

**NMPRC NOMINATING COMMITTEE**  
**Thursday, August 29, 2022 at 9:00 am**  
**State Capitol, Room 307**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**The scheduled meeting of the NMPRC Nominating Committee was called to order on August 29, 2022 at 9:15 a.m. by Secretary Alonzo Baldonado.**

**II. ROLL CALL**

Roll call indicated the presence of a quorum in person, as follows:

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

The Honorable Brian Egolf, Chairperson [arriving later]

The Honorable Alonzo Baldonado, Secretary

Member Ron J. Lovato [remotely]

Member Denise Ramonas

Member Cydney Beadles

Member Rikki Seguin

Member William Brancard

**III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Upon motion by Member Seguin and second by Member Brancard, the Agenda was accepted as published.**

**IV. APPROVAL OF AUGUST 1, 2022 AND AUGUST 11, 2022 MINUTES**

The Committee discussed the style of the minutes and requested less detailed minutes.

Member Brancard requested a spelling correction of one name.

Member Beadles requested a spelling correction on the last page

**Upon motion by Member Brancard and second by Member Ramonas, the minutes of August 11, 2022 were accepted with two minor corrections.**

**V. GOVERNMENTAL CONDUCT ACT EDUCATIONAL SESSION, PRC OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL (INFORMATIONAL ITEM)**

Mr. Russell Fisk, Associate General Counsel for the Public Regulation Commission led the educational session and provided a handout for the Committee members on the Governmental Conduct Act.

He read portions of the Act and explained them briefly. He clarified that those the portions applicable to state agencies also applied to the Nominating Committee.

During his presentation, Chair Egolf arrived at 9:31 a.m.

Mr. Fisk's educational session ended at 9:48 and he invited questions.

The Committee had no questions on his presentation.

**VI. PUBLIC COMMENT AND INPUT SESSION (INFORMATIONAL ITEM)**

Mr. Propst introduced Patrick Rodriguez, Public Information Officer for the Public Regulation Commission who was keeping the list of public commenters.

Mr. Henry Honoré, PNM Vice President for Regulatory and Controller, described this company. He listed the attributes of Commissioners important to PNM as experience in the utility industry, knowledgeable about generation and transmission, active participation in NARUC (National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners) committees, support for a strong staffing with competitive salaries, willingness to consider what other state commissions are doing, and understanding the trends in transition to carbon-free technology.

Mr. Jim DesJardins, Executive Director of the New Mexico AREA, said the Commissioners should be smart people and hard workers with openness to new technologies, not necessarily an engineer, but comfortable in that realm. Most importantly, a new commissioner needs to be able to see the big picture and understand the benefits and embrace it.

Ms. Chelsea Canada, New Mexico Chamber of Commerce Public Policy Director, shared the mission of the NMCC who wanted Commissioners who could balance the interests of business and customers, met the qualifications of NM State Law, and insight into what would benefit both utilities and consumers. They should be innovative, adaptive, ambitious, energetic, critical thinking skills, candidates that can

navigate the ETA, have a working understanding of electric markets and potential brownouts or blackouts.

Jim Schichtl, EPE VP agreed with prior speakers on qualifications and experience and added their desire for a commissioner that is be prepared for these big changes, capable to deal with rapid change, and provide speedy and efficient decisions. He hoped the new Commissioners would be able to bring reform to the regulatory structure to shorten procurement time to obtain energy resources.

Member Seguin asked if he had recommendations on where the candidates live and from different areas of the state.

Mr. Schichtl agreed where they come from is important but not nearly the most important factor.

Adrian Rodriguez, President of SPS Company, emphasized four important characteristics for new Commissioners: transparency, predictability, consistency, and timeliness. The Commission needs the ability to attract developers who look to the Commission to decide whether to relocate to New Mexico. He appreciated the transparency of the nominating process.

He responded to several questions about credit ratings and issuance of bonds. The candidate should be able to know what we do here in New Mexico that impacts the stakeholders and the ratepayers.

In response to Member Beadles, he added that the Commissioners need to be able to maintain a productive relationship with the Legislature.

Ms. Sandy Kau, the Climate Advocate for Energy Voters New Mexico, was in support of full implementation of the ETA. The organization wanted Commissioners who were in support of the Energy Transition Act and supported salaries commensurate with the requirements of the Commission, noting that Texas pays their Commissioners \$150,000 and Arizona pays them \$155,000 while NM Commissioners receive \$90,000.

