



September 21, 2022  
 STERLING MUNICIPAL LIGHT DEPARTMENT  
 REGULAR SESSION  
 MEETING MINUTES



DATE: September 21, 2022

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

BOARD MEMBERS: Joe Curtin (Curtin), Chairman (ABSENT)  
 Brian Pierce (Pierce), Vice Chair  
 Eric Darlington (Darlington), Clerk

SMLD STAFF: Darren Borge (Borge), Manager  
 Sean Hamilton (Hamilton), Consultant

MINUTES: Patty Page

6:00 pm. Meeting called to order; Pierce stated that the meeting is subject to audio recording. Roll Call Attendance: Darlington present, Pierce present. (Curtin absent).

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.** Pierce seconded, no discussion, all in favor, Pierce aye, Darlington aye (2-0).

Manager’s report given by Darren Borge

1. Approximately 1000 customers enrolled in e-bill, saving the SMLD approximately \$2,300 per year in postage.
2. Mueller AMI Update – DPU (Dept. Public Utilities) regulations, require that SMLD hold old meters for 1 year and then breakdown and decommission. As of July 1, 2022, the one-year requirement has passed. An electric utility from TN reached out to the SMLD about acquiring the old units. An agreement was made between to the two utilities. The agreement saved the SMLD the cost scraping and disposal of old meters.
3. MA CDL Course Requirement Discussion – MassDOT requires drivers to take Entry Level Drivers course for CDL Class A&B licenses. It is 100 hours and apprentices are required to get a Class B license by SMLD requirements. These new classes cost approximately \$5000-\$9000. The plan is to enroll one apprentice currently. Then enroll 2 employees at a time throughout 2023. A Class A license is required for the three-reel trailer and pole carrier trailer. Only 2 employees have Class A licenses currently.
4. Pole Inspector software for field - This is an add-on “widget” that would allow crew to record pole details with photos and an inventory all hardware and materials to make change-outs faster. The cost is a one-time fee of \$8300 and \$500 a month for support. The Board recommended tabling this for now to control expenses at this time.
5. 12 Month Rate Comparison – SMLD is currently the 13<sup>th</sup> lowest cost out 45 Massachusetts utilities.

6. Garden Club – Borge will be speaking to the Garden Club at the Senior Center on October 20, 2022 at 6 pm. Discussion will cover environmental concerns and talk about non-carbon emitting power portfolio, renewable energy and new emerging technologies.
7. August ISO-NE Bill – The 2022 August power bill had an 8% cost increase from July, for 9% less MWH purchased. The ISO-NE was a big part of the increase cost. The Mystic COS is approximately 3 times higher than usual. Mystic Generating Station is one of the few liquefied natural gas (lpg) acceptance points in New England and were deemed critical to keep operational until new LNG infrastructure/ transmission could be put in place to ensure continued flow of LNG in the area.
8. PURMA Annual Conference – Borge will be attending the annual conference.

Unfinished Business

- a) PURMA Cyber Security Policy Update/Discussion – Initial CISA security audit has been completed and Vertikal6 has completed the software audit. SMLD has signed up for CISA’s Cyber Hygiene Vulnerability Scanning which is a free service. Vertikal6 is writing an executive summary which will help with insurability.
- b) Middle-Mile Grant Update – Nothing new to report. SMLD was not chosen for the ReConnect Phase 3 Grant. SMLD will submit to the ReConnect Phase 4 grant which SMLD has a good chance of receiving.
- c) SMLD 5 Year Rate Study Update – The rate study was presented to the board. Will be discussed at the October Board meeting. Attached to the minutes is the preliminary cost of service packet.
- d) SMLD 5 Year Plan Update – The 1<sup>st</sup> DRAFT 5-Yr Plan was presented to the Board. This will be discussed at the October Board meeting. Also discussed was putting out an RFP for new billing software. There’s no cost for the RFP, the Board supports the RFP.
- e) Replacement LED Sign – Table for now (replacement cost would be \$7,865).

APPROVAL OF PAST MINUTES:

8/31/2022 Minutes: **Darlington made a motion to approve the regular 8/31/2022 minutes as written**, Pierce seconded, no discussion, all in favor. Darlington aye, Pierce aye. **Darlington made a motion to approve the executive session minutes of 8/31/2022 as amended, not to be released.** Pierce seconded, no discussion, all in favor. Darlington aye, Pierce aye.

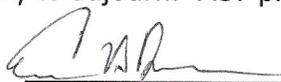
Customer Comments: None at this time.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND SCHEDULE NEXT BOARD MEETING: Next meeting October 19, 2022 @ 6 pm.

At 7:11 pm **Darlington made a motion to go into Executive Session (1) under M.G.L. Chapter 30A: Section 21(a), Clause 10 (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 – (8.1) Existing Vendor Inquiry, (8.2) New Vendor Inquiry. Executive Session (2) if needed and time allows, under M.G.L. Chapter 30 A: Section 21(a), Clause 3 (To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining), – (9.1) SMLD/Local 486 Union Discussion/Update, only to return to regular session to adjourn,** Pierce seconded, no discussion, Roll Call Vote, Pierce aye, Darlington aye. All in favor.

The Board reconvened in Open Session, only to adjourn. 7:57 pm meeting adjourned.

ATTEST:



Eric Darlington, Clerk

DATE:

10/19/22

BOARD APPROVAL FOR RELEASE: