BEFORE THE
ILLINOIS COMMERCE COMMISSION
BENCH MEETING
PUBLIC UTILITY

Wednesday, January 13, 2016
Chicago, Illinois

Met, pursuant to notice, at 10:30 A.M.,
at 160 North La Salle Street, Chicago, Illinois.

PRESENT:
BRIEN J. SHEAHAN, Chairman
ANN MCCABE, Commissioner
SHERINA E. MAYE EDWARDS, Commissioner
JOHN R. ROSALES, Commissioner

SULLIVAN REPORTING COMPANY, by
PATRICIA WESLEY
CSR NO. 084-002170
CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Good morning. Are we ready to proceed in Springfield?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MR. MATIRISCH Yes, we are.

CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, I call to order the January 13, 2016 Bench Meeting of the Illinois Commerce Commission.

Commissioners McCabe, Edwards and Rosales are present with me in Chicago. We have a quorum.

We have no requests to speak and will, therefore, move into our regular agenda.

We are going to begin by going out of order a little bit this morning. We are going to take a couple of items from our Public Utility Bench Session Agenda first and then we have some minutes to clean up at the end.

Our first item under the Public Utility Agenda is Nicor Gas' compliance report with the final Order in Docket No. 11-0046, and we have got a couple of representatives of the company here.

Just for the record, if you will state your name before you begin.
MR. EVANS: Andrew Evans from AGL Resources.

MR. WILLIAMS: Melvin Williams, Nicor Gas.

CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Thank you, and the floor is yours.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, and thank you, Commissioners, for having us today. This is the fourth time that the company has had an opportunity to come before you to talk about our progress related to the merger conditions, and I'm happy to tell you that we are fully compliant with the 34 conditions that were set forth in the merger agreement in 2011.

As you know, John Somerhalder retired as Chairman, President, and CEO of AGL Resources at the end of December. I assumed the role of President and CEO at the beginning of the year, and Jim Rubright, who's a long-time member of our board, assumed the role of Chairman of AGL Resources right at the first of the year.

While I have spent significant time in Illinois over the last four years in my prior role of CFO, this is the first time that I have had a
chance to come before the Commission.

Just to give you some sense of background, I've been in the utility business for about 25 years working for Southern Company for the first 10 of that, and I have been with AGL Resources for about 15.

My family has a long history in Illinois. I have a number of relatives who currently reside in DuPage County, but my parents grew up in Clarendon Hills in Hinsdale, met in Hinsdale High, so I have a significant obligation to serve appropriately in those communities or hear about it from my family.

As part of our leadership succession process generally, in last May we asked Beth Reese to come back to Atlanta to serve as Chief Financial Officer. That's a very important change for me personally and I know one that's personal to you as well.

Beth is a fantastic representative of the Illinois communities and we are real proud to have somebody so senior in leadership take such a
senior role in the corporation. She won't soon forget the commitments that she made up here, and I think that's been a very important transition for us.

With the changes in 2015 and likely the changes that will continue related to our announced acquisition or merger with Southern Company, I just want to assure you that we'll remain committed, very heavily committed to our customers and employees in Illinois and continue to support growth which is one of our primary tenets here.

The full details of our merger and compliance were provided in our December report to the ICC. Let me just add that after four years of operating in Illinois we believe that we will continue to operate successfully under the remaining conditions for many years to follow, and I don't think that you will see a material shift in the way we operate as it relates to the transactions.

Melvin will provide additional details on our key business activities for 2015, but I did want to highlight a few points relative to the
merger compliance activities and my perspective on
the industry generally.

Nicor Gas customers continue to
benefit from service that provides among the lowest
natural gas rates in Illinois. We have extended our
record of low rates through a combination of
effective operations, management and our ability to
leverage economies of scale across our corporate --
our seven utility footprint, our corporate
footprint, but our costs are never at the expense of
safety, and safety is always a top priority.

I spoke to the Chairman this morning
and let him know that our priorities are simply
safety for our employees and for our customers,
customer satisfaction, typically customer growth in
our customer base and investment in our
infrastructure so we can continue to provide strong
service over the next hundred years.

Specifically, the Commission's
approval of our investing in the Illinois
Infrastructure Program, a very important program to
us that was approved in 2015, has allowed Nicor Gas
to improve the safety and reliability of the gas
distribution system while spurring economic
development activity in the state.

We are bringing important jobs. We
are bringing businesses back toward communities that
we serve and we are very focused on investment in
the state.

