

PRINCETON MUNICIPAL LIGHT DEPARTMENT
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BOARD OF LIGHT COMMISSIONERS

AUGUST 16, 2017

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

Present were: Commissioner/Chairman, Jim Whitman, Commissioner, Chris Conway, Commissioner Rick Rys and PMLD General Manager, Brian Allen. Also present was residents Claire Golding and David Pratt.

Agenda:

The Board voted unanimously in favor (3-0) to approve the August 16, 2017 agenda as presented.

Meeting Minutes:

The Board voted unanimously in favor (3-0) to approve the July 12, 2017 regular meeting minutes as presented.

PMLD Financials:

- **Bank Balances** - The Board reviewed the bank balances report dated August 16, 2017 (a copy will be placed on file). The Citizen's Bank Operating account has a balance of \$278K, the Depreciation account has a total balance of \$806K, the MMDT Rate Stabilization account has a balance of \$814K, the Unibank Operating account has a balance of \$4K, the Meter Deposit account has a balance of \$36K. As of July 12, 2017, PMLD has \$114K listed for accounts payable and is waiting for \$212K in electric customer account receivables. Chairman Whitman shared his gratitude for the hard work to reestablish healthy bank account balances and reminded everyone that many had \$0 and very low balances just 6 years ago.
- **2017 Year-to-Date Operating Budget Review** – The Board reviewed the 2017 working budget analysis spreadsheet dated 08/15/2017 (a copy will be placed on file). The target measure for revenue and expenses through February is 50%. Revenues are currently at 55.01% and expenses are at 47.60%. Chairman Whitman asked that a detailed version of the budget report be provided and reviewed at the next Board meeting to help Mr. Rys understand the accounting process/coding and detailed activity associated with each expense and revenue category.

Other General Manager Updates:

- ***Tree Trimming Invitation for Bid (IFB)*** – Mr. Allen provided an update on the annual tree trimming IFB that PMLD advertised with the MA Registry starting August 1st. Bids are due by September 1st. Chairman Whitman commended the tree trimming companies who have worked for PMLD in the past and conveyed his desire to see the same level of professionalism from the company that is awarded the bid this year. Mr. Allen explained the requirements of the bid package and the list of streets to be trimmed this year (Beaman Rd, East Princeton Rd, Hobbs Rd, Leominster Rd, North County Rd, Willson Rd, Coal Kiln Rd, Esty Rd, Forslund Rd, Gleason Rd, Gregory Hill Rd, Town Farm Rd, Whittaker Ln & Bigelow Rd). Mr. Allen confirmed that there is no formal notification to residents prior to trimming. PMLD has budgeted \$120K for the project and if bids come in above that budget target PMLD can peel off roads from the project if needed. Mr. Allen reminded the Board that most of the major tree trimming in town is complete and that the majority of tree trimming is routine maintenance. PMLD's line crew is currently doing the tree trimming maintenance on Mountain Rd. Mr. Allen reminded everyone that tree trimming follows the National Electric Safety Code and contractors and crews follow PMLD's Vegetation Management Plan to insure consistency and best practices. Site work review is also done weekly. Chairman Whitman shared that 15 years ago PMLD line losses were at approximately 16%-18% and was attributed mostly to energy lost when electric wires come in to contact with trees; now PMLD is right around 6% which points to the success of the vegetation management plan, despite the fact the PMLD is still 50% delta wired in town. PMLD's annual distribution line losses can be found in the annual Department of Public Utilities (DPU) report. Large trees/limbs are left on the side of the road for approximately 7 days for public consumption; anything small is chipped and hauled away. PMLD will return and remove any left-over debris.
- ***Police Department / PMLD Protocol for Emergencies*** – Mr. Allen met with Chief Powers and she agreed that training to access the town line electrical switch in the event of an emergency would be useful and appropriate. The senior emergency manager on scene will make the call to cut power sending a trained police officer to take action and then notify PMLD. PMLD will then reengage the switch once the emergency/accident scene is safe and the distribution lines are repaired.

Other Business:

- ***July's Council on Aging (COA) Senior Ice Cream Social Update*** – Mr. Allen said that the ice cream social was well received by the 25 attendees. Seniors stayed for about 2 hours and ate ice cream while Mr. Allen, the Board members and PMLD staff hosted the event. Mr. Allen gave a presentation on "What To Do in the Event of a Power Outage" and everyone left with power outage reference material, a magnet and a flashlight.
- ***Upcoming Public Relations/Community Events*** – PMLD is hosting a COA luncheon with a "Energy Conservation" theme on September 19th at PMLD and Brian Sewell & Mike Plassk representatives from MMWEC will speak about the HELPS program. PMLD staff will man a booth at the September 30th Princetonfest at Krashes Fields. PMLD will set up the bucket truck, digger derek, possibly the Nissan LEAF electric car and a tent for visitors to interact with. Mr. Allen will present a lesson on "Distribution of Electricity" to 5th graders at Thomas Prince School on October 16th. The Board discussed a possible open house at PMLD in the fall. The Board agreed with the idea to provide 4 energy credit vouchers as a blind draw for those who attend the September 19th luncheon.

Mr. Allen granted permission to the COA Director to use PMLD's front lawn for their annual COA barbeque event on September 6th.

- ***Mansfield Municipal Electric Department Inquiry*** – Commissioner Rys shared his recent conversations with Mansfield's Director, Joe Sollecito. Mansfield has put a moratorium on solar net metering to do a powerline capacity study. Mansfield is not interested in purchasing wind energy from PMLD.
- ***MA DOER & CEC Grant*** – Commissioner Rys shared his knowledge of the grant with a deadline of September 15th and that he felt PMLD was eligible to apply, but it would require quick action to assign personnel to the task and write the grant. Discussion included upfront costs and the newly appointed Energy Action Committee's (EAC) involvement. Claire Golding stated that her committee hasn't met officially and that their first meeting is scheduled for September 6th. Suggestions were made to inquire if other neighboring towns were considering the grant and possibly join in with them as a cost and time savings. David Pratt stated that the grant applies to towns with high fossil fuel consumption. The Board acknowledged that our small town of Princeton could not compete with the larger cities and towns in Massachusetts with more customers and industry applying for the grant.
- ***Wind Turbine Update*** – Mr. Allen shared that the turbines produced higher wind energy this month than in past years. The acquired spare converter is still being negotiated for transit and repair.

At 7:59 PM the Board voted unanimously in favor (3-0) to adjourn.

***Respectfully Submitted,
Christine Trudeau
Recording Secretary***