

PRINCETON MUNICIPAL LIGHT DEPARTMENT
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BOARD OF LIGHT COMMISSIONERS

MARCH 8, 2017

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 4:06 PM.

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

Agenda:

The Board voted unanimously in favor (2-0) to accept the March 8, 2017 agenda as presented.

Meeting Minutes:

- The Board voted unanimously in favor (2-0) to approve the February 15, 2017 regular meeting minutes as amended.

PMLD Financials:

- **Bank Balances** - The Board reviewed the bank balances report dated March 8, 2017 (a copy will be placed on file). The Citizen's Bank Operating account has a balance of \$204K, the Depreciation account has a total balance of \$731K, the MMDT Rate Stabilization account has a balance of \$809K, the Unibank Operating account has a balance of \$1K, the Meter Deposit account has a balance of \$34K. As of March 8, 2017, PMLD has \$133K listed for accounts payable and is still waiting for \$339K in customer account receivables.
- **2016 Year-to-Date Working Budget Review** – The Board acknowledged that the working budget was closed out last month and the December ISO bill came in at \$29K. The annual audit review is currently underway. The Goulet Salvadio & Associates (GSA) auditing firm were in the office on February 28th and March 1st for on-site field work. The 2016 audit will be reviewed at a future meeting.
- **2017 Year-to-Date Working Budget Review** – The Board reviewed the 2017 working budget analysis spreadsheet dated 03/08/2017 (a copy will be placed on file). The target measure for revenue and expenses through January is 8.34%. Revenues are currently at 10.09% and expenses are at 8.05%. There was no unexpected activity to report. Transmission costs could rise and Mr. Allen is monitoring the invoices and addressing concerns as needed. President Trump announced a plan to look at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and Mr. Allen will stay on top of the issue.
- **Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Requirements Review** – Mr. Allen shared the information he received from a GSA informational meeting regarding GASB and the Worcester County Retirement Pension liabilities. A qualified opinion is needed to acknowledge the liability on the audit, however there is an issue with the measurement date. Mr. Allen spoke with the Town Administrator and Treasurer about the issue and everyone is on the same page. GSA will provide a letter explaining the issue in detail. Commissioner Conway acknowledged the recent T&G news article regarding the funding issues the Worcester Country Retirement system is facing. Commissioner Whitman shared his research regarding the funding of the OPEB liability. Everyone agreed that PMLD's plan to fund the OPEB liability after the windfarm debt is paid off is a solid plan at this time. Mr. Allen confirmed that he and the Town Administrator

will coordinate actuarial valuations through the actuarial company, Odyssey, to insure the liabilities are separate and managed yearly. PMLD's actuarial valuation is still valid through 2017.

Unfinished Business:

- **LED Street Light Conversion Project** – Mr. Allen confirmed that all PMLD paperwork is filed with MMWEC and he and his foreman have already met with a few manufacturers who were awarded the bid to consider products (copies of product information were provided to the Board). Princeton has an official total of 59 street lights to be replaced. A few design options were considered and it was decided to stay traditional and go with a product similar in shape & size as the existing fixtures (a cobra head model). These light fixtures are owned by the town and the locations were determined by safety personnel. Replacement of the existing fixtures with new fixtures will happen once the product is ordered and received.
- **Electric Meter Replacements** – Mr. Allen confirmed that the plan to upgrade and implement an automatic meter reading process is underway. Of the 7 routes in town, routes 1, 2 & 3 were changed out in January & February and route 4 will be done in March. Mr. Allen explained how the meter replacement process works. The portable collection device has been ordered and will retro-fit to the hand-held meter reading device. The collector will automatically pull radio reads from the meters in the field as it is driven along the roads. The investment will eliminate most of the manual effort. Benefits include a reduction in staff and vehicle time & costs, as well as less of a need to access private property and exposure to hazards like dogs and weather. \$80K in depreciation money was earmarked for the project and currently the project costs are at approximately \$70K and should come in under budget.

New Business:

- **Automobile Accident Protocol Discussion** – There was an automobile accident recently on Coal Kiln Rd where a car hit a utility pole, broke it and the live primary electric wires fell onto the car. Emergency crews responded as required and the issue was resolved without issue – the driver did walk away from the scene. However, Mr. Allen explained that he and the Foreman spoke with the Police Chief and other town officials after the accident to discuss how to improve the safety of the first responders in the event of a still-live electrical emergency; and it was agreed that police department staff could be trained on how to work the non-electric re-closure switches in town to cut power as needed/or instructed by the emergency scene manager. The Board agreed with the new protocol and Mr. Allen will take action to notify and train individuals.
- **Legislation Clean Energy Standard** – Mr. Allen shared the collective effort of the municipal light managers to share their municipal light plant (MLP) concerns with the 'all green' requirement that is being considered by legislators and the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The MLP's are scheduled to meet with Representative Ferguson, Senator Chandler and other legislators on March 9th in Shrewsbury to present facts and their position on the issue before legislators vote on the new legislation.
- **Weather Related Outage Update** – Mr. Allen confirmed for the Board that there were no outages in Princeton during the high winds of March 2nd & March 3rd. Comparably other municipalities in surrounding towns weren't so fortunate and had to call in mutual aid for assistance. Commissioner Conway shared his confidence in the Vegetation Management Plan (a.k.a. Tree Trimming) PMLD has implemented successfully for over 4 years now. The Board agreed that the tree trimming in town has improved reliability and the electrical distribution system is resilient through severe weather.

At 5:15 PM the Board voted unanimously in favor (2-0) to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted,
Christine Trudeau
Recording Secretary