



June 27, 2023
 STERLING MUNICIPAL LIGHT DEPARTMENT
 REGULAR SESSION
 MEETING MINUTES



DATE: June 27, 2023

LOCATION: SMLD, Rear Board Room
 50 Main Street, Sterling, MA

BOARD MEMBERS: Joe Curtin (Curtin), Chairman
 Eric Darlington (Darlington), Vice Chair
 Andy Gonsorcik (Gonsorcik), Clerk

SMLD STAFF: Matt Stelmach (Stelmach), General Manager
 Bill Underhill (Underhill), Network Coordinator

MINUTES: Patty Page

6:05 pm. Meeting called to order; Curtin stated that the meeting is subject to audio recording. Roll Call Attendance: Darlington present, Gonsorcik present, Curtin present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Board members in attendance pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

Safety Announcement - Equipment in office.

Approval of Agenda - Darlington made a motion to approve agenda. Gonsorcik seconded, no discussion, all in favor, Gonsorcik aye, Darlington aye, Curtin aye. (3-0).

Manager’s Report

1. The new staff accountant started on Monday June 26, 2023.
2. The SMLD Open House has been postponed with no new date at this time, but most likely late August.
3. MMWEC – the summer generator failed to start on what was likely the June peak demand day. Stelmach is looking at the repercussion of the failure.
4. 50 Main Street repairs – The blue stone for the front steps is on backorder; currently have quotes for the painting and still waiting on quotes for the slate roof repairs.
5. Stelmach worked with SLCT to get an Owl Webcam for future broadcasting of meetings.
6. Stelmach attended the APPA conference in Seattle where the discussion focused on cyber and physical security. Some light companies use video surveillance and some use security services.
7. Stelmach attended a tour of Seabrook. This was very informative and is recommended for board members. Very impressive security measures in place.
8. Upcoming – NetZero meeting in Shrewsbury, Nancy Forgione to attend for SMLD. Stelmach will be on vacation at the end of July and the first week of August.
9. Curtin asked about security through PURMA. Stelmach replied that it would require 2-factor authentication on all devices. Too disruptive to staff at this time.

Unfinished Business

- a) ERP Billing Software – getting closer to an agreement, but some problems on the operations side. Both Electric and Fiber ops are “invested” in other systems. Demonstration meetings with NISC are being arranged in hopes of getting more on board with the change.
- b) Sectionalizing Study – Complete. All recommendations implemented in the field.
- c) 2015A Project Update – Not yet online, but on track for commercial operation at the end of July.
- d) Website Re-design – 3 consultants interested and will be out to bid in the next 2 weeks.

New Business

- a) Fiber Update – Mr. Underhill updated the Board on the number of customers: 241 customers installed with 31 being businesses, several on a waiting list and 378 interested. 991 fiber-ready (potential customers). Sean Hamilton has been assisting with the fiber planning. Renegotiated with Calix and will result in a savings of \$61k over the life of the contract. Stelmach, Hamilton, Underhill and Josh Hallen met with the Housing Authority about getting fiber into the units located at Sholan Terrace on Bird Street.
- b) Quarterly Financials – Discussion topic – Stelmach presented a revised format which had been used in the past. Looking for feedback from the Board whether this is what they would like to see. Working toward showing fiber and electric separately. Stelmach will have the staff accountant in to do a financial update for the Board at least twice a year.
- c) MMWEC 2023A Project – This was discussed at a previous meeting in executive session. The stipulation of the agreement required the vote to be made in public session. Darlington made the following motion for Special Project 2023A:
 - 1. Town of Sterling as a member of the Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (“MMWEC”), acting by and through its municipal light department, hereby agrees to participate in MMWEC’s Special Project 2023A; and
 - 2. Town of Sterling, acting by and through its municipal light department, hereby agrees to pay its *pro rata* share of the monthly costs for carrying out Special Project 2023A pursuant to the scope of work and budget for such Project as developed by MMWEC and received by the manager of the municipal light department (“Manager”); and
 - 3. Manager is hereby authorized and directed to make payments to MMWEC calculated on the basis of the Town of Sterling’s *pro rata* share of the expenses as set forth in the budget for Special Project 2023A; and
 - 4. Manager is hereby authorized and directed to execute the Participation Acknowledgment, a copy of which has been presented at this meeting and is filed with the permanent records hereof; and
 - 5. Power Purchase Agreement with MMWEC for Special Project 2023A, is hereby approved substantially in the form of the Power Purchase Agreement (“PPA”) presented to the Board at this meeting and made a part of the record of this meeting; and
 - 6. Manager is hereby authorized to execute and deliver the PPA, substantially in the form of the PPA presented to the Board at this meeting, with such changes and amendments thereto as the Manager, may deem necessary or appropriate, without need of further approval or action from this Board; and
 - 7. Actions previously taken by the Manager which are consistent with the purpose of this vote are hereby ratified and confirmed; and

