurrence, as traditionally temperatures are more moderate, and therefore electric loads tend to decrease. Scheduled outages typically consist of maintenance and upgrades work.

Normally, unit outages occur every six, 12 or 18 months, based on manufacturer’s specifications and the operator’s preference. This outage season, the Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska (MEAN) has outages with several units in which it either shares ownership or receives output through purchase power contracts.

Outages tend to range anywhere from one to 10 weeks, and are normally based on maintenance plans and scheduled upgrades. Outages are normally scheduled, with Regional Transmission Organizations (RTOs) or regional Balancing Authorities

so there aren’t too many outages scheduled in an area or during the same time to maintain reliability.

Transmission outages also are scheduled during shoulder months. This occurs because when electric loads are lower, less transmission capacity is required.

The impact of outage season can vary weekly as different season and equipment around MEAN’s electric loads and resources go into or out of outages. Transmission paths may have to change to avoid transmission equipment that is on outage. An added complication is energy production from wind resources tend to be highest during shoulder months. Wind resources typically are built in rural areas which can max out a lot of the transmission that serves more urban areas.

RTOs dispatch units to serve electric load as cost effectively as possible. If several large, low-cost units are on outage, higher priced units will be dispatched to cover electric load. This can cause the market price to be higher than it would typically be.

MEAN has resources and serves electric load in three regions, providing the benefit of moving energy around to serve loads in the most cost-effective manner.

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Adam Schieffer is dispatch supervisor for the Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska.

Energy Dispatch Notes



By Adam Schieffer

West Point breaks ground on educational facility

A groundbreaking ceremony was held in April to mark the beginning of construction of the new Donald E. Nielsen Career and Technical Training Facility in West Point, Neb.

The 15,000 square-foot facility is being built by funds by the West Point Community Foundation and will be owned by the City and leased by Northeast Community College. The City is partnering with Pathways to Tomorrow, Wayne State College and Northeast Community College to create career and technical education opportunities for area high school students, adult learners and business and industry training.



Member News

West Point Mayor Marlene Johnson served as groundbreaking program emcee. Johnson said educating a workforce capable of supporting, attracting, and sustaining economic growth is critical for the region to remain economically robust.

“It is the job of all of us to empower and provide the resources necessary to build that workforce... and provide employees of this region’s businesses and industry the training and skillsets that are required in order for our rural areas to survive and thrive,” she said. “The building that will be constructed behind me over the course of the year will be one of those resources to allow that to



Northeast Community College photo

West Point Mayor Marlene Johnson speaks at the groundbreaking ceremony in April for the new Donald E. Nielsen Career and Technical Training Facility in West Point.

become a reality.”

Construction of the facility is under way. It is expected to open in early 2019.

Fort Morgan launches public engagement platform

The City of Fort Morgan, Colo., recently launched Polco, an innovative community engagement platform where residents can directly provide input to the local government decision-making process.

To participate residents visit the City’s Polco website and create an account or sign in directly from the Polco app. The City plans to post questions directly to residents on Polco’s app and website, where residents answer and comment on the questions. The first set of four questions requests input on the proposal for a charter change.

“We looked at a number of public engagement tools, and Polco was by far the best choice for our needs,” said Fort Morgan City Manager Jeff Wells. “It’s clean, simple and easy to use, and will provide the city with great

data to help the City Council and city staff make the best decisions in the interest of the community.”

Most Polco questions give respondents an opportunity to write comments after they answer the yes/no or multiple choice question. City staff can also provide background information embedded with questions to help clarify the issue – such as maps showing where something is proposed or historical information on a particular issue. For more information about Polco, visit www.polco.us.

Mitchell leaders visit local businesses

Community leaders in Mitchell recently conducted business retention and expansion visits with nearly 50 local businesses. The visits are part of an effort to become a designated Leadership Certified Community through the Nebraska Department of Economic Development.

The Certified Leadership Communities program provides a framework for communities to identify capacity, stimulate focused planning and utilize technology to build strong foundations and to meet future challenges.

— Scottsbluff Star-Herald

MEAN Board approves credits to participants

The Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska (MEAN) Board at its quarterly meeting in May approved energy charge and fixed cost recovery charge credits totaling \$8.3 million to its wholesale electric participants. The actions were based on positive financial results for the 2017-18 fiscal year that ended March 31.

The credits will be allocated to all current long-term (Schedule M) and limited-term (Schedule K) participants and will be issued to each participant in June in a lump sum payment.

