

AUSTIN UTILITIES

MINUTES OF MEETING

4:00 pm, November 17th, 2025

Regular Meeting

Steve Greenman

Date

President

Members Present:

Steve Greenman, President
Jay Lutz, Commissioner
Geoff Baker, Commissioner
Tyler Hulsebus, Commissioner
Kristin Johnson, Commissioner

Others Present:

Tom Dankert, General Manager
Alex Bumgardner, Utility Operations Director
Kory Robinson, Finance & Customer Care Director
Marc Oleson, Information Technology Director
Dan Ulland, Employee Relations Director
Sarah Douty, Administrative Coordinator
Melissa Swenson, Communications & Energy Services Manager
Meredith Manahan, Marketing Assistant

Members Absent:

President Steve Greenman called the meeting to order at 4:01 pm.

Moved by Geoff Baker, seconded by Kristin Johnson, to approve the agenda. Approved unanimously.

Moved by Geoff Baker, seconded by Jay Lutz, to approve the regular meeting minutes of October 21st, 2025. Approved unanimously.

Commissioner Johnson noted a discrepancy in the October check register total. Kory Robinson, will review and make any needed correction. Moved by Geoff Baker, seconded by Tyler Hulsebus, to approve, after correcting and reconciliation of the check register, the disbursements summary, accounts payable list, additional bills and expenses, and authorize warrants to be drawn for their payment. Approved unanimously.

Melissa Swenson, Communications and Energy Services Manager, presented the 3rd quarter customer survey results. Overall satisfaction is high at 86.8% but the Net Provider Score (NPS) was 27.2 which is down from the 1st quarter score of 36.6. The most noted customer complaint was a belief that their bills are too high. Staff plan to focus on utilizing technology, identifying different communications with customers, and continuing customer follow ups. Commissioner Baker recommended focusing on a more defined singular message of value and Commissioner Lutz added AU's high reliability rate coincides with that value. General Manager Dankert said he hopes to increase media coverage of AU's value and highlight what would be a neutral rate adjustment if the 2026 budget is passed.

Kory Robinson, Finance & Customer Care Director, reviewed AU's 3rd quarter financial dashboard. A review of each department's sales, operating income and expenses versus the budget year to date were explained. It was noted that a negative PCA was calculated for November. Commissioner Johnson suggested creating a line item for rebates in the future due to the costs being reimbursed by SMMPA.

Tom Dankert, General Manager, and Kory Robinson, Finance and Customer Care Director, presented the 2026 updated budget. Notable changes from the 2025 budget were requests to add a full time Horizontal Directional Drill Operator and a full time IT Network & Systems Administrator. At the October board meeting Commissioner Baker asked for additional rationale for adding the IT position. Marc Oleson, IT Director, reviewed the need for the position. Commissioners and staff discussed cybersecurity coverage, inhouse knowledge compared to contracting for services, necessary training and future succession planning in the IT department. General Manager Dankert noted areas of the budget where savings have been identified that would help offset the cost of adding an additional employee.

As presented at the October meeting, the 2026 electric operating budget has a rate decrease of approximately 1.9% for residential and commercial customers.

The 2026 gas operating budget has rate increases of 0.4% residential and 2.7% commercial and is only in the cost of service, there will be no change to the purchased gas rate.

The 2026 water operating budget has rate increases of approximately 4.25% for both residential and commercial customers. The operating budget is slightly below the target operating income even with the proposed rate increase.

Moved by Geoff Baker, seconded by Tyler Hulsebus, to approve the 2026 budget as presented. Approved unanimously.

Tom Dankert, General Manager, and Kory Robinson, Finance and Customer Care Director, presented the corresponding rate tariffs for 2026. These included all electric, gas, and water tariffs along with a new residential Time of Use rate to be offered in March of 2026. Commissioner Hulsebus questioned the wording relating to off and on peak hours. Staff will reword the language in the tariff to make it more clear. A draft news release on rate changes for 2026, with a focus on neutral rate changes, was discussed. Moved by Geoff Baker, seconded by Kristin Johnson, to approve the 2026 rate tariffs. Approved unanimously.

Tom Dankert, General Manager, also updated the Board on the following:

- SMMPA meeting minutes
- Safety committee minutes including front door changes
- Status of upcoming labor union negotiations
- Status of downtown water reservoir
- Suspension of disconnects due to federal government shutdown
- Hormel Digital Equity Coordinators
- Clarification of grace period on customer bills

The next regular board meeting was set for 4:00 pm on Tuesday, December 16th, 2025.

Moved by Geoff Baker, seconded by Tyler Hulsebus, to adjourn. Approved unanimously at 5:15 pm.

President

Secretary