

PRINCETON MUNICIPAL LIGHT DEPARTMENT
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BOARD OF LIGHT COMMISSIONERS

JANUARY 11, 2017

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 PM.

Present were: Commissioner/Chairman, Jim Whitman, Commissioner, Chris Conway, Commissioner Tim Cochrell and PMLD General Manager, Brian Allen.

Agenda:

Chairman Whitman made a motion to amend the January 11, 2017 agenda to move the 2017 HELPS program agenda item before the PMLD Financials. Commissioner Conway seconded the motion. They all were in favor (3-0).

Meeting Minutes:

- The Board voted unanimously in favor (3-0) to approve the December 14, 2016 regular meeting minutes as amended. The minutes will be amended to replace the words road scrapings with asphalt millings.

New Business:

- **2017 HELPS Program Update** – Ms. Trudeau presented the Board with the 2017 HELPS energy audits, appliance rebates, cool homes program and energy efficiency program detail. The information will be posted on the www.pmlld.com website and hardcopies will be available at the office. New in 2017 is a \$50 rebate for wi-fi smart thermostats. The submission process was automated last year and customers submit information online to the third-party company for a quicker turn-around. The free in-home energy audit provides residents with a list of home improvements like insulation that will help reduce energy costs that they can implement; some of those improvements are eligible for rebates through the energy efficiency program or the cool homes program. Energy audits and all rebates are paid through PMLD once confirmations/approvals from the auditing and processing companies are confirmed through MMWEC. As of Q3 of 2016 PMLD spent \$2,800 for HELPS; in 2015 a total of \$4,800 was spent.

PMLD Financials:

- **Bank Balances** - The Board reviewed the bank balances report dated January 11, 2017 (a copy will be placed on file). The Citizen's Bank Operating account has a balance of \$79K, the Depreciation account has a total balance of \$889K (\$45K is earmarked for OPEB), the MMDT Rate Stabilization account has a balance of \$808K, the MMDT OPEB Account has a balance of \$45K, the Unibank Operating account has a balance of \$21K, the Meter Deposit account has a balance of \$34K. \$30K has been deposited into depreciation thus far in 2017.
- **2016 Year-to-Date Working Budget Review** – The Board reviewed the 2016 working budget analysis spreadsheet dated 01/11/2017 (a copy will be placed on file). Mr. Allen explained that revenues and

expenses are just about all in at this point. The Board acknowledged that the year-to-date actuals were within \$3K of the proposed. A final copy of the budget detail will be provided at the February meeting.

- **2017 Proposed Budget Plan Discussion** – The Board reviewed the 2017 working budget analysis spreadsheet dated 01/11/2017 (a copy will be placed on file). The spreadsheet categorizes all the proposed figures for expenses and revenue line items that were reviewed and approved at the December 2016 meeting. The Board acknowledged that the depreciation funds amount noted on the spreadsheet which will be used to track the activity for the \$347K earmarked for 2017. Mr. Allen confirmed that the 2017 proposed revenue figure (\$3.9M) is lower than the 2016 actual figure (\$4.2M). Mr. Allen and the Board discussed the trend of kilowatt sales to customers declining (PMLD sold 320,000 kilowatts less in 2016 compared to 2015); and, anticipated lower/less wind energy sales because most of our wind energy sales is subject to market pricing. The Board acknowledged that LED lighting is more affordable and available today and is likely a contributing factor. Mr. Allen also shared that managers in other municipal utilities have confirmed seeing the same declines because of access to other sources of energy and higher focus on conservation. The Board acknowledged that wind energy sales revenue did not meet expectations in 2016. There was no significant residential or commercial customer growth in 2016.

New Business:

- **Public Records Access Officer Appointment** – The Board acknowledged the new state requirement to appoint a Public Records Access Officer. Chairman Whitman made a motion to appoint Brian Allen as the PMLD Public Records Access Officer as required by the MA Division of Public Record and outlined in the guide of the MA Public Records Law. Commissioner Conway seconded the motion. They all were in favor (3-0).
- **PMLD Name Change** – Mr. Allen shared the idea to change the name of the department. The Board acknowledged the past confusion with the PBMLP and the recent challenge by some members of the SelectBoard and Advisory Committee to oversee and change policy for the department. Mr. Allen explained his position that this department needs to be run like a company and the Board of Light Commissioners is the only elected governing body for the light department as defined in MA general laws, c.164. The Board discussed all the moving parts that would need to be considered like contractual agreements, website, logo, domain & email addresses, signage, letterhead, business cards, clothing, etc. The Board acknowledged that other municipalities have the description company and power in their name/logo. Light Plant is another description used by others like Sterling and West Boylston. The Board looked at a suggested list of new names for the department. The Commissioners agreed to consider the idea and asked Mr. Allen to solicit input from employees. The Board agreed to discuss the topic at their next meeting.

Unfinished Business:

- **LED Street Light Conversion Project** – Mr. Allen confirmed that a meeting is scheduled for January 18th, which Christine Trudeau will attend on behalf of the department to receive details on the DOER's timeline and MMWEC's action plan.

At 4:45 PM the Board voted unanimously in favor (3-0) to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Trudeau

Recording Secretary