

AGENDA
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
April 6, 2022
3:00 P.M.

- A. Call to Order

- B. Roll Call

- C. Approve Consent Agenda
 - 1. Approve Agenda
 - 2. Approve Meeting Minutes
 - 3. Payments Report

- D. Substation Maintenance
 - OCR Control Unit Replacement
 - Insulator Replacement

- E. Tom Bovitz Scholarship

- F. Adjourn

Public Utilities Commission Meeting
Minutes
March 2, 2022

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Schulte at 3:04 p.m.

Members present: Charles Hathaway, Bill Hansen and Craig Schulte

Absent:

Staff Present: Mike Roth, Patrick Knight, Tom Nelson, Shane Steele

New commissioners Hathaway and Hansen introduced themselves.

Motion by Hathaway, seconded by Hansen to approve the Agenda; November 3, 2021 Minutes; and Payment of Bills. Approved unanimously.

Tom Nelson presented a request for 3 new control panels for the potable water system, and to replace the wired telemetry system with cellular to increase reliability.

Motion by Hansen, seconded by Hathaway to approve the purchase of the control panels and cellular telemetry system.

Roth noted that the project can be paid for by American Rescue Plan Act funds that the city has already received

The meeting was adjourned at 3:27 p.m.



CITY OF GRAND MARAIS

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Payments

Current Period: March 2022

Payments Batch 3-3-22NicholsDepRef \$144.66

Refer	83439 NICHOLS, SUSAN/RACHEL	-	
Cash Payment	G 604-11504 Undistributed Receipts	000000347102	\$144.66
Invoice	3/9/2022		
Transaction Date	3/3/2022	MAIN CHECKING G 10100	Total <u>\$144.66</u>

Fund Summary

	10100 MAIN CHECKING GMSB
604 ELECTRIC	<u>\$144.66</u>
	\$144.66

Pre-Written Checks	\$0.00
Checks to be Generated by the Computer	<u>\$144.66</u>
Total	\$144.66



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Payments

Current Period: March 2022

Payments Batch 3-9-22 AP				Total
Refer	83400 <u>SAWTOOTH RIDGES</u>	-		
Cash Payment	E 604-49590-390 Conservation Improve	Commercial Low-Income Lighting		\$480.00
Invoice	1477	2/24/2022		
Cash Payment	E 604-49590-390 Conservation Improve	Energy Star Fixtures & Ceiling Fans		\$440.00
Invoice	1477	2/24/2022		
Transaction Date	2/24/2022	MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total \$920.00
Refer	83402 <u>PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION1</u>	Ck# 005557E 3/9/2022		
Cash Payment	E 602-49451-380 Utility Services (GENER			\$878.01
Invoice	MAR2022	3/1/2022		
Cash Payment	E 602-49480-380 Utility Services (GENER			\$2,612.84
Invoice	MAR2022	3/1/2022		
Cash Payment	E 601-49420-380 Utility Services (GENER			\$3,189.43
Invoice	MAR2022	3/1/2022		
Cash Payment	E 604-49551-380 Utility Services (GENER			\$34.05
Invoice	MAR2022	3/1/2022		
Cash Payment	E 604-49558-380 Utility Services (GENER			\$137.05
Invoice	MAR2022	3/1/2022		
Transaction Date	2/28/2022	MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total \$6,851.38
Refer	83413 <u>GRAND MARAIS AUTO PARTS, INC</u>	-		
Cash Payment	E 604-49570-210 Operating Supplies (GEN	2088		\$30.33
Invoice	812768-2088	1/27/2022		
Cash Payment	E 602-49480-404 Repairs/Maint Machinery	1160		-\$154.98
Invoice	811073-1160	12/28/2021		
Cash Payment	E 602-49480-404 Repairs/Maint Machinery	1160		\$52.78
Invoice	813661-1160	1/27/2022		
Cash Payment	E 602-49480-404 Repairs/Maint Machinery	1160		-\$159.36
Invoice	813661-1160	1/27/2022		
Transaction Date	3/1/2022	MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total -\$231.23
Refer	83414 <u>NORTH SHORE WASTE</u>	-		
Cash Payment	E 602-49480-384 Refuse/Garbage Dispos			\$210.60
Invoice	81161	2/28/2022		
Transaction Date	3/1/2022	MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total \$210.60
Refer	83419 <u>LHB ENGINEERS & ARCHITECTS</u>	-		
Cash Payment	E 602-49431-303 Engineering Fees			\$321.00
Invoice	160861.00-34	2/10/2022		
Transaction Date	3/1/2022	MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total \$321.00
Refer	83425 <u>COMO OIL & PROPANE</u>	-		
Cash Payment	E 602-49480-217 Heating Fuel			\$758.53
Invoice	1506273843	2/15/2022		
Transaction Date	3/1/2022	MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total \$758.53
Refer	83426 <u>ARROWHEAD COOPERATIVE</u>	Ck# 005558E 3/9/2022		
Cash Payment	E 604-49570-317 Contracted Services	Rosebush Area Outage Assistance		\$612.84
Invoice	28468	2/16/2022		
Transaction Date	3/1/2022	MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total \$612.84
Refer	83429 <u>STEVE S SPORTS AND AUTO</u>	-		



