

Meeting Minutes

NMPRC Nominating Committee Meeting

Date: September 9, 2024

Time: 10:00 a.m.-12:45 p.m.

Committee Members Present:

- Rikki Seguin (Chair)
- Alonzo Baldonado
- Catherine Nicolaou
- Cydney Beadles
- William Brancard
- Denise Ramonas
- Ron Lovato

PRC Staff Present:

- Chief of Staff: Cholla Khoury
- Administrative Service Division Director: Miranda Mascarenas
- IT: Phil Bolton
- Zoom Administrator/Public Information Officer: Patrick Rodriguez
- Project Manager: Jordan Gutierrez

Department of Justice Counsel:

- Kristin Hovie

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Chair Rikki Seguin called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. and confirmed the presence of all members.

2. Pledge of Allegiance and State Salute

The committee observed the Pledge of Allegiance and State Salute.

3. Consideration and Approval of Agenda

Chair Seguin made *motion* to approve the agenda. William Brancard moves approval of the agenda. *Second motion* comes from Denise Ramonas. The *motion passed unanimously*.

4. Public Comment

Chair Seguin emphasized the importance of public participation and confirmed that public comments would remain a regular agenda item.

Camilla Feibelman of the Sierra Club Rio Grande Chapter gave public comment after the public comment period had officially closed.

5. Introduction of Department of Justice Counsel

Chair Seguin introduced Kristin Hovie from the Department of Justice, who explained her role in assisting with compliance regarding the Open Meetings Act. She also offered to provide additional training on both the Open Meetings and Inspection of Public Records Acts, suggesting an upcoming session in Albuquerque in October.

Cydney Beadles expressed interest in further training, particularly related to the Open Meetings Act. Kristin Hovie agreed to arrange it, suggesting it be added to the October 9 meeting agenda.

6. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

The draft minutes of the December 2, 2022 meeting were discussed, and amendments were made. Concerns were raised regarding missing details, including motion and second motion information, which Cholla Khoury confirmed would be added. Corrections included:

- “NMAREA” changed to “Renewable Energy Industries Association of New Mexico (NMREIA).”
- “Rona Webber” corrected to “Mona Blaber” from the Sierra Club.
- Other typographical and phrasing errors were noted and corrected.

First motion was made by Denise Ramonas to approve the amendments. **Second motion** was made by William Brancard and **passed unanimously** to accept the minutes with these amendments.

The July 15 meeting minutes were also amended

- Correct the names of Catherine Nicolaou and William Brancard
- Add last names to Committee members in section 4 under “Committee Member Introductions”
- Add job titles to the appointers under attendees.
- Add Michelle Lujan Grisham as the appointer for Ron Lovato.
- Under item 1 under meeting agenda, change “Chair” to “Secretary”
- More detail in the minutes for meetings moving forward.
- Add who made first and second motions.
- Add “or edits to be made” after first bullet point for section 8. Other Business.

First motion to accept minutes as amended made by Denise Ramonas. **Second motion** made by Alonzo Baldonado and **passed unanimously** to accept the minutes with these amendments.

7. Open Meetings Act Resolution Discussion

Two draft versions of the Open Meetings Act resolution were discussed. Kristin Hovie recommended adopting the shorter, more accessible version provided by the Department of Justice, with minor additions suggested by the committee. William Brancard raised questions about notice requirements for regular and special meetings, which Hovie clarified. Cydney Beadles proposed adding language to ensure public participation, and the resolution was tabled for further updates.

8. Questionnaire Discussion and Potential Approval

The committee discussed revisions to the candidate questionnaire. Key points included:

- Alonzo Baldonado suggested revising Question 4 to focus on balancing reliable energy with reducing carbon emissions, while Cydney Beadles preferred keeping it open-ended. The committee decided to retain the original question.
- Combining Questions 7 and 8 to focus on evaluating issues before the PRC, with William Brancard confirming previous topics like reliability and affordability were listed in Question 7.
- Catherine Nicolaou proposed adding broadband-specific questions, which the committee agreed to integrate.

A key discussion revolved around the PRC's role in ensuring universal broadband access. Committee members considered whether ISPs should be regulated as utilities to ensure this access. Action items included clarifying the PRC's regulatory responsibilities and whether statutory changes are needed. The committee refined two key candidate questions:

1. What is the PRC's role in ensuring broadband service is universally available?
2. Should broadband service providers be regulated as utilities?

The committee agreed that candidates must understand telecommunications and broadband regulations. Revisions to the questionnaire were approved, and **a roll call vote** was made by Cholla Khoury. The ***motion passed unanimously***.

9. Break

A 10-minute break was taken at 11:55 a.m.

10. Report on Job Posting and Advertising

A report was presented on the success of job postings for the PRC commissioner role, with 32 applications received after three withdrawals. Recommendations included starting the process earlier and possibly increasing the advertising budget.

11. Review of Candidate Applications

Rikki Seguin reviewed the statutory requirements for commissioner eligibility, emphasizing that candidates must verify their qualifications through a questionnaire. The eligibility requirements include: independence from the industries regulated by the Commission; competence demonstrated through relevant education and professional experience (either a baccalaureate

degree with 10 years of experience or a postgraduate degree/professional license with similar experience); no financial interest in a public utility and no employment by a regulated entity within the last two years; and commissioners must fully commit to the role without other employment or holding any other profitable office. Additionally, no more than two commissioners may be from the same political party. Rikki suggested starting with a list of candidate names, following past committee practice. The committee reviewed 32 applications, narrowing the list to 13 candidates to receive questionnaires.

Denise Ramonas gave a list of 8 names for consideration. Those include:

- Blessing Chukwu
- James Ellison
- Stephen Meyer
- Flavious Smith
- Greg Nibert
- Collin Walcavich
- Sean Wilder
- Anibal Taboas

Catherine Nicolaou gave a list of 7 names for consideration. Those include:

- Greg Nibert
- Stephen Meyer
- Diana Lindstrom
- Daniel P. Hunnell
- Blessing Chukwu
- Debra Hicks
- James Ellison

Ron Lovato wanted to include two additional names for consideration. Those include:

- Collin Gillespie
- Maria C. Berio

Denise Ramonas gives ***motion*** to send questionnaires to all 13 mentioned names. Alonzo Baldonado ***seconds motion***.

Roll call vote was made by Cholla Khoury. The motion passed unanimously. Candidates to receive applications:

- Maria C. Berio
- Blessing Chukwu
- James Ellison
- Collin Gillespie
- Debra Hicks
- Daniel P. Hunnell II
- Diana Lindstrom

- Stephen Meyer
- Greg Nibert
- Flavious Smith
- Anibal Taboas
- Colin Walcavich
- Sean Wilder

12. Announcements

Cholla Khoury updated the committee on the letter to the Governor regarding salary recommendations, currently under review by the Governor's office.

13. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:45 p.m.

Next Meeting: October 9, 2024, 10:00 a.m.