Pipeline safety and modernization
continue to be of critical importance to us and to
our industry, and we appreciate the support that you
have given us around those programs in particular.

Nationally wellhead prices are at
historic lows. I'm sure you read about it daily, as
I do. Recent price trends primarily are driven by
the proliferation of shale gas production in a
number of producing regions, some contiguous to you
and some not.

While there will still be some price
volatility due to weather, intermittent pipeline
restraints, and other geopolitical events, analysts
forecast low prices for quite some time, a very
stark contrast to where we saw ourselves in 2008.
If you now look at where we stand, prices are considerably lower and should stay substantially low for a period of time. That's good for our customers and that's very good for our business.

Interstate transportation of natural gas is likewise evolving to meet new opportunities as the location for production changes relative to what it's been historically. We saw a lot of gulf coast production. We are now seeing a lot of mid-continent, high-continent production because of shale, and so we are working very hard to make sure that we balance that infrastructure appropriately.

AGL Resources continues to focus on opportunities to eliminate localized constraints and bring more reliable, stable and affordable production into our customers in Illinois through our growing footprint.

In that regard, the company looks forward to continuing to work in and with Illinois officials to extend our service and bring affordable fuel to as many homes as we possibly can.

Let me conclude my portion of the
presentation by emphasizing the positive impact of
low natural gas prices, very positive impact and
favorable opportunities provided to local
distribution companies that really have fostered a
recent flurry of merger and acquisition activity in
our industry.

Many industry analysts have long
predicted that this would occur. We have had a very
fragmented industry for a number of decades and it
was very logical that it would lead to some
consolidation of space, both gas consolidation and
gas/electric consolidation.

2015 saw this continuation occur at a
very brisk pace with companies like Exelon and
Pepco, Piedmont Natural Gas and Duke Energy
combining, just to name a few.

For AGL Resources, I think this kind
of activity makes a lot of sense in our business.
It will benefit our customers, our employees, and
our shareholders.

I don't specifically want to get ahead
of other pending regulatory filings; however, I do
expect that we will -- I know that we will maintain and further strengthen our company's commitment to supporting our Illinois constituents through the acquisition.

Again, thank you very much for your time. If there are any questions that I can answer for you, I'm happy to take them now or when Melvin concludes his remarks.

With that, let me turn it over to Melvin Williams.

MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you.

Good morning, Commissioners. I am pleased to be here today to share our annual update and talk to some of the business highlights for 2015 and into 2016.

I would like to start off with safety. Safety of our people, our pipeline, and the public is first and foremost our priority. In fact, we have added safety as our number one shared value this year across the enterprise further emphasizing the importance we place on safety in our organization.
We continue to work to establish a culture of safety and see the impact of our efforts in our performance matrix as overall personal safety incidents are down over last year.

An important part of our safety and reliability efforts include the modernization of our infrastructure, as Andrew alluded to. Investing in our infrastructure has been an ongoing part of our business. We made a commitment long ago to replace aging gas mains and services to ensure the safety and reliability of our system.

Historically we have replaced about 40 miles of main each year and we have been able to increase our efforts through our Qualified Infrastructure Program which we call Investing In Illinois.

In 2015 we replaced 145 miles of natural gas mains and 31,000 natural gas services. We are working closely with municipalities in our service territories as we make these upgrades and we will continue our collaborative approach with them in 2016.
Investing in Illinois and the corresponding legislation has been critical to ensure we can make the necessary upgrades to our system in a safe, yet, timely fashion, and we will continue our commitment to our customers.

We continue to look for opportunities to engage diverse businesses and developing and expanding partnership opportunities created by these investments. We remain committed to our business diversity and increasing the economic impact within the communities where we do business.

We are doing our part to create a healthy economy by participating in more than 30 economic development organizations throughout our service territory and continuing to look for opportunities to make it easier and more affordable to get natural gas into new areas of the state.

In terms of growth, we have added 10,000 new customers this year. We have been able to expand to several new communities, including Lake Carol and Fairdale.

Fairdale Community, as you may recall,
was a community that was hit by the tornado last year, and I want to thank you, Commissioners, for expediting the certification process for the town of Fairdale. We were able to serve them prior to this winter, so we sincerely appreciate your support.

Similar to the Lake Carol expansion, additional communities are reaching out to us for services. Our goal is that we can use an innovative economic development program that will allow us to extend facilities to these communities in a way that will benefit all customers.

Our customers continue to pay amongst the lowest natural gas costs in the State of Illinois, as Andrew mentioned. Prices are at historical lows. We are estimating a decrease of 30 percent in customers' heating bills this winter over last.

To-date, we have engaged more than 600,000 residential and business customers in our Energy Smart Program which is our energy efficiency program. We also continue to engage our customers in our Energy Assistance Program. Our commitment to
our customers and our communities is a part of our generosity of spirit which is another one of our shared values.

We are proud of our long legacy in the State of Illinois and we remain committed to the communities that we serve here.

We have contributed more than $2 million to more than 200 organizations this year, including organizations like the United Way Neighborhood Networks, but we're not just providing financial assistance. We are also providing our time and our talents giving approximately 2000 hours in volunteer hours within our communities.

Workforce development will continue to be a key priority for our business. We recognize the need to build and develop future generations and we are furthering our efforts to provide education and workforce development opportunities.

We are really proud of our efforts and the participations in various organizations throughout our community. We are focusing on developing our internal workforce as well. We want
to ensure we are tapping into the diverse skills, talents and experiences that exist across our organization.

We have introduced this year new Employee Resources Groups, or ERGs. These are groups that allow our employees to develop professionally and allow for their professional growth and opportunities through training, education and networking. We are very proud of our ERGs.

In summary, it's been a great year and we have been very pleased with our efforts around safety and reliability, growth and economic development, engagement with our customers, our communities and our employees.

We are proud of our long legacy of commitment to our customers and to the State of Illinois and we will continue to advance these efforts in the years to come.

Thank you for your time today. Andrew and I are available for questions if you have any.

CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Thank you.

Commissioner Edwards.
COMMISSIONER MAYE EDWARDS: I have one question.

It's a clarifying question.

Andrew, you mentioned -- you used the term I think twice of your relationship with other companies as a merger and then as an acquisition. Just as a former corporate attorney, I was curious to know what it was.

MR. EVANS: Sure. As a recovering accountant, I think there's different ways to describe what's occurring. We were acquired by Southern Company and will be accounted for as an acquisition.

COMMISSIONER MAYE EDWARDS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Any other questions?

(No response.)

Okay. Thank you for taking the time to come. We appreciate your presence.

MR. EVANS: Thank you for having me.

MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Mr. Williams, we have another report to hear from you as Chair of the Illinois Utilities Business Diversity Council.

By way of background, the Illinois
utilities Diversity Council is a forum for sharing best practices amongst Illinois utilities and focus on advancing the growth and utilization of diverse businesses in the State of Illinois.

The Council was chartered in June of 2015 by five founding members, Ameren, ComEd, Illinois American Water, Nicor and Peoples/North Shore. We look forward to hearing about your progress.

MR. WILLIAMS: Once again, good morning, Commissioners.

CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: I'm sorry. Before you begin, Commissioner Edwards has something to say.

COMMISSIONER MAYE EDWARDS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, on behalf of Commissioner del Valle's absence, I just want to say that he and I have worked really collaboratively over the last year or two, and I just want to focus on the diversity roundtable we held last year in February prior to your taking this role, but you really talk about the use of the Utilities Business
We talked about the goals that we are accomplishing, and even though we worked through a lot of other Councils that have been already formed around the nation, we wanted to ensure that this particular Council in Illinois would take the footprint of Illinois and would represent the five members that we had here.

It was really important to make sure that everybody is on the same page, that all of the utilities were just as excited as we were, that this was really an effort based on passion and not based on force.

So with that, I am excited to hear what you have to say. I know that even though the Council was launched in June and I know that a lot of that time between June and now was working to get together working on some of the governing documents, I just wanted to lay the foundation and say that we understand it's been six months perhaps a little less in actuality.

So we thank you for your time. We
thank you for your support on behalf of all of the
other CEOs and we welcome your comments.

MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Commissioner, and thank
you for your continued support of the Council.

Good morning, once again,
Commissioners. It's my pleasure, once again, to
speak to you today this time as the Chair of the
Board of Directors for the Illinois Utilities
Business Diversity Council, or the IUBDC.

Before we get started, I would like to
recognize my fellow board members: Anne
Pramaggiore, President and CEO of ComEd; Bruce Hauk,
President of Illinois American Water; Richard Mark,
President of Ameren Illinois; Charles Matthews,
President of Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas.

The IUBDC provides a structured forum
whereby utility leaders are working today to share
best practices, serve as a resource for our
stakeholders, and advance our economy by increasing
the utilization of diverse business partners within
our companies in the State of Illinois.