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Payments

Current Period: March 2022

Cash Payment	E 604-49570-210 Operating Supplies (GEN 297882/298178/298189)				\$107.76
Invoice	1551640	1/31/2022			
Transaction Date	3/1/2022		MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total \$107.76
Refer	83432	MN DEPT OF HEALTH-DRINKING	-		
Cash Payment	G 601-20803 State Water Connection Fee				\$1,759.00
Invoice	1160001	3/2/2022			
Transaction Date	3/2/2022		MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total \$1,759.00
Refer	83433	BUCK S HARDWARE HANK	-		
Cash Payment	E 602-49480-300 Professional Svcs (GENE				\$41.89
Invoice	1160	2/28/2022			
Cash Payment	E 602-49480-210 Operating Supplies (GEN				\$90.31
Invoice	1160	2/28/2022			
Transaction Date	3/2/2022		MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total \$132.20
Refer	83434	AE2S	-		
Cash Payment	E 602-49481-303 Engineering Fees				\$384.75
Invoice	74396	3/2/2022			
Transaction Date	3/2/2022		MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total \$384.75
Refer	83435	UTILITY CONSULTANTS, INC	-		
Cash Payment	E 602-49480-300 Professional Svcs (GENE				\$577.14
Invoice	111626	2/22/2022			
Transaction Date	3/2/2022		MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total \$577.14
Refer	83437	SMMPA	-		
Cash Payment	E 604-49570-317 Contracted Services				\$416.10
Invoice	INV541	2/28/2022			
Cash Payment	E 601-49440-310 Service Agreements				\$25.50
Invoice	INV541	2/28/2022			
Transaction Date	3/2/2022		MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total \$441.60
Refer	83440	NORDIC ELECTRIC	-		
Cash Payment	E 602-49480-401 Repairs/Maint Buildings				\$1,068.63
Invoice	17556	3/1/2022			
Transaction Date	3/3/2022		MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total \$1,068.63

Fund Summary

10100 MAIN CHECKING GMSB

101 GENERAL FUND	\$29,795.55
211 LIBRARY	\$2,168.91
215 LIBRARY RESTRICTED FUND	\$1,329.00
601 WATER	\$4,973.93
602 SEWER	\$6,682.14
604 ELECTRIC	\$2,258.13
609 MUNICIPAL LIQUOR FUND	\$52,604.60
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	\$99,812.26

Pre-Written Checks	\$7,464.22
Checks to be Generated by the Computer	\$6,449.98
Total	<hr/> \$13,914.20



