



June 26, 2024
 STERLING MUNICIPAL LIGHT DEPARTMENT
 REGULAR SESSION
 MEETING MINUTES



DATE: June 26, 2024

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

BOARD MEMBERS: Joe Curtin (Curtin), Chairman
 Eric Darlington (Darlington), Vice Chair
 Andrew Gonsorcik (Gonsorcik), Clerk (via phone)

SMLD STAFF: Matt Stelmach (Stelmach), General Manager
 John Kwasniewski (Kwasniewski), Accountant

MINUTES: Patty Page

5:11 pm. Meeting called to order. 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 the agenda with the following change: move executive session up to earlier in the meeting, just after the auditor’s report. Gonsorcik seconded, no discussion, all in favor, Darlington aye, Gonsorcik aye, Curtin aye. (3-0).

Tracy Vaughan and Adam Schremser from Goulet, Salvidio & Associates presented their 2023 audit results to the board. One of the earliest audits they have seen from Sterling. Vaughan stated that there was a marked improvement with only three (3) significant findings and five (5) prior year comments resolved. Overall, the books are in much better shape with electric and fiber accounts now separated.

At 5:54 pm Darlington made a motion to go into Executive Session (1) under M.G.L. Chapter 30A: Section 21(a), (to discuss trade secrets or confidential, competitively sensitive or other proprietary information provided in the course of activities conducted by a governmental body as an energy supplier.) Gonsorcik seconded, no discussion, Roll Call Vote, Gonsorcik aye, Darlington aye, Curtin aye. All in favor, 3-0.

The Board reconvened in Open Session at 7:18 pm.

Manager’s report

1. SMLD email address for members – there was an inquiry regarding potential access to personal email accounts in the event of a public records request. Stelmach will consult with the attorney to learn more.
2. Verizon pole agreement – Stelmach will work on renegotiating the agreement. The current agreement is about 25 years old and he estimates a cost increase of approximately 30%.

3. Peg's pond fountain – a citizen had reminded Stelmach of a commitment from the SMLD to update the fountain at Peg's pond. He will move forward on this item.
4. MMWEC orientation for board members – open to all members if there is any interest.
5. NEPPA Annual Conference – the conference will be held 8/25 thru 8/28 if members were interested.

Unfinished Business

- a) 2015A Project Update – Met all ISO-NE requirements on 5/31. Target commercial operation date of 7/1.
- b) Website Design – Contract executed with inConcert Web Solutions. Preliminary work begins in July.

New Business

- a) Fiber Update – Stelmach summarized the update prepared by Underhill. There are 454 subscribers. Take rate is up and revenues are trending up. The contractor, Phoenix Communications, continues to splice. The number of interested is 417. 1506 are fiber ready. Sholan Terrace is fiber ready with 3 customers. The underground fiber project is complete at Cider Hill and drop cables to be installed outside unites next week with a target to be done at the end of July. Osgood and Heywood cabinets placed and backbone fiber has been rough-in. Billing financials were also provided. The Board would like to see more direct contact with potential customers and recommended phoning customers regularly to reach out and give status updates after door-knockers have been placed. The board urged further promotion of the excellent customer service that is provided by the SMLD.
- b) Operations Manager Position – the board reviewed anticipated duties that this position will be responsible for. After some discussion, Curtin made a motion to authorize the general manager to add to the current and future annual SMLD budgets the new full-time “operations engineering position” as substantially described in the job description outline 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. Darlington seconded, all in favor. Darlington aye, Curtin aye, Gonsorcik aye. Vote 3-0.

APPROVAL OF PAST MINUTES: Darlington made a motion to approve the 5/15/2024 regular session minutes as amended, Gonsorcik seconded, no discussion, all in favor. Darlington aye, Curtin aye, Gonsorcik aye. Vote 3-0. Darlington made a motion to approve the 5/15/2024 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: None at this time.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND SCHEDULE NEXT BOARD MEETING: Future agenda items to include items on this agenda (unfinished business/new business/manager's report). Next meeting July 24, 2024 @ 5:00 pm.

At 7:55 pm Darlington made a motion to adjourn. Gonsorcik seconded. All in favor, 3-0.

ATTEST:



Andrew Gonsorcik, Clerk

DATE:

7/26/24

BOARD APPROVAL FOR RELEASE:

7/24/24