We are collectively committed to
connecting businesses with valuable contacts, to expand their awareness and access to the opportunities that exist within each of our organizations, providing training, advocacy, education to diverse businesses, giving them the tools and mentoring they need to succeed when doing business with us, and we are driving accountability within our respective organizations, working towards consistent and transparent reporting that will help us more effectively collaborate and measure the impact of our efforts.

Putting this vision into an actual plan has taken a significant effort and an unprecedented amount of partnership, engagement and coordination from our five utilities.

Our work up front to align our strategic goals, structure the Council and establishing a governance process has admittedly taken more time than initially anticipated, but these efforts have laid the foundation for a strong and sustainable future.

Since formally establishing and
announcing the Council in June, we have appointed six committees. I won't go into detail around the committees, but you do have a document in hand that will allow you to be able to review the structure.

The committees include members from different levels and departments of each of our utilities creating a developmental opportunity for employees and resulting in a diverse cross-functional team focused on driving actions and results.

We have made significant progress this year hosting our first two events, the Think Tank and Business Partnership Forum, on November 30th.

The first event created a forum for advocacy for stakeholders to engage in a discussion around the opportunities, challenges and best practices on issues of business diversity and inclusion within the State of Illinois.

The second event focused on matchmaking on several of our utilities' key diverse partners with upcoming infrastructure opportunities within each of our utilities.
Thank you to Commissioners McCabe, del Valle and Edwards for your attendance and participation in that event.

These events are great opportunities for us to learn from each other, establish best practices and recognize new opportunities for partnerships.

We have also created a website, believe it or not, in six months that will give the background and mission to provide helpful information as to contacts and events for diverse businesses, and at this point Meena is going to give us a preview of that website.

MS. BEYERS: Good morning. I am Meena Beyers from Nicor Gas and I am also the Chair of the Communication and Awareness Committee for the Illinois Utilities Business Diversity Council.

Melvin asked me to join him today to give you a very brief overview of the Council's website www.IUBDC.com, which was just recently launched. The website provides the Council's background and mission, as well as the vision to
provide any of our stakeholders the opportunities to understand why the Council was formed and what the Council hopes to achieve.

We have an overview of the leadership of the Council, as well as supplier diversity and business diversity contacts for each utility while the Council forums continue to grow and figure out how to centralize contacts for the Council among the utilities.

Under our Events tab we have a Calendar of Events that will be built over the course of the year, not only will it contain the Council's events but also supplier diversity events for each individual utility, as well as events that are held by our stakeholder for anyone that may be interested in attending, so you can see we have got a national conference here, as IUBDC will be looking at the other events held by our stakeholders locally in Illinois.

Under our Press Room tab we have a library of our press releases that are available. You can see the one from June and the one from
November listed there.

We also want to share some success stories of the Council. Currently we have two stories listed of companies that attended our November 30th Business Partnership Forum and how their business is able to grow a little bit based on that engagement that day.

Also, under the Press Room we hope to have a library of videos here. We currently have one video that introduces the leadership of the IUBDC. It has each leader just explaining what the Council is, how it was formed and what it hopes to achieve. We have another video underway that provides a recap of the November 30th event as well and the library will grow over time.

We also want to provide photo galleries here in the Press Room, as well as media contacts for anyone who wants to provide coverage for the Council.

Finally, under our Resources tab this area is going to continually grow as the Council achieves its mission and vision. We have got ways
for advocacy groups, as well as diverse businesses, to get engaged in the community, as well as quick links to the certifying bodies throughout the state, so any businesses that are interested in getting engaged and may not be certified yet can very easy find how they can do so.

Also, under our Business Resources tab we have got some key definitions of supplier diversity. So as we carry out the mission of the Council, our website will grow with it. Thank you.

MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Meena.

And then, as you can see, Commissioners, a lot of time and effort and a lot of talented individuals are really focused on executing around our mission and our vision for the IUBDC.

Meena is actually leading one of our committees and we are very, very appreciative of the efforts that's gone into specifically developing our website over the last few months. So thank you, Meena.

We are in the final stages of our strategic planning process for this year. We have
completed a swat analysis of our organizations and we have laid out a strategic plan, which was reviewed by the board this past week at our board meeting.

Our strategic plan identifies six strategic goals for the Council for 2016: First create an open, engaging and accountable environment that will promote contribution of each IUBDC member while enhancing business diversity initiatives amongst the participating companies --

COMMISSIONER ROSALES: I'm sorry. Do we have a copy of that?

MR. WILLIAMS: The plan?