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Payments

Current Period: March 2022

Payments Batch 3-25-22 APP		\$16,924.58	
Refer	83459 VISA	Ck# 005570E 3/11/2022	
Cash Payment	E 602-49480-240 Small Tools and Minor E Grainger		\$165.66
Invoice	3519 3/2/2022		
Cash Payment	E 604-49590-330 Transportation/School Country Trails Inn		\$83.83
Invoice	3519 3/2/2022		
Transaction Date	3/11/2022	MAIN CHECKING G 10100	Total \$249.49
Refer	83486 MN DEPT OF REVENUE-EFTPS	Ck# 005573E 3/15/2022	
Cash Payment	G 601-20800 Taxes Due (State MN)		\$899.00
Invoice	2-144-640-672 2/28/2022		
Cash Payment	G 604-20800 Taxes Due (State MN)		\$14,404.00
Invoice	2-144-640-672 2/28/2022		
Transaction Date	3/15/2022	MAIN CHECKING G 10100	Total \$15,303.00
Refer	83505 MN DEPT OF COMMERCE	-	
Cash Payment	E 604-49590-390 Conservation Improve		\$553.69
Invoice	1000047491 3/1/2022		
Transaction Date	3/16/2022	MAIN CHECKING G 10100	Total \$553.69
Refer	83514 GRAND MARAIS AUTO PARTS, INC	-	
Cash Payment	E 604-49570-210 Operating Supplies (GEN 2088		\$30.33
Invoice	2088 3/10/2022		
Transaction Date	3/16/2022	MAIN CHECKING G 10100	Total \$30.33
Refer	83538 ARROWHEAD COOPERATIVE	-	
Cash Payment	E 604-49570-317 Contracted Services Rosebush Area Outage Assistance		\$612.84
Invoice	28468 2/16/2022		
Transaction Date	3/21/2022	MAIN CHECKING G 10100	Total \$612.84
Refer	83542 WEX BANK	Ck# 005581E 3/25/2022	
Cash Payment	E 601-49440-212 Motor Fuels		\$149.76
Invoice	79439429 3/15/2022		
Cash Payment	E 604-49570-212 Motor Fuels		\$16.21
Invoice	79433253 3/15/2022		
Cash Payment	E 601-49440-212 Motor Fuels		\$4.63
Invoice	79433253 3/15/2022		
Cash Payment	E 602-49490-212 Motor Fuels		\$4.63
Invoice	79433253 3/15/2022		
Transaction Date	3/21/2022	MAIN CHECKING G 10100	Total \$175.23



Payments

Current Period: March 2022

Fund Summary

	10100 MAIN CHECKING GMSB	
101 GENERAL FUND		\$30,104.75
211 LIBRARY		\$28.00
601 WATER		\$1,053.39
602 SEWER		\$170.29
604 ELECTRIC		\$15,700.90
609 MUNICIPAL LIQUOR FUND		\$77,842.91
		<hr/>
		\$124,900.24

Pre-Written Checks	\$15,727.72
Checks to be Generated by the Computer	\$1,196.86
Total	<hr/>
	\$16,924.58



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Payments

Current Period: March 2022

Payments Batch 03-31-22AP		\$519,503.26	
Refer	83460 <i>COMO OIL & PROPANE</i>	-	
Cash Payment	E 602-49490-212 Motor Fuels		\$645.81
Invoice	1506472563 3/2/2022		
Cash Payment	E 602-49480-217 Heating Fuel		\$682.01
Invoice	1506575528 3/16/2022		
Transaction Date	3/14/2022	MAIN CHECKING G 10100	Total \$1,327.82
Refer	83461 <i>FS3, INC</i>	-	
Cash Payment	E 604-49570-220 Repair/Maint Supply (GE		\$295.39
Invoice	76522 3/2/2022		
Transaction Date	3/14/2022	MAIN CHECKING G 10100	Total \$295.39
Refer	83462 <i>FLOW MEASUREMENT AND CONT</i>	-	
Cash Payment	E 601-49420-210 Operating Supplies (GEN		\$332.83
Invoice	1513 1/19/2022		
Transaction Date	3/14/2022	MAIN CHECKING G 10100	Total \$332.83
Refer	83463 <i>EHLERS</i>	-	
Cash Payment	E 604-47032-601 Debt Srv Bond Principal 39242		\$115,000.00
Invoice	70311 3/14/2022		
Cash Payment	E 604-47032-611 Bond Interest 39242		\$7,125.00
Invoice	70311 3/14/2022		
Cash Payment	E 604-47030-601 Debt Srv Bond Principal 38514		\$190,000.00
Invoice	70310 3/14/2022		
Cash Payment	E 604-47030-611 Bond Interest 38514		\$4,812.50
Invoice	70310 3/14/2022		
Cash Payment	E 604-47030-620 Fiscal Agent s Fees 70153-PA		\$475.00
Invoice	70153 3/14/2022		
Transaction Date	3/14/2022		Total \$317,412.50
Refer	83465 <i>ROTH, MIKE</i>	-	
Cash Payment	E 604-49590-330 Transportation/School PRESTON, MN-ELECTRIC		\$482.37
Invoice	3/10/2022		
Transaction Date	3/14/2022	MAIN CHECKING G 10100	Total \$482.37
Refer	83468 <i>STUART C IRBY CO</i>	-	
Cash Payment	E 604-49570-210 Operating Supplies (GEN 113679		\$463.91
Invoice	S012889222.01 3/9/2022		
Cash Payment	E 604-49570-210 Operating Supplies (GEN 113679		\$127.88
Invoice	S012747786.007 3/14/2022		
Transaction Date	3/14/2022	MAIN CHECKING G 10100	Total \$591.79
Refer	83469 <i>GRAND MARAIS MOTORS</i>	-	
Cash Payment	E 602-49451-404 Repairs/Maint Machinery		\$579.35
Invoice	82099 3/10/2022		
Transaction Date	3/14/2022	MAIN CHECKING G 10100	Total \$579.35
Refer	83473 <i>STEVE S SPORTS AND AUTO</i>	-	
Cash Payment	E 602-49480-210 Operating Supplies (GEN 1160		\$23.94
Invoice	298827 3/8/2022		
Transaction Date	3/14/2022	MAIN CHECKING G 10100	Total \$23.94