Ms. Camilla Feibelman with the NM Chapter of the Sierra Club and Director of the Rio Grande Chapter, whose goal is to lead our state into a clean future, urged the Committee to nominate candidates who understand what is best for consumers; candidates who understand the consequences of fossil fuel and hydrogen, which also pollutes; candidates who uphold the law and apply all principles for the benefit of New Mexico families and not fossil fuel extraction producers.

Mr. Christian Casillas, Coalition of Sustainable Communities, New Mexico, shared the local governments who were members. He urged candidates who supported the energy transition and knowledge of the technical industry and emerging markets. He also supported the transparency of the process. He asked for consideration of a public forum like local candidate forums so they could field questions from the public on relevant subjects that might not otherwise surface.

In response to Member Beadles, he agreed they should have Commissioners from various parts of the State. But more important was for them to have a deep understanding of regulatory aspects, understanding the needs of low-income folks and weather differences from southern to northern New Mexico.

Mr. Charles Goodmacher, representing Voices for Children in New Mexico, said the Commissioners need to be fully aware of the environmental damage affecting young people in our State – more drought and more wildfires and the take into account the impacts for the future, free from conflicts of interest, and fully committed to the health and good life of constituents.

Mr. Tom Solomon, Coordinator of 315 New Mexico, asked for candidates who were well aware of the climate change upon us, and time left according to the Climate Clock, and willing to work quickly to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. He also wished for people who would not support conversion to blue hydrogen energy.

Mr. Joseph Hernandez, from Shiprock NM, representing Navajo and other tribal communities, said potential nominees must believe in climate change and work for conversion to carbon-free energy.

Another man from the Four Corners area shared the bad environmental impact on people who lived in that area and wanted their children to have a healthy future. He wanted candidates who would stop the use of resources that harm people's health.

Mr. Lucas Herndon supported strong science-based candidates who would work to reverse climate change that is ever-present.

Ms. June Parsons could not hear the Chairman.

Mr. Jim Nelson could not hear either.

Ms. Jenelle Johnson was called and did not respond.

The Committee went back to Jim Nelson at 11:15.

Mr. Nelson noted energy service in New Mexico are provided by investor-owned utilities and rural coops. He asked that candidates be supportive of coop based electrical utilities.

Ms. Jenelle Johnson provided no testimony.

Ms. Brittany Ortiz was called but was no longer on.

Mr. Allen Downs had no comment to make.

There were no other public comments.

**VII. UPDATE ON RECRUITMENT PROCESS, PRC HUMAN RESOURCES STAFF, (INFORMATIONAL ITEM)**

Ms. Rene Kepler, Director of Human Resources at the PRC presented the update on recruitment process to the Committee.

She reported that the PRC Human Resources Staff have been advertising the position in the Albuquerque Journal, the Santa Fe New Mexican, the Las Cruces Sun Times, NARUC and Linked-in and El Paso Times and shared the publication dates.

She has received five applications to date and asked Chair Egolf if the Committee wants them forwarded as received or at a specific date.

Chair Egolf said they could access them through file sharing and asked Ms. Kepler to just let the Committee members know when a candidate's application has been received.

**VIII. OTHER BUSINESS**

Chair Egolf reported he had submitted his op-ed for publication. He also said he was awaiting an answer from the Governor on the salary issue.

Member Beadles suggested reaching out to UNM, New Mexico Tech, and NMSU and potentially Sandia and Los Alamos National Labs on their virtual bulletin boards. She and Member Lovato will be meeting with the All-Pueblo Board of Governors too.

Mr. Propst also reached out to the Secretary of Indian Affairs.

Member Ramonas will also see if the Utilities Institute in Washington D.C. has the job posted.

Chair Egolf noted an additional educational session was scheduled on September 12, and he asked members if the meeting was still needed. After a brief discussion, the Committee agreed to remove it from the schedule and agreed to have the next meeting on September 29.

Member Brancard asked about determining the questions to pose to the candidates.

The Committee discussed the issue and agreed to invite questions from the public on the website or opinions about suggested questions. The Committee also agreed the actual questions used would not be disclosed before interviews.

Mr. Propst agreed to clarify the issue of considering out-of-state applicants, the requirement to have candidates from three different counties, and closed meetings for personnel matters.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

**Having completed the agenda and with no further business to consider, the Nominating Committee meeting was adjourned at 11:43 a.m.**

Approved by:

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Brian Egolf, Chair

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Date