

Ordinance # 300-010

**An Ordinance granting Minnesota Energy Resources, a subsidiary of WEC Energy Group, a Wisconsin corporation, its successors and assigns, a natural gas franchise and the authority to construct, operate, maintain, and extend a natural gas distribution plant and system, and granting the right to use the streets, alleys, and other public places within the present or future corporate limits of the City, of Hewitt, Minnesota**

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Hewitt, Minnesota, as follows:

**FRANCHISE GRANTED**

The City of Hewitt, Minnesota, (hereinafter referred to as "Grantor") hereby grants a non-exclusive franchise to Minnesota Energy Resources, a subsidiary of WEC Energy Group, a Wisconsin corporation, (hereinafter called "Grantee"), its lessees, successors and assigns. Grantee is hereby granted the right, privilege, franchise, permission and authority to lay, construct, install, maintain, operate and extend in, along, over or across the present and future streets, alleys, avenues, bridges, public rights-of-way and public places as are now within the present or future limits of said Grantor, a natural gas distribution system and all facilities necessary for the purpose of supplying natural gas or processed gas for all purposes to the inhabitants of said Grantor and consumers in the vicinity thereof, and for the distribution of natural gas from or through said Grantor to points beyond the limits thereof. Such facilities shall include, but not be limited to, all mains, services, pipes, conduits and appliances necessary or convenient for transmitting, transporting, distributing and supplying natural gas for all purposes for which it may be used, and to do all other things necessary and proper in providing natural gas service to the inhabitants of Grantor and in carrying on such business.

**TERM**

The rights and privileges granted by this Ordinance shall remain in effect for a period of Twenty-five (25) years from the effective date of this Ordinance.

**GOVERNING RULES AND REGULATIONS**

This Ordinance is granted subject to all conditions, limitations and immunities now provided for, or as hereafter amended, and applicable to the operations of a public utility, by State or Federal law. The rates to be charged by Grantee for service within the present or future corporate limits of Grantor and the rules and regulations regarding the character, quality and standards of service to be furnished by Grantee shall be under the jurisdiction and control of such regulatory body or bodies as may, from time to time, be vested by law with authority and jurisdiction over the rates, regulations and quality and standards of service to be supplied by Grantee. Provided however, should any judicial, regulatory or legislative body, having proper jurisdiction, take any action that precludes Grantee from recovering from its customers any cost associated with services provided hereunder, then Grantee and Grantor shall renegotiate the terms of this Ordinance in accordance with the action taken, so as to allow Grantee to be made whole economically. In determining the rights and duties of the Grantee, the terms of this franchise Ordinance shall take precedence over any conflicting terms or requirements contained in any other Ordinance enacted by the Grantor.

If an energy supplier is unable to furnish an adequate supply of energy due to an emergency, an order or decision of a public regulatory body, or other acts beyond the control of the Grantee, then the Grantee shall have the right and authority to adopt reasonable rules and regulations limiting, curtailing or allocating extensions of service or supply of energy to any customers or prospective customers, and withholding the supply of energy to new customers, provided that such rules and regulations shall be uniform as applied to each class of customers or prospective customers, and shall be non-discriminatory as between communities receiving service from the Grantee.

### **CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF COMPANY FACILITIES**

Any pavements, sidewalks or curbing taken up and any and all excavations made shall be done in such a manner as to cause only such inconvenience to the inhabitants of Grantor and to the general public as is reasonably necessary; and repairs and replacements shall be made promptly by Grantee, leaving such properties in as good as condition as existed immediately prior to excavation.

Grantee agrees that for the term of this grant, it will use its best efforts to maintain facilities and equipment sufficient to meet the current and future energy requirements of Grantor, its inhabitants and industries. While maintaining its facilities and equipment, Grantee shall obtain permits as required by ordinance, except that in emergency situations, Grantee shall take immediate unilateral actions as it determines are necessary to protect the public health, safety, and welfare; in which case, Grantee shall notify Grantor as soon as reasonably possible.

Grantor will give Grantee reasonable notice of plans for street improvements where paving or resurfacing of a permanent nature is involved that affect Grantee's facilities. The notice shall contain the nature and character of the improvements, the rights-of-way upon which the improvements are to be made, the extent of the improvements and the time when the Grantor will start the work, and, if more than one right-of-way is involved, the order in which this work is to proceed. The notice shall be given to the Grantee a sufficient length of time, considering seasonable working conditions, in advance of the actual commencement of the work to permit the Grantee to make any additions, alterations, or repairs to its facilities.

### **EXTENSION OF COMPANY FACILITIES**

Upon receipt and acceptance of a valid application for service, Grantee shall, subject to its own economic feasibility criteria, make reasonable extensions of its distribution facilities to serve customers located within the current or future corporate limits of Grantor.