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Payments

Current Period: March 2022

Refer	83474	FERGUSON WATERWORKS#2518			
Cash Payment	E 601-49430-220	Repair/Maint Supply (GE			\$526.08
Invoice	0486927-2	3/1/2022			
Cash Payment	E 601-49430-220	Repair/Maint Supply (GE			\$2,759.30
Invoice	0489381	3/4/2022			
Cash Payment	E 601-49430-220	Repair/Maint Supply (GE			\$367.66
Invoice	0490158	3/8/2022			
Cash Payment	E 601-49430-220	Repair/Maint Supply (GE			\$511.42
Invoice	0489803-1	3/7/2022			
Cash Payment	E 601-49430-220	Repair/Maint Supply (GE			\$455.98
Invoice	0489803	3/4/2022			
Cash Payment	E 601-49430-220	Repair/Maint Supply (GE			\$610.37
Invoice	0490162	3/8/2022			
Cash Payment	E 601-49430-220	Repair/Maint Supply (GE			-\$455.98
Invoice	CM036213	3/9/2022			
Cash Payment	E 601-49430-220	Repair/Maint Supply (GE			-\$576.13
Invoice	PY0486927*1	2/28/2022			
Transaction Date	3/14/2022	MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total	\$4,198.70
Refer	83475	LOCATORS & SUPPLIES, INC			
Cash Payment	E 604-49570-210	Operating Supplies (GEN			\$238.48
Invoice	0298072-IN	3/8/2022			
Transaction Date	3/14/2022	MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total	\$238.48
Refer	83476	SMMPA	Ck# 005571E 3/14/2022		
Cash Payment	E 604-49560-388	Purchase Power			\$172,559.59
Invoice	INV555	2/28/2022			
Transaction Date	3/14/2022	MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total	\$172,559.59
Refer	83482	ARROWHEAD COOPERATIVE	Ck# 005572E 3/14/2022		
Cash Payment	E 602-49490-321	Telephone			\$126.69
Invoice	2121	3/1/2022			
Cash Payment	E 604-49551-321	Telephone			\$108.13
Invoice	2244	3/1/2022			
Transaction Date	3/14/2022	MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total	\$234.82
Refer	83483	COOK COUNTY HOME CENTER			
Cash Payment	E 602-49480-240	Small Tools and Minor E 1160			\$191.46
Invoice	309101-375	2/28/2022			
Cash Payment	E 601-49420-240	Small Tools and Minor E 1160			\$51.99
Invoice	309405	2/28/2022			
Cash Payment	E 604-49570-220	Repair/Maint Supply (GE 2088			\$88.16
Invoice	309639	2/28/2022			
Transaction Date	3/14/2022	MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total	\$331.61
Refer	83484	WEX BANK			
Cash Payment	E 604-49570-212	Motor Fuels			\$10.67
Invoice	888676	2/28/2022			
Cash Payment	E 601-49440-212	Motor Fuels			\$3.05
Invoice	888676	2/28/2022			
Cash Payment	E 602-49490-212	Motor Fuels			\$3.05
Invoice	888676	2/28/2022			



