

Selected Summary of PMLD Commissioner Meetings
July 17 and August 14, 2019
Submitted to EAC by Philip Gott

Topics of relevance to EAC

MMWEC control of Princeton wind turbines

To increase operating time, PMLD explored and has put in place MMWEC control of the Princeton turbines. The advantage of this is that with MMWEC running the turbines, they operate 24 hours per day, every day when conditions are correct for power production. When PMLD operated the turbines, they were under control only during office hours. While they were left “on” when the office closed, if conditions changed, they would automatically shut down. Now, they are monitored and controlled 24 hours per day. Higher total operating hours have been experienced, but it is too soon to establish a before and after comparison.

Impact of Unionization of PMLD linemen.

Under union (IBEW 3) work rules, linemen do not work on wind turbines. Maintenance and repair of the turbines will need to be contracted out. Brian Allen is preparing for this and exploring collaborative maintenance contracts with Templeton and other wind turbine operators. Note that before MWEC took over the turbines, they generated \$150-\$200k per year in revenue. Now that MMWEC is operating them, revenue generation is expected to be higher, which should help to offset the cost of a maintenance contract.

The “Use” of Princeton Wind Power for Princeton

On average, the Princeton wind turbines produce about 25% to 40% of the total power demand of the town. At times of low demand, the turbines can produce more power than Princeton needs.

As we know, 100% the wind power is now sold to Sterling, Boylston and the open or “spot” market. What most folks don’t realize is that the “electrons” (actually, the energy) produced by the turbines is used first by the town of Princeton. Only the excess goes out of town. Thus the “sale” of the wind turbine power by PMLD to other towns is purely an accounting and billing arrangement rather than the actual transfer of electrons. It therefore appears to MCAN and others that Princeton does not actually use the power generated by Princeton’s own turbines when in fact this is not the case.

PMLD wants to correct this mistaken impression and give its rate payers the comfort of knowing that a significant portion of their power does indeed come from the wind turbines. As previously discussed, direct sale of the wind power to PMLD rate payers is not possible due to contractual limitations with Nextera (our power provider), the lack of energy storage capacity and regulatory constraints. Therefore, discussions are ongoing with MMWEC (there were two MMWEC

representatives at the 8/14 meeting) about buying some or all of the wind power and selling it back to PMLD. Note MMWEC is a non-profit organization and is therefore a qualified customer for PMLD.

MCAN Scorecard Improvement

Commissioners have expressed concern in prior meetings as well as on 8/14 that PMLD does not get full credit for being as green as it is. MMWEC was asked to review the score and the scoring system and make recommendations as to how PMLD's score could be improved. Various suggestions were made including:

1. Buy cleaner energy
2. Retire the RECS from PMLD wind turbines (would not change anything physically but would enable PMLD to get credit for producing clean power). Cost would be roughly \$52,000/yr.
3. **Develop a Town Climate Action Plan that includes PMLD (I volunteered that this is in the EAP we recently submitted)**
4. Improve communications to rate payers about the sources of power PMLD uses.
5. Add energy storage capability to capture excess wind and solar (from private homes) power.

Note that I observed that none of these steps other than the first will make any difference in the actual environmental footprint of PMLD. It is just "window dressing."

MLP-Related Legislation

Recalling the prior discussion between Rick Rhys and Brian Allen about the MCAN support of legislation that would "hold the feet MLPs to the fire" for reaching State carbon reduction goals, Rick wants to send a letter to MCAN withdrawing the support of the legislation by PMLD pledged by Brian Allen earlier this year. Reasons for this are that Rick believes the legislation is flawed in that it gives some breaks to MLPs in terms of what the legislation defines as low or zero carbon sources. I offered that the "breaks" are likely in recognition of the more limited resources of MLPs when compared to IOUs (Investor owned utilities). The board voted 2-1 to send a letter withdrawing support, and stating reasons why.

HELPS Program upgrade

PMLD is kicking in another \$5000 to support the HELPS program. This is to assist PMLD rate payers in taking advantage of a Mitsubishi rebate program of \$650 per heat pump unit. This rebate is in effect from now until year's end.

Interest in Solar

Two rate payers inquired about the DOER solar program. Both explored it and decided NOT to install solar panels. One found it financially unattractive because the installation would first require them to install a new roof. The reason for the other declining is not known.

DISCLAIMER;

These notes have not been reviewed by any other attendee. Any differences between these notes and the actual minutes of PMLD are unintentional and my mistake. In the event of discrepancies, the actual minutes should be referenced and considered accurate.