The MEAN Board and Management Committee annually evaluate MEAN's preliminary fiscal year finances and make adjustments in accordance with MEAN's financial policies and guidelines.

Kimball Wind Facility Update

The Board and Management Committee received an update on the new Kimball Wind Facility, which is in the final stages of testing. The 30-megawatt, 12-turbine facility replaces the old 10.5-megawatt MEAN Kimball Wind Project, which was recently decommissioned after nearly 15 years of operation. MEAN signed a power purchase agreement for the output of project, which is located just outside Kimball, Neb. It is expected to go into commercial operation later this summer.

Unit Capability Testing to begin in June

Beginning in June, MEAN will begin its annual process of testing local power generating units among its long-term power

MEAN NOTES

The Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska held its quarterly Board and Management Committee meeting in May. These are a few of the actions taken and topics discussed at the meeting.

participants. Formally known as unit capability testing, the process occurs each summer and ensures local generating units remain reliable to serve as part of MEAN's energy capacity portfolio as well as to serve as backup electric generation for each of the respective communities that have their own generation units.

Election of Board Officers

The MEAN Board elected its officers for fiscal year 2018-19. All three officers from the previous year were re-elected to serve another one-year term. Officers re-elected were:

- Tom Goulette, city administrator/utility superintendent, **West Point, Neb.**, chair
- Tom Ourada, city administrator, **Crete, Neb.**, vice chair
- Darrel Wenzel, chief executive officer, **Waverly (Iowa) Utilities**, secretary/treasurer.

The board acts as the final authority on rates and charges to MEAN long-term, total requirements participants.

Adam Suppes, electric superintendent, **Delta, Colo.**, also was elected to fill a vacancy on the MEAN Executive Committee.

Moody's affirms rating on MEAN's revenue bonds

Moody's Investors Service recently affirmed the A2 rating on a portion of the Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska's (MEAN) power system supply revenue bonds. The rating outlook is stable.

The rating agency stated the rating affirmation reflects the stable credit quality of MEAN's long-term total requirements municipal electric utilities as well as the diversity of its participants with no participant accounting for more than 10 percent of MEAN's revenues.

"MEAN has an established track record to raise rates when necessary while providing competitive priced power to its participants," the opinion stated.

The report cited possible factors that could have a positive or negative impact on future ratings. Possible factors that could lead to an upgrade include sustained improvement in the credit quality of MEAN's participants and higher fixed charge coverage ratios. Factors that could negatively impact ratings include a deterioration in the credit quality of MEAN participants and a persistent increase in cost base that includes cost competitiveness or results in weaker financial performance.



NMPP Energy photo

Discussing rates and cost of service studies...

NMPP's Andrew Ross (middle right) held a session on the benefits of cost of service studies for smaller utilities at the Kansas Municipal Utilities Annual Conference in May.

ACE wraps up Choice Gas selection period

ACE, the Public Alliance for Community Energy, wrapped up another year of providing competitively priced natural gas in the Nebraska Choice Gas selection period, which ran April 13-26.

Overall, gas rates during the selection period were slightly lower than in 2017 across the Central and Western regions.

ACE's preliminary selection results were shared during the ACE Board meeting held in May. Over-

all, ACE maintained its overall market share of 22 percent of total customers (nearly 18,000 accounts).

"With six natural gas suppliers competing, it was an extremely competitive selection period this year," said Beth Ackland, director of gas operations. "ACE was formed with the primary goal of providing competition for the benefit of customers and I'm happy we were able to carry out that mission in ACE's 20th year."

Ogallala joins ACE, NMPP

The Public Alliance for Community Energy (ACE) Board of Directors approved the City of Ogallala, Neb., as a new ACE member community during its May board meeting in Kearney.

Ogallala, located in West-Central Nebraska, has a population of 4,737. As a member of ACE, Ogallala also becomes a member of the Nebraska Municipal Power Pool (NMPP) and is eligible for the cost-based

utility-related services provided by NMPP.

"We're pleased to welcome Ogallala as a new ACE member community and into the NMPP Energy family overall," said Beth Ackland, director of gas operations. "We look forward to working with the City and providing value to the community."

ACE's membership now includes 73 communities and one public power district.



NMPP Energy photo

ACE Board Chair Andrew Devine, left, presents Ogallala City Manager Bruce Smith with a NMPP membership plaque at the ACE Board meeting in May.