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Payments

Current Period: March 2022

Transaction Date	3/14/2022	MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total	\$16.77
Refer	83492 HACH COMPANY				
Cash Payment	E 602-49451-220 Repair/Maint Supply (GE				\$174.72
Invoice	12920196 3/8/2022				
Transaction Date	3/16/2022	MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total	\$174.72
Refer	83493 CENTURYLINK				
Cash Payment	E 601-49440-321 Telephone				\$69.36
Invoice	218D24-1001916 3/1/2022				
Cash Payment	E 601-49440-321 Telephone				-\$30.52
Invoice	218387-1788 617 3/1/2022				
Cash Payment	E 601-49440-321 Telephone				\$69.36
Invoice	218D24-1002213 3/1/2022				
Transaction Date	3/16/2022	MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total	\$108.20
Refer	83494 HAWKINS, INC.				
Cash Payment	E 601-49420-218 Operating Supplies- Che				\$649.39
Invoice	6138123 3/8/2022				
Transaction Date	3/16/2022	MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total	\$649.39
Refer	83497 NEON LINK				
Cash Payment	E 604-49590-310 Service Agreements				\$452.64
Invoice	2225 3/4/2022				
Cash Payment	E 601-49440-310 Service Agreements				\$127.31
Invoice	2225 3/4/2022				
Cash Payment	E 602-49490-310 Service Agreements				\$127.30
Invoice	2225 3/4/2022				
Transaction Date	3/16/2022	MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total	\$707.25
Refer	83498 US BANK				
Cash Payment	E 601-47027-611 Bond Interest				\$538.50
Invoice	172 3/16/2022				
Cash Payment	E 601-47027-620 Fiscal Agent s Fees				\$142.27
Invoice	172 3/16/2022				
Transaction Date	3/16/2022	MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total	\$680.77
Refer	83512 GOPHER STATE ONE CALL				
Cash Payment	E 601-49440-230 State Fees				\$4.05
Invoice	2020995 2/28/2022				
Transaction Date	3/16/2022	MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total	\$4.05
Refer	83517 TEAM LABORATORY CHEMICAL C				
Cash Payment	E 602-49451-210 Operating Supplies (GEN				\$1,252.50
Invoice	INV0029472 3/11/2022				
Transaction Date	3/17/2022	MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total	\$1,252.50
Refer	83540 JAVA MOOSE				
Cash Payment	E 604-49590-200 Office Supplies (GENER				\$120.00
Invoice	1076 3/18/2022				
Transaction Date	3/21/2022	MAIN CHECKING G	10100	Total	\$120.00
Refer	83550 ALLIED GENERATORS				
Cash Payment	E 604-49551-317 Contracted Services				\$14,115.42
Invoice	29742 3/15/2022				



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Payments

Current Period: March 2022

Cash Payment	E 604-49551-317 Contracted Services	\$2,960.00
Invoice 28641	3/15/2022	
Transaction Date	3/23/2022	
	MAIN CHECKING G 10100	
	Total	\$17,075.42

Refer 83557 COAST TO COAST COMP PRODUC _

Cash Payment	E 602-49490-200 Office Supplies (GENER	\$105.00
Invoice 2757512	3/21/2022	
Transaction Date	3/24/2022	
	MAIN CHECKING G 10100	
	Total	\$105.00

Fund Summary

604 ELECTRIC	\$317,412.50
609 MUNICIPAL LIQUOR FUND	\$263.40
	<u>\$317,675.90</u>
	10100 MAIN CHECKING GMSB
101 GENERAL FUND	\$15,162.22
211 LIBRARY	\$2,357.46
215 LIBRARY RESTRICTED FUND	\$308.30
601 WATER	\$6,156.29
602 SEWER	\$3,911.83
604 ELECTRIC	\$192,022.64
609 MUNICIPAL LIQUOR FUND	\$550.00
	<u>\$220,468.74</u>

Pre-Written Checks	\$172,794.41
Checks to be Generated by the Computer	\$346,708.85
Total	<u>\$519,503.26</u>

City of Grand Marais

MEMO

TO: Grand Marais Public Utilities Commission
FROM: Jeff Eliassen
DATE: March 31, 2022
SUBJECT: Substation Maintenance

In January 2022 the line department noticed that the digital interface on the circuit recloser for the power plant was blank. As we were performing a monthly exercise test, the generators could not sync to the substation. We called GRE and they sent a crew to assess the problem and it was determined we would need a new digital interface, and the other two reclosers, in the substation should also be changed, the cost of that service was \$2500. It had to be engineered first so an engineering firm that was recommended by SMMPA came to do that. We have not received an invoice for that service yet. The cost of replacement parts for the three reclosers will be \$24360. GRE will be doing the installation and as of now we do not have a quote on labor cost, but we estimate \$5,000-10,000. The Scheduled ship date for equipment is April 20th and installation is scheduled for April 25.

There is another issue with the porcelain insulators on the substation of which there are 135. The issue is that they are randomly breaking and should be replaced with polymer insulators the estimated cost is 20,900 for parts. Labor has not been determined. We are going to contact GRE to discuss the urgency of this project

**SCHWEITZER ENGINEERING LABORATORIES, INC.**

2350 NE Hopkins Court • Pullman, WA 99163-5603 USA
 Phone: +1.509.332.1890 • Fax: +1.509.332.7990
 www.selinc.com • info@selinc.com

CONFIRMATION

BILL TO:
 City of Grand Marais
 PO Box 600
 Grand Marais, MN 55604-0600
 USA

Sales Order Date	03-23-2022
Sales Order No.	SO-1901279
Customer No.	CN-422485
PO No.	2022-604-49551-01
SEL Project No.	
Project ID	

SHIPPING INFORMATION	Ship To:	City of Grand Marais Public Utilities 1800 W Highway 61 Grand Marais, MN 55604-7503 USA
	Contact	Kim Dunsmoor
	Phone	218-387-1848
	Ship Via	FDX GROUND
	Ship Terms	FOB Destin

SALES INFORMATION	Sold To:	City of Grand Marais 1800 W Highway 61 Grand Marais, MN 55604-7503 USA
	CSR	Brooke Cooper
	Revision	SO-1901279-1
	Terms	NET 30

Enduser: City of Grand Marais Grand Marais MN USA

ITEM	QTY	SHIP DATE (mm-dd-yyyy)	PRODUCT/DESCRIPTION	UNIT PRICE	DISC	EXTENSION
1.00	3	04-20-2022	651R#1581214 SEL-651R Advanced Recloser Control 0651R23CXAA8AE112314XX Ship Via: FDX GROUND Ship Term: FOB Destin	7,492.69		22,478.07

All sales are subject to the attached SEL Sales Terms, which are also available at SEL's website at <https://www.selinc.com/termsandconditions/> and are incorporated herein by reference.

All sales are expressly limited to the SEL Sales Terms and are conditional on Buyer's assent thereto. SEL expressly objects to any additional or different terms proposed by Buyer, unless agreed to in writing by SEL.

FREIGHT	0.00	SALES TAX	1,882.54	SUBTOTAL	22,478.07
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Sales tax is an estimate and is subject to change based on the ship to location and rate(s) applicable at time of shipment.

ORDER TOTAL
24,360.61 USD

City of Grand Marais

MEMO

TO: Grand Marais Public Utilities Commission
FROM: Patrick Knight, Communications Director
DATE: March 31, 2022
SUBJECT: Tom Bovitz Memorial Scholarship

Each year the Grand Marais Public Utilities Commission partners with Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association to provide a scholarship essay contest for graduating seniors of Cook County High School who seeking post-secondary education.

Entries are to interpret in 500-750 words one or more aspects of the theme, "Municipal utilities: good for all of us." This applies to municipal electric and natural gas utilities. Judges are to look particularly for originality and the relevance of the theme to the writer and his/her city.

The winners locally receive \$500, \$300, and \$200 dollars respectively, and the first place winner is submitted to a statewide competition for \$2000, \$1500, \$1000 and \$500

At your meeting we will determine a 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place essay and announce the winners.

Please come to the meeting with a rank order for the four essays included in this packet.

Municipal Utilities: Good For All of Us

There's a sudden silence as I shuffle to our drawer of flashlights. A few candles are lit around the room and the rest are slipped into ziplock bags with a flashlight and a box of matches in each. Gradually, phone lights arrive at our door as we explain the situation to each guest. Number five, then number two, and so on. We tell number two that there is a kerosene lamp in the cupboard above the fridge and we hand them a ziplock. We call in and give our street address as we make sure the fridge is closed tight. My brother treks up the hill and to the highway to see if the neighbors have power. The night calms down and we don't worry whether or not the power will come back, we know it will. It is temporally inconvenient, but not unreliable.

Communities are important. They allow for people to form bonds, specialize their time and skills, and most of all they are often the place we call home. Communities, and cities for that matter, don't come without costs. It is difficult to meet a large population's energy needs, but public utilities make it possible to supply energy to cities and close-knit communities like Grand Marais.