COMMISSIONER ROSALES: What you are reading now.

MR. WILLIAMS: No, you do not have a copy of the plan. The plan is still in development. We will have the final launch in a couple of weeks and we will provide it, Commissioner Rosales.

COMMISSIONER ROSALES: Thank you.

MR. WILLIAMS: -- third develop and host stakeholder forums with specific focus on business diversity, education, training, matchmaking and
policy and other pertinent subject matter; fourth, sustain and enhance diverse business partnerships throughout the utilities, expand education, development and access provided to qualified diverse businesses; five, utilize tools and reporting processes that assess progress, challenges and the effectiveness of our organization; and, six, demonstrate continuous improvement across processes, programs and communication.

Our goal is to sanction this plan over the next several weeks and align the committees in our respect organizations behind the goals and objectives as outlined in our strategic plan.

One of the key objectives of 2016 will be to continue the momentum we have generated through additional forums and events leading into 2016.

Finally, I speak on behalf of the fellow board members when I say we are excited about the vision and the mission of the IUBDC. By working collectively, the member companies of the Council have added capacity to establish an accessible
network of industry leaders that will support the
continued growth and utilization of diverse
partners.

We remain committed to enhancing
our individual business diversity efforts, making a
greater impact in fueling our state's economy and
honoring the core values of each one of our
companies.

Thank you, and I'm available for
questions if you have them.

CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Thank you.

Commissioner McCabe.

COMMISSIONER McCabe: You mentioned consistent
transparent reporting. What are the plans on that
front in the coming year and the challenges to
achieving it?

MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Commissioner.

One of the -- the plan, first and
foremost, is to continue to align within the five
organizations our ability to be able to understand
the information that each of our respective
companies are reporting.
As you might imagine when you are bringing together five organizations, each of those organizations having different processes, different systems, different means by which they're gathering, as well as reporting the information, it is quite an undertaking bringing five organizations together and trying to get into a single path around how we will be reporting, and that's going to be one of the focuses, particularly of one of our committees to ensure, and it's going to take time, particularly as a result of ensuring that that information that is being gathered within each of our respective utilities is being gathered in a consistent manner at each one of those utilities and then feeding into a central process that will allow us to gain consistency over time.

CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Any other questions?

COMMISSIONER ROSALES: Sure.

CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Commissioner Rosales.

COMMISSIONER ROSALES: Two questions that I have and I'm looking for the answers to, so that when I ask you about the recommendations that we were
reading, I'm looking for goals that you have set in terms of increasing the number of diverse suppliers within Illinois utilities.

The second question is what I'm looking for is what is the timeline on achieving these goals? So I know you put this together, but that's what I'm looking for is some concrete tangible results.

MR. WILLIAMS: Right. And we don't have specific goals related to increasing a certain number of diverse business partners, Commissioners.

Our goal is to ensure that we are availing ourselves among each of the utilities to ensure that we are, first and foremost, sharing our best practices, that we are sharing the opportunities within our respective companies in terms of the existing diverse business partners that we have today, and, to the extent that we can utilize leverage or allow those partners to be able to support our respective organizations, that's primarily our focus.

Our goal is also -- to your point
around how do we engage more diverse businesses into this overall process is going to be through advocacy, it's going to be through all the things that we have done last year, as well as what we are doing in terms of our strategic plan, how we connect with advocacy agencies within that state, meaning leveraging organizations like IPOs, leveraging organizations like the Illinois Black Chamber, leveraging organizations like the Illinois Hispanic Chamber, being able to create an environment that gives those diverse partners access to the Council but more specifically access to each one of our organizations.

Over time we will have specific measurements. We will have specific goals, but it's going to take us time in order to be able to ensure that we are aligned around our commitments, specifically related to our vision and mission of the organization, and I can't give you a specific timeline in terms of when we will get to that point but I assure you that as a part of 2016 and our strategic plan we are moving in that direction.
COMMISSIONER ROSALES: Okay. I appreciate that the IUBDC is moving forward. I'm really looking to some tangible results.

MR. WILLIAMS: I think you will find -- in fact, we will be reporting in about two months, and Commissioner, I am very confident that you will find that we have had measurable results both individually and collectively as a part of that reporting.

COMMISSIONER ROSALES: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER MAYE EDWARDS: I did have a couple of questions, Mr. Chairman.

Generally are the meetings open to the public or are they not?

MR. WILLIAMS: The board meetings? The board meetings are not open to the public right now. We will create forums that we will allow advocacy groups, as well as the general public, to be able to come in and create dialogue with the Council.

