

PRINCETON MUNICIPAL LIGHT DEPARTMENT
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**BOARD OF LIGHT COMMISSIONERS
JUNE 13, 2018
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

Present were: Commissioner/Chairman, Jim Whitman, Commissioner, Chris Conway, Commissioner Rick Rys and PMLD General Manager, Brian Allen. Also present were members of the EAC Committee - Claire Golding, Phoebe Moore, Phil Gott and Cori Burham-Howard and town resident - Frank Patrone.

Agenda:

Chairman Whitman asked to add an item under “new business” to discuss PMLD staff performance during the Charter utility pole work upgrades. The Board voted unanimously in favor (3-0) to approve the June 13, 2018 agenda as amended.

Environmental Action Committee (EAC) Presentation:

Claire Golding and Phoebe Moore explained the EAC’s charge to advise and recommend to the Town on environmental items. They shared their desire to work with the community to reduce green-house gas emissions from cars and oil burning home heating systems. EAC would like to perform an outreach program or conduct a survey to educate residents about what’s available and get residents excited about the value added in ‘going greener’ to offset costs for making environmentally conscious changes. Everyone acknowledged the efforts in conservation and efficiency improvements that have contributed to declining energy usage; and discussed the existing HELPS programs & rebates promoted by PMLD, as well as the state-level programs which include the MVP Pilot program and electric car purchase incentives and rebates. Peak shaving was discussed, and a volunteer-based town program is something of interest to all. Mr. Allen shared MMWEC’s efforts through Lumin Technologies and through HELPS to develop innovative programs and get state-level funding/grants. Mr. Allen reminded everyone that reliable WIFI is needed to execute some of the programs currently being offered. The EAC offered to write grants for PMLD. Chairman Whitman asked the EAC to study and understand the demographics of the town and the people that live here to identify their needs before moving forward and investing a lot of time and money on programs. PMLD’s conservative approach to implementing programs was discussed. Mr. Allen shared PMLD’s efforts to retrieve information from other MLP’s on successes and failures when considering an opportunity to implement a technology or program. As a member of MMWEC PMLD can tap into their resources and experts to seek out programs and work through them to provide opportunities to the residents of Princeton. PMLD has a number of attractive HELPS

programs and rebates that are offered to residents, all of which are consistent among the MLPs and comparable to the well-known MassSave program offered by IOUs like National Grid. The Board and Mr. Allen also shared that PMLD's contract with NextEra Energy has been and continues to be a valuable resource as well. NextEra not only provides Princeton with a comprehensive energy contract, but also gives PMLD access to a large number of experts in the industry to aid in considering other opportunities. EAC and Commissioner Rys shared their desire to keep the wind energy generation in town and take advantage of promoting Princeton as a greener or renewable energy rich town to meet the state-level green/renewable energy goals that have been set for the state of Massachusetts. Mr. Allen and Chairman Whitman conveyed their confidence in NextEra Energy to work with PMLD in the future to manage its energy portfolio and reminded everyone that NextEra is number 1 in renewables in the United States. EAC would like the Board to consider following the lead of towns like Concord and Sterling in an effort to change PMLD's energy portfolio to improve Princeton's green report card and promote renewable energy use. Mr. Allen stated that NextEra has already presented to the Board the willingness to develop a program and offer renewable energy for sale through a customer opt in program, but because renewable energy is still more expensive than the conventional energy that PMLD's energy contract primarily consists of, the Board has not moved forward on the program due to concerns that it would be a hard sell to Princeton residents and result in a low take rate. Chairman Whitman asked the EAC committee to find within the community no less than 50 residents who would be willing to sign on and purchase 100% renewables as part of their energy rate. PMLD will work with Nextera to finalize a program that can be implemented.

Meeting Minutes:

- ***May 9, 2018 Regular Meeting Minutes*** – The Board voted unanimously in favor (3-0) to approve the meeting minutes as written. A copy will be placed on file and is available on PMLD's website page.

General Manager's Other Business:

- ***New HELPS Programs and MMWEC/Lumin Technology partnership*** – Mr. Allen will share information as received.
- ***Hydro Quebec Contracts Renewal*** – Mr. Allen shared the Hydro Quebec contract renewal information that was discussed at the recent MMWEC meeting. There are two phases, of which PMLD is a part of, however the Phase 1 contract is under MMWEC with benefits for Princeton and other MLP's and Phase 2 is a direct contract with Hydro Quebec. Mr. Allen is working with MMWEC to look into the differences in the contracts and determine how to renew each in Sept/Oct. Mr. Allen will provide an update once more information is known.
- ***Health Insurance Plan Changes for 2018-2019*** – Mr. Allen explained that town officials voted this month to sign on with Blue Cross & Blue Shield as the health insurance provider effective July 1, 2018 to avoid a 28% cost increase if the insurance with Fallon Healthcare was renewed.
- ***Soltage Energy Battery Storage*** – Mr. Allen shared his plan to meet with Soltage representatives on June 14th to discuss battery storage for the wind turbine facility, costs and financing. Being able to store wind energy to use and sell later would be advantageous to Princeton, but there is concern with ISO regulations that could limit and/or penalize. Commissioner Rys shared his concerns with the

house bill 2545 which would mandate storage for generation facilities and expressed his desire to use lithium batteries.

- **MBI Meeting** – Mr. Allen was invited by the Town Administrator to attend the June 15th Boston meeting to review funding the Town received for the Broadband Make-Ready Project and provide the history of make-ready work that was performed, to enable the Selectmen to submit their request for additional funding.
- **Cost Breakdown on PMLD Bills** - A customer came in and shared his concern with the breakdown of costs associated with wind farm operation and debt at \$0.05 per kilowatt on his bill. He explained that he uses electric heat and thus uses more kilowatts of electricity and pays more towards the wind farm. The Board acknowledged his concern and would like to consider it and discuss it at a future meeting.

Other/New Business:

- **July Board Meeting** – Chairman Whitman reminded everyone that there will be no regular Board meeting in July. The Board's next meeting will be August 8th.
- **PMLD Employee Performance** – Chairman Whitman acknowledged the exceptional efforts and job performance for the additional pole make-ready work between February and May from the 6 PMLD employees to stay ahead of Charter's contractor, Phoenix. Everyone took on the additional work and job responsibilities and completed the work among everything else so that the project could stay on track and then successfully collected reimbursement for costs from Charter; and additionally, the efficient replacement of the wind turbine converter just days later. Commissioner Whitman made a motion to award a \$500 monetary stipend bonus to each employee (\$3K) for their outstanding efforts. Commissioner Conway seconded the motion. All were in favor (3-0). Mr. Allen thanked the Board for the recognition on behalf of the employees.

At 8:22 PM the Board voted unanimously in favor by roll call (3-0) to go into executive session not to return to public session for the purpose 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 under a license granted by the department of public utilities pursuant to section 1F of chapter 164, in the course of activities conducted as a municipal aggregator under section 134 of said chapter 164 that such disclosure will adversely affect its ability to conduct business in relation to other entities making, selling or distributing electric power and energy.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Christine Trudeau
Recording Secretary*