Access to affordable municipal utilities give power to all in more ways than one. Municipal Utilities are built to benefit the community that needs it. From early regulatory compacts to today, low cost and reliable sources of energy are what keep our lives and community running. We need them for our homes, our schools, and our businesses. The best indicator of this is what happens once this luxury is absent. Power outages, like the one I describe, rapidly change our lives. That is why having reliable power is so important for our community to do what it does.

Electricity is even more important now as everyday lives and even communities shift to have an online presence. When Cook County High School went online for my junior year, my

peers and I needed electricity to power our education and keep the routers, well, routing. Our schooling and social lives were the most linked they had ever been to the outlets in our walls. Even now, my education is reliant on the ability to turn on a computer and write an essay like this one. As it turns out, I need energy for most everything I do, whether it is refrigerating the food I eat, cooking that same food, or lighting my dinner table, access to energy shapes every step of my day to day.

Our Utilities are also on the forefront of Cook County's and Minnesota's transition into renewables. Although strides must be made in storage capacity for our energy to remain reliable, their focus on issues such as this show a focus on the community's future aspirations. The way Utilities have worked has gradually changed and will continue to change for the community it supports. The changes only add to public utility's importance in our lives as a balanced transition is met.

I am grateful to have grown up on the north shore, but that would have never been possible if not for the grid my school and my home rely on. I need power, and so does the community that has supported me through the years.

Do you know where your electricity and water come from? Chances are, they are from your city's municipal utilities. Minnesota Municipal Utilities serve around 386,000 people and are described as "local people working together to meet local needs." The city of Grand Marais's municipal utilities provide the community with electricity and water. These utilities are non-profit, tailored to the customer, reliable, and are actively working towards renewable energy.

Municipal utilities are non-profit, focusing only on serving the community. Other utilities such as cooperatives and investor-owned utilities take a margin of sales whereas municipal utilities do not. All sales are used to improve quality of service for their customers. Not only are they non-profit but some also contribute to the city's general fund. Money from the city's electric utility is used to reduce property taxes on the community.

Municipal utilities are also tailored to local needs. Utilities are regulated by a local commission, whose members are appointed by the city council. Since the city council is elected by citizens, they are trusted to appoint members who will only improve municipal utilities. This gives power to the people, allowing them to decide who is in charge of their utility commission. This local utility commission operates with more input from the public than most other utilities. They want the public's opinion to insure that all citizens' needs are met. The commission also offers special reduced rates for electric heat if customers heat their homes during times when the electric grid isn't as busy. This would be during the work day or during the night because the grid is most busy before people go to work and directly after they return home.

Municipal utilities are also reliable and efficient. If there is a power outage, municipal utilities are known to fix it within the hour, simply because the staff is local. Power outages are usually fixed in minutes and rarely last more than a hour in Grand Marais. Whether it be a wind storm or a seagull in a the substation, the issue is solved efficiently.

Not only are municipal utilities customer conscious but they are also environmentally conscious. Grand Marais's commission responded directly to the community's concern for carbon emissions of the city. In 2018, the Grand Marais Climate Action Plan(CAP) was enacted. The goals of the CAP include expanding renewable energy and improving energy efficiency, reducing carbon emissions by 45%. The city has implemented electric vehicle charging stations, offers rebates for energy efficient equipment and lighting, and is moving away from energy generated from coal, towards solar and wind power. In 2020, SMMPA, an agreement between 18 cities within Minnesota, including Grand Marais, launched SMMPA 2.0. This new agreement's goal is to 80% carbon free energy by 2030.

MMUA has a current renewable energy goal to have 25% of energy generated to be produced either by wind, solar, or hydroelectric power by 2025. According to MMUA's website, "An electric municipal utility with 1,000 or more customers must spend 1.5% of its gross operating revenues on energy conservation improvements." Renewable energy isn't a choice, it is an obligation.

Municipal utilities are always watching out for their customers and the environment. Whether it be a main focus on serving the community or renewable energy goals, municipal utilities work fully towards improving their service.