COMMISSIONER MAYE EDWARDS: Okay. With that, so what's the primary method of communication between the Council and the vendors, so to speak?
MR. WILLIAMS: So the primary focus has been, and this is the part of our strategic planning, Commissioners, a couple of things that we are planning to do, one is to, as I said a moment ago, create the opportunity to bring advocacy groups into specific forums so that we can create the dialogue around the mission and the vision; secondly, developing a website and other communications. We have a communications group that will be directly focused on that level of engagement with our external stakeholders and that continues to evolve, but that will be a key aspect of our strategic plan for 2016.

COMMISSIONER MAYE EDWARDS: Just a recommendation and merely a recommendation. I know you are Chairman of the Communication and Awareness Committee.

Have you all considered perhaps bringing in maybe a vendor as someone on a consulting basis just to, you know, see their perspective from your shoes? And, obviously, everyone on this Council and everyone on the
committees are members of the utilities. I actually love how the committees made up and I love how every utility is represented, but you guys are seeing it from one lens.

Have you thought about bringing somebody in from the vendor side to give their perspective, maybe what would work for them, what works maybe for some other programming and somebody on collaborative implementation?

MR. WILLIAMS: I will allow Meena the opportunity to discuss the communication.

MS. BEYERS: Thank you. Thank you, Commissioners. At one point we, as Melvin mentioned, as part of the strategic planning process, wanted to emphasize what each committee needed to do is to develop a preliminary budget.

As a part of the preliminary budget for the Communications Committee, we requested some funding for consulting services so we can do just that, not only be able to apply funds towards different communication methods but to bring in some consulting services to figure out what is the
best way to communicate as well as the frequency, because we know all these groups are very busy in the private marketplace.

COMMISSIONER MAYE EDWARDS: I want to be clear. I was not suggesting that you retain a consultant, but perhaps you could get a vendor to join a committee, you know, just to get their perspective.

I do understand that a vendor can be a consultant, but you understand what I mean, more so let's say a Loretta Rosenmayer or, you know, somebody to give their perspective to see what it's like to be in the shoes of the vendor, just some idea.

MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you for the suggestion, and the other thing that we will ensure that happens is we are going to be meeting leverage, external partners on a number of different fronts, and one of the things that we will also ensure is that there are diverse partners that are supporting the organization as well.

COMMISSIONER MAYE EDWARDS: Okay. Thank you. And then on the same front as my last
question how is the IUBDC funded? You probably
mentioned that in your report.

MR. WILLIAMS: We are self-funded. Each of the
organizations have made a financial commitment to
collectively fund to provide the support for our
budget for 2016.

COMMISSIONER MAYE EDWARDS: Okay. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER ROSALES: One more questions.

CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Commissioner Rosales.

COMMISSIONER ROSALES: Let me start off by saying
presently you spoke about developing best practices
within the State of Illinois.

What are your thoughts about best
practices outside of the State of Illinois? Some
other states seem to do a better job than we have in
the past in terms of disparity and lack of diversity
around suppliers.

MR. WILLIAMS: Yes, we have. In fact, we have
Jim Lowry who, as many of you know, spoke before the
Commission last year or the year prior. Jim is an
important resource for the Council in order to be
able to gauge what other organizations are doing
around the country and around the nation, and so we are relying on Jim as a critical part of our strategic planning process to be able to bring that type of information back to the Council.

CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Any other questions?

(No response.)

Mr. Williams, thank you for being here. We appreciate all your hard work.

MR. WILLIAMS: Thank you, Commissioners.

CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: We will move back into our Public Utility agenda briefly to approve the Minutes of our December 16, 2015 Bench Session.

Is there a motion to approve the edits.

COMMISSIONER McCABE: So move.

CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Is there a second?

COMMISSIONER ROSALES: Second.

CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: All those in favor say aye.

(Chorus of ayes.)

Opposed say nay.

(No response.)

The Minutes of December 16th are
approved.

We have no further items to discuss under the Public Utility Bench Session.

Judge Kimbrel, do we have any other items today?

JUDGE KIMBREL: Mr. Chairman, I see we have a FERC matter.

CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: We had that as a place holder. We did not have an update today, but we will at our next meeting.

JUDGE KIMBREL: Okay. There is nothing further.

CHAIRMAN SHEAHAN: Commissioners, do we have any new business?

(No response.)

Hearing none, we stand adjourned.

Thank you.

(Whereupon, the above matter was adjourned.)