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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City of Bryan Approves Coal Plant Decommissioning Plan

Bryan, TX- Last night, the City Council of Bryan unanimously approved a decommissioning budget to help pay for the retirement costs of the Gibbons Creek Generation Station, a 470 MW coal plant located about 20 miles east of Bryan.

The city and its utility had previously approved the creation of a \$19 million decommissioning fund for the eventual retirement and clean-up of the plant. However the most recent decision by the owners of the plant -- the City of Bryan, Denton, Garland and Greenville which collectively make up the Texas Municipal Power Agency (TMPA) -- to permanently retire the plant by October 23rd, 2019, set in motion today's approval for an expanded budget for fiscal year 2020. The plant is currently mothballed.

Under the TMPA's decommissioning plan brought by Bryan Texas Utilities (BTU) to city council, the City of Bryan will set aside its 21.7 percent share of some \$12.9 million dollars to pay off the costs of closure and partial clean-up of the site in fiscal year 2020. The \$12.9 million budget was a significant increase from a previously approved amount of some \$4.04 million. BTU officials told the Mayor and City Council that the total cost for all four cities to permanently close and clean up the plant would probably exceed \$80 million, with the City of Bryan responsible for roughly \$19 million.

Among the factors that led to the increase in decommissioning costs for 2020 include the permanent retirement status; the need to remove from the unit coal combustion waste products and various chemicals and fluids; regulatory requirements associated with the Coal Combustion Residuals regulations, which currently require TMPA to cease using its ash ponds for disposal of landfill leachate after October 1, 2020; the need to amend its wastewater discharge permit to accommodate an alternate method for disposing of leachate; the need to design and construct a leachate treatment system; and the need to develop detailed decommissioning, decontamination, demolition, and remediation studies and plans.

In response to the city's decision to retire the coal plant, and help pay for closure costs, **Cyrus Reed, interim director of the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club** who attended the meeting, told the city council in person that they had made the right move.

“For more than 30 years, the Gibbons Creek Generation Station, served the citizens of several municipalities in Texas with electricity, but its time has passed,” noted Reed. “With the need to move away from fossil fuels, and the associated global warming emissions, large water use, and nitrogen oxide and other air emissions, not to mention leaching of coal ash, the City of Bryan and BTU should be praised for making the right decision to permanently close the coal plant and clean up its pollution. Fortunately, BTU has been able to sign a large solar contract that will largely replace the electricity it was getting from the coal plant in previous years, and help its residents and the Texas A&M campus be powered with cheap solar energy.”

Recently, BTU signed a long-term solar contract that will provide 100 MWs of capacity of solar power to the area beginning in 2022, as well as another 50 MWs of capacity to the **Texas A&M University** campus, which has a wholesale energy contract with BTU. The plant, known as Samson, will be located in northeast Texas in Lamar County.

Local resident and **Sierra Club clean energy volunteer Sue Batchelor** also welcomed the decision: "I'm very pleased that Bryan and its partner cities are closing down the coal plant, and that in a couple of years our BTU energy will include solar, a much cleaner source."

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