Sources:

Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association <https://www.mmua.org>

Grand Marais Climate Action Plan <https://www.ci.grand-marais.mn.us>

Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association

(MMUA)

Throughout my life I have taken Public Utilities for granted. In fact, I didn't really understand what Public Utilities were and how they worked until I started thinking about it and asking my parents questions. I didn't quite realize how much electricity, water and sewer has impacted my daily life until I really started to think about it this year. I started to think what my life would be like without having access to these basic services that I have always been privileged to have. I now understand that all these services I have are because of the Grand Marais Public Utilities Commission and dependent on my parents paying a monthly fee. I think it is amazing that we have public utility workers in the community to help maintain these services so kids like myself can watch TV, have Alexa devices, be able to cook on our stove, have indoor plumbing, wash and dry my clothes and have lights when it is dark. With all these things that are part of the utilities commission, I think it's kind of extraordinary that they all come from our small community of Grand Marais. I appreciate those employed by the city of Grand Marais that work diligently to make sure everything is working properly.

These utilities are still going to impact my life in so many ways when it comes to using the toilet, washing my hands or needing to charge my phone. I am glad that we have workers to run out and get the electricity working when there's power outages. I remember several big storms that have knocked out the power and our workers have gone out in those storms to repair and restore our electricity. I am very grateful for their commitment to ensuring residents of

Grand Marais have power restored so quickly even when big storms happen. I'm thankful to live in the city of Grand Marais where I know that there is a commission of dedicated people that will work hard to keep our town running whether during storms, or just general upkeep of equipment needed to supply power to our entire town.

If we didn't have public utilities I think it would be a whole lot harder and more expensive to be able to individually generate electricity, water, and to keep warm in the winter time. The public workers are doing lots of challenging tasks and there are some risks they take when it comes to their job responsibilities. I am ever grateful for all the risky tasks like dealing with electricity because if they accidentally touch a live wire or box, they could get seriously injured. The training and protocols that they must have to follow help keep them safe. As I think about it, it is pretty extraordinary of the sacrifice of time and risk it takes to maintain and restore power in our community. As a resident of Grand Marais, I join my community in recognizing and sending my appreciation for all that our local Public Utilities Commission does behind the scenes to allow kids like myself to live our lives comfortably with proper electricity, water and sewer.

Municipal Utilities: Good for All of Us

In 1903 the city of Grand Marais was incorporated. The founding people and the original Ojibway people never would have expected the town to grow as it has. Part of the reason for the growth is the power system in the community. It took lots of different community effort to bring power to the North Shore— which is good for all of us.

Its is not clear when Grand Marais Public Utilities was formed but a search of the Cook County Historical Society records finds this article from the *Cook County News Herald* on December 9,1920:

Verne N. Johnson is now busily engaged wiring houses in preparation for the new electric light plant which Grand Marais is soon to have. Carl Ertsgard, who is an expert in that line, had been secured to look after the wiring and he has Walter Anderson to assist him. They have placed a light in the basement and stockroom of the News Herald office and are now wiring the C.J. Johnson cottages. Right now it is possible to have your wiring done before the plant arrives, but when it comes the electricians will be busy and not so easy to get on short notice.

Mr. Johnson carries a line of electrical supplies, such as bulbs, drop cord and regular extension wire; also other apparatus pertaining to the work of installing or extending your lighting system.

Eventually Grand Marais Public Utilities could not power the town on its own and joined forces with the Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency. Working with the Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency benefits us because we can gain more knowledge on more efficient ways to power our community. Even though we are a part of the Southern Minnesota Municipal Power Agency we benefit because the local utility commission can decide what is best

for our community. The local utility commission sets the rates, hires the linemen and is available for local customers. Having a local commission is good for us because we know and trust our local representatives who also live and work in the community.

As a municipal utility with local control, the Grand Marais Public Utility Commission can respond to public concerns. They have done so by establishing a Climate Action Plan and working with the Cook County Local Energy Project. The Climate Action Plan reduces the need for harmful carbon emissions and works toward renewable energy resources.

Having local control and being a municipal utility means Grand Marais can do its own projects. The city started to install solar panels on several city properties such as Gunflint Hills Golf Course and has installed some for the Grand Marais Recreation Park's shower house. The plan helps the community save money and reduce the hours of electricity needed to power the shower house. A few other interesting projects are the installation of EV charging stations located at the city hall parking lot and the Grand Marais Recreation Park. Also they have installed solar panels at the Public Works Building.

Another good thing being a part of Grand Marais Public Utilities is that they return money to the city general fund that is used to run the city and that helps the whole community.