THIS MONTH'S FEATURED CHAMPION BUSINESS



Proteus partners with businesses to provide digital transformation

Leveraging the Proteus Platform, Proteus partners with businesses to help digitally transform b2b customer experiences via robust content management, customer portals, and digital transformation.

www.proteus.co

For a complete listing of NMPP Energy Champion Businesses, see page 7

In Memoriam

Dick Amsberry

Dick Amsberry of Ansley, Neb., passed away in May at the age of 90. Dick served the Village of Ansley for more than 50 years as utilities superintendent and was active in the organizations of NMPP Energy for many years. He earned the Rudy Hultgren Dedicated Service Award from the Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska in 2004 and received the Larry Hobart Seven Hats Award from the American Public Power Association in 1996. The NMPP Energy organizations send its deepest condolences to the Amsberry family and the Ansley community.

Upcoming Meetings

Aug. 15.....MEAN Committees
Aug. 16.....MEAN/Mgmt Comm.



Go to
www.nmppenergy.org
and click on the Facebook logo to make NMPP part of your Facebook experience!

Employment Opportunities

Assistant Utility Superintendent

The City of Ord, Neb., is seeking applications for a full-time assistant utility superintendent. Under direction, the successful applicant will perform a variety of supervisory, administrative, skilled, technical, and maintenance work in the planning, construction, operation, repair, and maintenance of the City's electrical system, light plant, water and wastewater systems and streets. State certification is preferred for the operation of the drinking water and waste water systems and must be obtained within a timeframe set by the City Council. Drug testing and a valid Nebraska driver's license are required. This person must be able to work in extreme weather conditions, and be on call after hours for emergencies. This person will be required to work with other city departments when needed. This individual must have a minimum of five years of experience in utility services. The City of Ord offers an excellent benefit package. Application may be obtained at the Ord City Office, 201 S. 17th Street, Ord, NE 68862 or by calling (308) 728-5791. Applications are due in the City Office by 5 p.m. on June 15, 2018. EOE.

City Administrator

Due to retirement, the City of Burwell, Neb., is accepting applications for the position of city administrator. Burwell is the county seat of Garfield County and has approximately 1,200 residents. Burwell is located seven miles from the Calamus Reservoir in Central Nebraska. The municipality owns, operates and provides electric, water and wastewater services to its residents. Law Enforcement is under the direction of the Mayor. This position requires comprehensive knowledge of municipal finance, expertise in city, state and federal laws, regulations and guidelines, strategic planning, and supervisory skills. Individuals should possess a degree in a related field and/or possess a level of education

that together with experience and training gives the required knowledge and experience to perform the duties as city administrator. This person serves the community at the direction of the Mayor and city council. Salary is negotiable based on experience and qualifications and includes competitive benefits. Interested candidates should contact the City Office at 404 Grand Avenue (PO Box 604), Burwell, NE 68823 or phone (308) 346-4509. The application and job description is also available on the city's website at www.burwellonline.com. Completed application along with a cover letter and resume should be mailed or delivered to the city office address above or emailed to cityofburwell@nctc.net and will be accepted until the position is filled. The City of Burwell is an EOE.

Water/Sewer Superintendent

The City of Denver, Iowa (Pop. 1,780) is accepting applications for the water/sewer superintendent position. Salary is negotiable based on qualifications. Duties include all aspects of public works including water plant/distribution, sewer plant and collections system, streets, parks, cemetery, building and property maintenance. Position requires an associate of arts degree and a Class B CDL. Residency is required within three miles of Denver. Candidate should have basic construction and/or mechanical skills and have a Water Treatment Plant Operator Grade II, Water Distribution Grade II and Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator Grade II Certifications on the date of hire with the ability to obtain a Grade III Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator within one Year from date of hire. Applicants should submit resume, cover letter, and salary history to the City of Denver, 100 Washington Street, Denver, Iowa 50622. Position is open until filled. EOE.

See 'EMPLOYMENT' on page 8

Support NMPP member communities through the Champions Business Program

Champions are businesses and organizations that support NMPP Energy's effort to provide products and services to members. Consider these businesses when your utility or municipality has a business need. If your business is interested in becoming an NMPP Energy Champion, call Andrew Ross at (800) 234-2595.



Champions Business Directory of Services

Financial

Ameritas Investment Corp. (Ameritas.com).....	Omaha, Neb.
D.A. Davidson & Co. (dadavidson.com/ficm).....	Omaha, Neb.
First National Bank (Firstnational.com).....	Omaha, Neb.
UNICO Group, Inc. and Midlands Financial Benefits (unicogroup.com).....	Lincoln, Neb.
Nebraska Energy Federal Credit Union (ne-fcu.org).....	Columbus, Neb.
RBC Capital Markets (rbc.com).....	Denver, Colo.

