



July 24, 2024  
 STERLING MUNICIPAL LIGHT DEPARTMENT  
 REGULAR SESSION  
 MEETING MINUTES



DATE: July 24, 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  
 Bill Underhill (Underhill), Network Coordinator

MINUTES: Patty Page

5:03 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. Gonsorcik seconded, no discussion, all in favor, Darlington aye, Gonsorcik aye, Curtin aye. (3-0).

Manager’s report

1. SMLD email address for board members – Stelmach is still working on this and needs to check with the SMLD attorney.
2. MMWEC Orientation – for board members and staff. Stelmach is recommending for Gonsorcik, Manca and Kwasniewski. He will set it up.
3. Fiber Operations Financial Projections – numbers are looking good, will be presenting at next meeting with Hamilton.
4. NEPPA Annual Conference – to be held at Mount Washington August 24 through 28.
5. August Select Board Meeting – Stelmach and Underhill will attend a meeting in August to present fiber progress to update the Select Board.
6. West Boylston Municipal Light – Stelmach attended the open house for the new operations building on Tuesday. Impressive building.
7. Stelmach provided Q2 Residential rate comparisons to the Board.

Unfinished Business

- a) Website Design – Staff has met with the website design team. Right now the designers are gathering information and asking lots of questions. Darlington asked if they had email hosting, Stelmach said that they did.

- b) Operations Engineer Position – Stelmach provided the Board with the 3<sup>rd</sup> iteration of the draft job description. Will be open to all levels and no salary is listed. Looking to start advertising next week.

New Business

- a) Fiber Update – Underhill stated that there are 477 subscribers. Take rate is up and revenues are trending up. The Phoenix continues to splice. The number of interested is 419. 1509 are fiber ready. Sholan Terrace is fiber ready with 4 customers. The underground fiber project is complete at Cider Hill with drop cables to be installed outside units next week. Target to be done at the end of July. Osgood and Heywood cabinets placed and backbone fiber has been roughed-in. Underhill also provided billing financials. 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. Further promote the excellent customer service that is provided by the SMLD.
- b) Fiber Marketing – Underhill provided details on the fiber marketing plan. This includes email blasts, use of Mailchimp, doorknockers, phone calls, and signage. All new customers receive a welcome package that includes fiber information. Going forward, LAMB plans on doing targeted mailings. LAMB will be at the Sterling Fair again this year as well as a table set up for the NextZero utility rebate program
- c) BESS Inverter Failure – LG is sourcing replacement capacitors, but looking at 15 weeks out for new parts. SMLD was able to source a second summer diesel generator on peak day after failure.
- d) Storage Building – SMLD continues to seek a location for a storage building. Stelmach would like the ability to do an environmental assessment if needed and requested Board approval to move forward. After some discussion Darlington made a motion to allow the General Manager to obtain a Phase II environmental assessment at an amount not to exceed \$30,000, Gonsorcik seconded, all in favor. Darlington aye, Curtin aye, Gonsorcik aye. Vote 3-0.
- e) Reserve Trust transfer to Operating Cash – funds were previously committed. Darlington made a motion to transfer \$627,403.25 from the Reserve Trust to the Operating Cash account to replenish funds spent toward Phase 2 of the fiber deployment. Said amount representing the balance of funds committed to this purpose at the Board meeting held on December 14, 2020, Gonsorcik seconded, all in favor. Darlington aye, Curtin aye, Gonsorcik aye. Vote 3-0.

APPROVAL OF PAST MINUTES: Darlington made a motion to approve the 6/26/2024 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 6/26/2024 executive session minutes as written, 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/budget/manager’s report). Next meeting September 9, 2024 @ 5:00 pm.

At 6:26 pm Darlington made a motion to adjourn. Gonsorcik seconded. All in favor, 3-0.

ATTEST:

  
Andrew Gonsorcik, Clerk

DATE:

9/9/2024

BOARD APPROVAL FOR RELEASE:

9/9/24