

PRINCETON MUNICIPAL LIGHT DEPARTMENT
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BOARD OF LIGHT COMMISSIONERS

JUNE 14, 2017

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM.

Present were: Commissioner/Chairman, Jim Whitman, Commissioner, Chris Conway, Commissioner Rick Rys and PMLD General Manager, Brian Allen. Also present were 8 residents and the Landmark Reporter, Phyllis Booth.

Agenda:

The Board voted unanimously in favor (3-0) to approve the June 14, 2017 agenda as presented.

Meeting Minutes:

- The Board voted unanimously in favor (3-0) to approve the May 10, 2017 regular meeting minutes as presented.

PMLD Financials:

- **Bank Balances** - The Board reviewed the bank balances report dated June 14, 2017 (a copy will be placed on file). The Citizen's Bank Operating account has a balance of \$182K, the Depreciation account has a total balance of \$823K, the MMDT Rate Stabilization account has a balance of \$812K, the Unibank Operating account has a balance of \$23K, the Meter Deposit account has a balance of \$35K. As of June 14, 2017, PMLD has \$5K listed for accounts payable and is waiting for \$201K in electric customer account receivables.
- **2017 Year-to-Date Operating Budget Review** – The Board reviewed the 2017 working budget analysis spreadsheet dated 06/13/2017 (a copy will be placed on file). The target measure for revenue and expenses through February is 33.36%. Revenues are currently at 36.84% and expenses are at 31.16%. Mr. Allen confirmed that Truck & Transportation is high because the pick-up truck purchase was realized in April. The Board acknowledged that overall expenses are 2% lower than anticipated and revenues are 3% higher than anticipated. Mr. Allen explained how the ISO handles the wind energy sales and the guaranteed PASNY energy. Commissioner Whitman explained that PMLD was part of the Niagara/Mohawk build and PMLD gets on average 130,000 kilowatt hours per month at an average cost of \$0.02 presently, which is approximately 1% of what our demand is

on a monthly basis. Everyone agreed this is still a very good deal and unfortunately, no more can be purchased.

New Business:

- ***Public Relations Campaign Discussion*** – Chairman Whitman shared the details of a meeting he, Mr. Allen and PMLD staff had with the marketing firm, JC Marketing Associates, Inc. from Wakefield MA who came highly recommended by other municipal light departments (Georgetown, Reading, Belmont, Peabody). A copy of the May 5th letter from JC Marketing with their recommendation for services, costs and scope of work proposal (a copy will be placed on file) was received by the Board. Chairman Whitman explained his desire to remind residents about the value of having its own municipal light department. Mr. Allen shared his confidence that JC Marketing could be helpful to PMLD. JC Marketing could help with a number of things like a newsletter, a Facebook page to be used as a bulletin board to post accident reports associated with power outages, pictures, customer updates, news and information. Promotional/useful items can be purchased through JC Marketing to give away at the Thomas Prince School Electrical Safety program that is sponsored by PMLD twice a year (September and June), the Farmer's Market, during Public Power Week, and other community events. The Board acknowledged that the bucket truck was on display at the June 4th Farmer's Market and was well received. Mr. Allen confirmed that he is scheduled to teach how electricity is generated and distributed to 5th graders at Thomas Prince School in October. Participation in the Memorial Day parade, future Farmer's Markets and hosting a senior luncheon were discussed. The Board acknowledged that PMLD has had the tasks for many years now of hanging/purchasing the Flags and Holiday Decorations for the Town and will continue with those efforts going forward. The quote from JC Marketing provided an all-inclusive marketing plan and a la-carte marketing support. The Board acknowledged their desire not to spend a lot of money on this and need to determine what is a reasonable amount of money to allow PMLD to spend to make a number of positive impacts within the community. They would like to get involved in community events that would have the most impact for minimal cost. Mr. Allen shared the support of his staff and himself to implement ideas the Board decides to move forward on. More information about the wind turbines regarding monthly production, operational updates and information was suggested to be included on the website; as well as windfarm tours. Chairman Whitman shared his ongoing efforts to partner with the Ecotarium in the sharing of and display of Princeton's Windfarm information at their facility and on their website. The idea is still being worked on, but Chairman Whitman feels this partnership will happen. The Board listened to comments/suggestions for public relations ideas from the residents who were present at the meeting and they included better promotion of the windfarm facility and its operation, a 5-year recap of PMLD then and now to share financial successes, concerns that folks just don't read letters or updates anymore and the need to bring the information to them in more creative/impactful ways, limit/avoid spending money and ask for volunteers in town who could help with marketing. The Board agreed to consider all the information and make a decision at the next meeting (July 12th).
- ***Board of Light Commissioners Meeting Time Change*** – The Board supported Chairman Whitman's request to move future board meetings to a start time of 7:00 PM to encourage public attendance and participation.

- ***Distributed Generation Policy Discussion*** – Chairman Whitman explained the importance to review the distributed generation policy now that battery storage technology is advancing. The Board agreed that a comprehensive distributed generation policy acknowledging battery storage should be defined better within the policy. Chairman Whitman discussed some of the specifics of the existing policy that was put in place back in June 2008 and revised in June 2014. PMLD has a 10 KW limit on the size of a residential installation and discussed how battery storage could be added if the policy had specific install/use requirements defined within the policy to meet that 10 KW requirement. The Board acknowledged the contractual agreement between Nextera and PMLD for the purchase of energy. Nextera will provide the Board with an official letter detailing the available capacity PMLD could reduce their energy purchase by, thus enabling interconnected generation (solar) customers to consume less because of their utilization of battery storage energy. The latest battery storage technology, retrofitting to existing solar installations, cost, affordability and likelihood to act upon the idea were discussed openly with the Board members and public. Frank Patrone, Tom Harmon, David Pratt & John Kowaleski, provided comments for the Board to consider. Chairman Whitman didn't think that adding a battery storage would void the existing solar energy generation customers purchase power agreements. The Board acknowledged that this is the start of the discussion and agreed to continue the discussion until a policy change is crafted and voted on.
- ***Solar Generation Facility Visit at the Sterling Light Department*** – The Commissioners and Brian Allen visited Sterling Light in May and their General Manager, Sean Hamilton gave them a private tour and answered questions. Commissioner Rys would like to share a report about the visit.
- ***Wind Energy Sales to the Ecotarium*** – Chairman Whitman announced that the Ecotarium has agreed to purchase wind energy from PMLD and that the purchase power agreement is currently being negotiated. Everyone was pleased with the update.

Unfinished Business:

- ***Police Department / PMLD Protocol for Emergencies*** – Mr. Allen will follow-up with Chief Powers on a date to train her first on the process to access the non-electrical switch to turn off power to the town in the event of an emergency. Mr. Allen explained that Chief Powers will then make the determination if this is something her Police Officers could do as first responders when there is a life-threatening emergency involving a car accident and power lines.
- ***Energy Action Committee*** – Mr. Allen and Commissioner Whitman acknowledged that there has been no contact from the Committee members. Claire Golding was present and stated that the committee has not yet been appointed by the Board of Selectmen, but the hope is within the next month or so.

Public Comments:

The Board fielded questions from the public throughout the evening and provided answers and information as appropriate. Comments and statements specific to agenda topics were included in the topic summaries above.

At 5:35 PM the Board voted unanimously in favor (3-0) to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine Trudeau
Recording Secretary