Regulatory/Compliance

Air Regulations Consulting (airregconsulting.com).....	Lincoln, Neb.
Power Plant Compliance (Powplant.com).....	Oketo, Kan.
NAQS Environmental Experts (naqs.com).....	Lincoln, Neb.

Utility/Community

EnergySolutions, Inc. (energysolutions-inc.com).....	Omaha, Neb.
Fairbanks Morse Engine (Fairbanksengine.com).....	Beloit, Wis.
Hometown Connections, LLC (Hometownconnections.com).....	Lakewood, Colo.
Hubbell Power Systems (Hubbellpowersystems.com).....	Bellevue, Neb.
Foundation for Educational Services (fes.org).....	Lincoln, Neb.
JK Energy Consulting, LLC (JKenergyconsulting.com).....	Lincoln, Neb.
Kriz-Davis Co. (Krizdavis.com).....	Grand Island, Neb.
NovaTech (Novatechweb.com).....	Lenexa, Kan.
PDS, Inc. (PDSinc.biz).....	Omaha, Neb.
Protective Equipment Testing Laboratory (petl.com).....	Great Bend, Kan.
REM Electric, Inc. (Davidsoncompanies.com).....	Nebraska City, Neb.
RESCO (Rural Electric Supply Cooperative) (resco1.com).....	Ankeny, Iowa
Solomon Corporation (Solomoncorp.com).....	Solomon, Kan.

Computer/Technology

Proteus (Proteus.co).....	Lincoln, Neb.
Salt Creek Software, Inc. (Saltcreek.com).....	Lincoln, Neb.

Engineering

EPSIM Corporation (epsim.us).....	Boulder, Colo.
Exponential Engineering Company (exponentialengineering.com).....	Fort Collins, Colo.
JEO Consulting Group, Inc. (jeo.com).....	Wahoo, Neb.
Lutz, Daily & Brain, LLC (ldbeng.com).....	Overland Park, Kan.
Olsson Associates (Olssonassociates.com).....	Lincoln, Neb.
Power Engineers (powereng.com).....	Overland Park, Kan.

Insurance

League Association of Risk Management (larmpool.org).....	Lincoln, Neb.
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Legal

Chapman and Cutler, LLP (chapman.com).....	Salt Lake City, Utah
Spiegel & McDiarmid (spiegelmc.com).....	Washington, D.C.

Telecommunication

River Oaks Communications Corp. (rivoaks.com).....	Centennial, Colo.
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NEWSLETTER

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Employment (cont.)

Electric Lineman

The City of **Burlington, Colo.**, is seeking a qualified individual for the position of lineman in the Electric Department. The electric lineman performs technical tasks related to the operation, maintenance, repair, and security of the City's electrical energy and distribution systems, including facilities, equipment, vehicles, and grounds. The successful applicant must possess a high school diploma or GED equivalent with formal coursework in the electrical field. Enrollment in a certified apprentice line worker program is desired with one year groundmen level experience preferred. The successful applicant will have a valid Colorado driver's license or the ability to obtain, and the ability to complete Level 1 apprentice coursework within one year of

employment. Salary range for this position is \$29,015 - \$51,801 annually, plus benefits, based on qualifications. Applications are available at City Hall, 415 15th St., Burlington, CO 80807, or the City's website at www.burlingtoncolo.com. Send application, cover letter, and resume to Shelly Clark at City Hall, or email to shelly.clark@burlingtoncolo.com. Position open until filled. Visit the City's website for additional information. EOE.

City Engineer

City of **Seward, Neb.**, is accepting applications until filled for a full-time city engineer. Pay range: \$5,317.00 to \$7,444.00 per month, with benefits. Applicant must have bachelor's degree in civil engineering or related engineering field of study from an accredited four-year college or university and registration as a professional civil engineer in the State of Nebraska; must be able

to provide professional engineering services in connection with planning, organizing, directing and coordinating activities involving municipal streets, storm sewers, water distribution and wastewater collection and treatment; must possess a valid driver's license. Application and job description available at Seward City Hall, 537 Main St.; P. O. Box 38; Seward NE 68434-0038 (402-643-2928) or can be downloaded at City's website: www.CityofSewardNE.gov. EOE.

To submit an ad

NMPP members can advertise job openings for free in the Essent newsletter and on the NMPP Energy Web site. E-mail kwickham@nmppenergy.org.

**All job openings posted at
www.nmppenergy.org**

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