### **RELOCATION OF COMPANY FACILITIES**

If Grantor elects to change the grade of or otherwise alter any street, alley, avenue, bridge, public right-of-way or public place for a public purpose, Grantee, upon reasonable notice from Grantor, shall remove and relocate its facilities or equipment situated in the public rights-of-way, if such removal is necessary to prevent interference and not merely for the convenience of the Grantor, at the cost and expense of Grantee. If Grantor orders or requests Grantee to relocate its facilities or equipment for the primary benefit of a commercial or private project, or as a result of the

initial request of a commercial or private developer or other non-public entity, and such removal is necessary to prevent interference and not merely for the convenience of the Grantor or other right-of-way user, Grantee shall receive payment for the cost of such relocation as a precondition to relocating its facilities or equipment. Grantor shall consider reasonable alternatives in designing its public works projects so as not arbitrarily to cause Grantee unreasonable additional expense in exercising its authority under this section. Grantor shall also provide a reasonable alternative location for Grantee's facilities. Grantor shall give Grantee written notice of vacating of a public right-of-way. Vacating of a public right-of-way shall not deprive the Grantee of its right to operate and maintain existing facilities, until the reasonable cost of relocating the same are first paid to the Grantee.

Any person or corporation desiring to move a building or other structure along, or to make any unusual use of any street, alley, avenue, bridge, public right-of-way or public place which shall interfere with the facilities or equipment of the Grantee, shall first give notice to the Grantor and the Grantee and pay a sum sufficient to cover the expense and damage incident to the moving of Grantee's facilities and equipment.

### **CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

Grantor acknowledges that certain information it might request pursuant to this franchise may be of a proprietary and confidential nature. If Grantee requests that any information provided by Grantee to Grantor be kept confidential due to such proprietary or commercial value, Grantor and its employees, agents, and representatives shall maintain the confidentiality of that information, to the extent allowed by law. If Grantor is requested or required by legal or administrative process to disclose any such confidential information, Grantor shall promptly notify Grantee of such request or requirement so that Grantee may seek an appropriate protective order or other relief. Grantor shall use all reasonable efforts to ensure that the confidentiality of Grantee's confidential information is maintained.

### **FORCE MAJEURE**

It shall not be a breach or default under this franchise if either party fails to perform its obligations hereunder due to Force Majeure. Force Majeure shall include, but not be limited to, the following: 1) physical events such as acts of God, landslides, lightning, earthquakes, fires, freezing, storms, floods, washouts, explosions, breakage or accident or necessity of repairs to machinery, equipment or distribution or transmission lines; 2) acts of others such as strikes, work-force stoppages, riots, sabotage, insurrections or wars; 3) governmental actions such as necessity for compliance with any court order, law, statute, ordinance, executive order, or regulation promulgated by a governmental authority having jurisdiction; and any other causes, whether of the kind herein enumerated or otherwise not reasonably within the control of the affected party to prevent or overcome. Each party shall make reasonable efforts to avoid Force Majeure and to resolve such event as promptly as reasonably possible once it occurs in order to resume performance; provided, however, that this provision shall not obligate a party to settle any labor strike.

### **HOLD HARMLESS**

Grantee, during the term of this Ordinance, agrees to save harmless Grantor from and against all claims, demands, losses and expenses arising directly out of the negligence of Grantee, its

employees or agents, in the constructing, operating, and maintaining of distribution and transmission facilities or appliances of Grantee; provided, however, that Grantee need not save harmless Grantor from claims, demands, losses and expenses arising out of the negligence of Grantor, its employees or agents.

**SEVERABILITY**

If any clause, sentence or section of this Ordinance is deemed invalid by any judicial, regulatory or legislative body having proper jurisdiction, the remaining provisions shall not be affected.

**NON WAIVER**

Any waiver of any obligation or default under this franchise shall not be construed as a waiver of any future defaults, whether of like or different character.

**REPEAL CONFLICTING ORDINANCES**

This ordinance, when accepted by Grantee as provided below, shall constitute the entire agreement between the Grantor and the Grantee relating to this franchise and the same shall supersede all prior ordinances pertaining to this franchise agreement, and any terms and conditions of such prior ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed. Ordinance # 300-008 of the City of Hewitt Minnesota, is hereby repealed as of the effective date hereof.

**EFFECT AND INTERPRETATION OF ORDINANCE**

The captions which precede each section of this ordinance are for convenience in reference only and shall not be taken into consideration in the interpretation of any of the provisions of this ordinance.

**EFFECTIVE DATE AND ACCEPTANCE**

This Ordinance shall become effective and be a binding contract between the Grantor and Grantee, upon its final passage and approval by Grantor, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, and upon acceptance by Grantee by written instrument within sixty (60) days of passage by the governing body, and filed with the City Clerk of the City of Hewitt, Minnesota. The City Clerk shall sign and affix the community seal to acknowledge receipt of such acceptance, and return one copy to Grantee. If Grantee does not, within sixty (60) days following passage of this Ordinance express in writing its objections to any terms or provisions contained therein, or reject this ordinance in its entirety, Grantee shall be deemed to have accepted this ordinance and all of its terms and conditions.

Passed and approved by the City Council of the City of Hewitt, Minnesota, on this 9th day of February, 2016.

ATTEST:

Juanita Mitchell  
Mayor

Tara Greer  
City Clerk