8. Manager is hereby authorized to execute any other documents he/she deems necessary or appropriate to carry out the purposes of this vote without need of further approval or action from this Board.

Gonsorcik seconded. Curtin aye, Darlington aye, Gonsorcik aye. Vote 3-0.

- d) July 3 Office Closure – Office will be closed on July 3rd. Line crews will be available for coverage.
- e) New Bucket Truck – The digger/derrick is 2 years out and next year the plan was to replace an older bucket truck. There is an opportunity now to get a new bucket truck from Kiley rather than waiting until next year and possibly have that backordered for a length of time. With upgrades, the cost would be approximately \$360 to \$370,000. Operations went to look at it. After some discussion, Darlington made a motion to allow the manager to purchase the new bucket truck if it is in the \$370k range. Gonsorcik seconded. Curtin aye, Darlington aye, Gonsorcik aye. Vote 3-0.
- f) General Manager Vehicle Allowance – the Board discussed the option of provided the manager an allowance in lieu of a company vehicle. Will be discussed further at a future meeting.
- g) Municipal Building Energy Audit Report – distributed to members. Still reviewing, but as a result of the report, Stelmach is working with the town to reconstitute the Energy Committee.
- h) Light Board Nominee to Energy Committee – Brian Pierce is still on the committee and wishes to stay on, but there really should be a Board member on the committee. Will discuss again at a future meeting.

APPROVAL OF PAST MINUTES:

- a) Darlington made a motion to approve the 2/15/2023 executive session minutes to be released, Curtin seconded, no discussion, all in favor. Darlington aye, Curtin aye (Gonsorcik abstained as he was not on the Board at the time). Vote 2-0-1.
- b) Darlington made a motion to approve the 2/23/2023 executive session minutes to be released, Curtin seconded, no discussion, all in favor. Darlington aye, Curtin aye (Gonsorcik abstained as he was not on the Board at the time). Vote 2-0-1.
- c) Darlington made a motion to approve the 4/12/2023 minutes, Curtin seconded, no discussion, all in favor. Darlington aye, Curtin aye (Gonsorcik abstained as he was not on the Board at the time). Vote 2-0-1.
- d) Darlington made a motion to approve the 5/17/2023 minutes, Gonsorcik seconded, no discussion, all in favor. Darlington aye, Curtin aye Gonsorcik aye. Vote 3-0.
- e) Darlington made a motion to approve the 5/17/2023 executive session minutes NOT to be released, Gonsorcik seconded, no discussion, all in favor. Darlington aye, Curtin aye, Gonsorcik aye. Vote 3-0.

Customer Comments: Mr. King of the Finance Committee asked additional questions regarding security.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND SCHEDULE NEXT BOARD MEETING: Future agenda items to include ERP Billing, 2015A Project, Fiber Update, Website design, Manager vehicle allowance, Energy Committee nominee. Next meeting July 25, 2023 @ 6 pm.

At 7:20 pm Darlington made a motion to adjourn. Gonsorcik seconded. All in favor, 3-0.

ATTEST:


Andy Gonsorcik, Clerk

DATE:

7/25/2023

BOARD APPROVAL FOR RELEASE:

