

**STATE OF IOWA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
UTILITIES DIVISION**

BEFORE THE IOWA UTILITIES BOARD

IN RE:	
INTERSTATE POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY	DOCKET NO. RPU-2019-0001

INTERSTATE POWER AND LIGHT COMPANY REPLY TO THE CITY OF DECORAH AND LUTHER COLLEGE RESPONSES TO THE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Interstate Power and Light Company (IPL) submitted its comprehensive Customer Satisfaction and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (Plan) to the Iowa Utilities Board (Board) on April 6, 2020, in response to the Final Decision and Order in Docket No. RPU-2019-0001. IPL's Plan outlines and describes a series of ongoing and new actions to improve customer satisfaction and continue to strengthen its relationships with customers, communities and stakeholders. These include further understanding IPL customers' needs and expectations, improving the quality and timeliness of the service, new programs and choices for customers and communities, additional tools to provide timely, accurate information about IPL's services, current rates and future costs expectations and expanded efforts to communicate with the communities we proudly serve. The Plan also describes the specific metrics by which IPL will measure its success in improving customer satisfaction and strengthening our relationships with customers, communities and stakeholders.

IPL proudly serves nearly 700 communities across 83 counties, including the residents and businesses of the City of Decorah. On June 8, 2020, the City of Decorah City Council (Decorah City Council), and on June 24, 2020, Luther College filed responses to IPL's Plan, noting several items on which they seek additional information and Board action.¹ IPL files this reply to highlight examples of the solutions IPL is implementing and resources IPL is developing to serve our customers and communities. Additionally, IPL staff will continue to meet monthly with Board staff on our customer focused efforts as IPL remains committed to achieving the Plan goals. Throughout the remainder of this year and in coming years, IPL will continue to follow through on its customer-focused Plan to ensure improvements to customer satisfaction and community relationships. Accordingly, IPL does not believe further action by the Board is necessary.

I. Brief Summary of IPL's service in Decorah

For more than 100 years, IPL has served the residents and businesses of Decorah. Currently, IPL serves 3,020 residential customers, 632 commercial customers, 20 industrial customers and one municipal lighting customer in the City of Decorah with a local staff of 12, and a broader team of more than 1,900 employees across Iowa. IPL recognizes that each community has different energy-related needs and priorities. As such, IPL frequently engages and collaborates with Decorah's local leaders and local customers on customer-focused and collaborative solutions.

Over the past several years, IPL has been working on several customer-focused initiatives with the City of Decorah and Luther College. These efforts include but are not

¹ IPL notes that the response was filed on behalf of the Decorah City Council, on a Council vote of 5-2. Minutes of Decorah City Council, June 1, 2020 meeting, available at: <https://www.decorahia.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/June-1-2020-CM.pdf>

limited to: developing electric vehicle charging stations, supporting efforts for additional renewables at Luther College, an upcoming Decorah-based battery storage project, economic development assistance and other customer-focused efforts.

The Decorah City Council filing specifically mentions an interest in a proposal for a community solar project. IPL is currently working to develop new projects under the renewable tariffs recently approved by the Board. IPL will work with interested customers and communities in the process. IPL's local crew has been working with Luther College's electrician on the planning and installation of infrastructure upgrades to support additional solar and a new battery storage facility owned by Luther College on their campus. This project is scheduled to begin installations next week on July 2, 2020.

In addition, IPL has worked closely with many stakeholders, including the Decorah City Council and Decorah Parks and Recreation, to plan for an IPL-owned battery storage project, which is scheduled to be publicly announced in mid-July, 2020. This battery will be located on land leased by IPL within the southeast corner of the Vennehjem Park in Decorah.

IPL has worked with local leaders and customers to help with economic development and customer focused efforts. For example, in Decorah, IPL provided economic development grant funds to help recruit a new grocery store to locate in the community. And, during the COVID-19 pandemic, IPL proactively donated and personally delivered protective face shields to the local hospital and senior care facilities in Decorah. While these examples are not energy-specific, it highlights IPL's commitment in serving Decorah residents with customer focused efforts.

Since IPL filed its Plan on April 6, 2020, IPL employees have had more than thirty conversations, correspondence and participation in public meetings with the local leaders in Decorah. IPL has also proactively reached out to leadership at Luther College. We will continue to work with the local leaders, residents and businesses of all the communities IPL serves, including Decorah, to explore options for customer-focused and collaborative solutions.

II. IPL's Plan Includes New Community-Focused Actions and Resources to Ensure Timely, Accurate and Current Information about Rates is Publicly Available

The Decorah City Council's filing appears to express its concern that IPL's Plan reflects current operations and does not include new, customer and community-focused actions. IPL's Plan is comprehensive, so it does transparently outline IPL's ongoing customer-focused efforts, but the Plan also includes many new actions IPL will be taking to benefit our customers and communities and new resources IPL is providing to customers. Some relevant examples of IPL's new and expanded community-focused efforts include the following:

- IPL has produced and circulated the first quarterly e-newsletter for city staff and elected leaders and is preparing a second quarterly e-newsletter planned for circulation in early July.
- IPL is providing additional information about its current and anticipated rates in semi-annual webinars. These webinars will additionally focus on developing community-specific solutions and ensuring IPL supports community improvement efforts. IPL's first semi-annual webinar occurred on June 25, 2020 and local leaders in Decorah, among many other communities, participated in this webinar.

- IPL is launching a new webpage, planned for July 1, 2020, containing detailed information customers and community leaders can use to understand IPL's rates over time, and which communities considering municipalization may use to understand historical, and anticipated, changes in rates. To assist communities in evaluating IPL's rate over time, the new webpage will include ten years of historical information.
- IPL is continuing its ongoing series of Leadership Roundtables to connect our executive leadership, key account managers and local staff directly to community leaders around the state. These roundtables will provide direct engagement with our communities to understand individual community needs and develop customized solutions.

IPL's Plan is forward looking and describes in detail the new resources it is developing and IPL's increased commitment to providing timely, accurate and current information about energy rates. Notably, the resources described above will provide our customers and communities with clear, accurate information about historical rates, current rates, and IPL's current expectations regarding future energy rates.

The Decorah City Council and Luther College's filings discuss the 2018 vote in the City of Decorah regarding municipalization and IPL's recent rate review. IPL will work with the Decorah City Council and Luther College to improve its relationship with mutual trust and is committed to doing so. IPL has engaged the Decorah city leaders, Luther College leaders, Decorah based business and Decorah residents on several occasions and appreciates these opportunities to focus on our relationships moving forward.

The Decorah City Council specifically finds fault with the fact that IPL's Plan does not mention the City of Decorah by name and requests that the Board order IPL to modify its Plan. IPL does not believe the Board should require any modifications. IPL's Plan sets forth a forward-looking framework and new tools to provide additional information to the hundreds of thousands of customers (including customers in Decorah) and hundreds of communities (including Decorah) that IPL proudly serves. IPL and its employees work hard to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy to all customers. However, in the infrequent event that there are future local elections on municipalization, the additional rate information IPL will be providing through webinars, meetings, newsletters and on its website will help inform customers and communities.

IPL disagrees with the Decorah City Council and Luther College's proposals that the Board require approval of any "promotional" material and that the Board promulgate rules governing the local municipalization process. IPL respectfully urges the Board to take no action on these requests. The local election process is not within the Board's jurisdiction and a restriction on only IPL's ability to provide information to its customers is unreasonable. While the Board reviews petitions by municipal corporations to furnish electric service under Iowa Code § 476.23(1), this authority does not extend to the local election itself. IPL believes the additional rate information IPL will be providing, as detailed in IPL's Plan, will help proactively address these situations in the future.

III. IPL's Plan Includes Specific, Measurable Goals to Ensure Accountability

IPL understands the importance of accountability in improving customer satisfaction and meeting the needs of our customers and communities. To that end, IPL included within its Plan thirteen specific, actionable and measurable goals. While many

of IPL's goals are focused on improving customer satisfaction by reducing complaints, maintaining a strong average speed of answer and maintaining a high rate of first call resolution, several goals within the Plan are specifically focused on providing increased information to our customers and communities. IPL believes this increased information will be helpful to customers and communities in many contexts, including in the case of an infrequent vote regarding municipalization. Therefore, IPL proposed goals focused on providing additional information including:

Goal 7: In 2020, Alliant Energy will produce new methods to communicate with customers about the elements of an electric and a natural gas bill. These methods include, but are not restricted to a new video, articles in the company's monthly newsletter and mentions in webinars and Leadership Roundtables.

Goal 10: Alliant Energy's goal is to hold a minimum of eight Leadership Roundtable events with our communities annually.

Goal 11: Alliant Energy will hold semi-annual community webinars and semi-annual webinars specifically for commercial and industrial customers.

Goal 12: Alliant Energy will publish a quarterly e-newsletter for city staff and elected leaders.

Goal 13: Alliant Energy will create a webpage to provide updated publicly-available information regarding our current expectations for future costs. This webpage will be available by July 1, 2020.

IPL believes these goals remain appropriate and meet the requirements identified by the Board in its Final Decision and Order in Docket No. RPU-2019-0001. As noted previously, IPL is implementing solutions and developing resources towards the Plan goals and will continue to focus on the customer-focused goals outlined in the Plan.

WHEREFORE, IPL respectfully requests that the Board accept this additional information regarding IPL's implementation of its Customer Satisfaction and Stakeholder

Engagement Plan. IPL does not believe further action by the Board on this matter is necessary.

Dated this 26th day of June, 2020.

Respectfully Submitted,

**INTERSTATE POWER AND LIGHT
COMPANY**

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