

PRINCETON MUNICIPAL LIGHT DEPARTMENT  
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**BOARD OF LIGHT COMMISSIONERS  
ZOOM PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 9, 2023**

**Action Items:**

- Mr. McKeon will find out if the average daily cost could be included in the new PMLD bill.
- Mr. McKeon will write an explanation of what happened to the wind turbines.
- Mr. McKeon and the Fire Chief will work together concerning generator safety.
- Mr. McKeon will update the General Terms and Conditions for billing rates.

The public meeting was called to order at 3:06pm.

Present were Commissioner- Phil Gott, General Manager- Sean McKeon, Ashley Reddy, and Karen Mammone.

Attending via ZOOM- Commissioner- Rick Rys, Commissioner- Richard Chase, David Pratt, and Marie Lee.

**Agenda:**

The Board voted unanimously in favor (3-0) to accept the March 9, 2023 agenda as written.

**Meeting Minutes:**

**February 15, 2023, Public Meeting Minutes-** The Board approved amended minutes (2-0). Commissioner Chase abstained from voting. Commissioner Chase did not have a chance to read the minutes before the meeting began.

*Under- Storm Update- Change word "death" to "dealt."*

*Under- MMWEC Alternate Voting Representative- change "Phillip" to "Philip."*

**General Manager's Report:**

**Current Bank Balances-**

The Board read over the bank account balances report dated March 9, 2023. A copy will be placed on file. All bills are paid in a timely manner.

**2023 Cashflow Budget Review-**

Mr. McKeon presented the Board with a copy of the 2023 budget detail dated March 6, 2023. A copy will be placed on file. The cashflow figures were for January 2023 with a target of 8.33 %. Mr. McKeon stated that revenues were at 8.26 % and expenses were at 6.99 %.

**Update on Operations:**

- Washington Trip and Transformer Supply- Last week Mr. McKeon traveled to Washington, D.C. with NEPPA (Northeast Public Power Association) and MMWEC (Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company). The group spoke with several Representatives, Senators and the House Energy and Commerce Committee. They discussed how close New England was to having a rolling black-out on Christmas Eve, what would have caused the rolling black-out and the current supply chain issues- specifically transformers.

The group would like financing of transformer production through the Defense Production Act. Currently, there is a four-year wait, and the cost of transformers continues to increase. One of the reasons is that

grain-oriented steel is used to build transformers and electric vehicles. Within the next few years, transformers will be required to use amorphous steel in place of grain-oriented steel. Currently, China is the only country making amorphous steel which will continue to cause delays in receiving transformers.

- Wind Turbines- American Superconductor's Engineer in India found the parameters were not correct. He contacted the engineering department in Austria to work on the parameters. Mr. McKeon and Mr. Courville met with Commissioner Chase's contact who use to work for American Superconductor. He may be able to help figure out what is going on with the turbines.

The wind turbines are insured for loss of production. The dollar amount has not been determined.

- PMLD New Bill Format- Mr. McKeon sent out a draft bill showing the breakdown of the new bill. The new bill would show energy charge, transmission charge, windfarm operation debt, windfarm production credits and distribution charge. The Commissioners would also like to add average daily use, if possible, to the bill. Mr. McKeon will investigate this suggestion.
- MMWEC Battery Storage- MMWEC's Environmental Engineer toured the wind site last week. The surveyors stopped by yesterday and picked up a couple of wind site maps.

#### Other Updates:

- Commissioner Rys attended a Town Board Meeting for the Board Chairs. Residents in town are wondering why the turbines are not currently operational. A member of the Select Board requested a written explanation of what is going on with the wind turbines so the residents will understand why they have not been running.
- A request was made for Mr. McKeon and Fire Chief Bennett to work on informing residents of generator safety. Residents can also purchase a Generlink. The Generlink is a device installed behind the electric meter, that allows a generator to be safely connected to a home.
- Mr. Courville updated PMLD's circuit map and one-line diagram. The circuit map will come in handy if PMLD needed mutual aid and a one-line diagram will be vital for location of the reclosers.
- Commissioner Gott was nominated for the Select Board. He did speak with the State Ethics Commission and there is no conflict. If Commissioner Gott wins this position, he will resign from the Environmental Action Committee.
- Commissioner Rys announced he will run for another 3-year term.
- PMLD has been replacing poles throughout town.
- Commissioner Rys received an email on billing rates when repairing service from pole to house. Commissioner Rys did look on page 13 in the General Terms and Conditions, which states "Charges for the installation, maintenance, and repairs of equipment and facilities will be billed as applicable." The Board discussed changing the word "applicable" to "will be billed at rates in effect at the time of service." PMLD does not give estimates during storm situations. No two bills are alike. A lot of variables go into creating a bill like who is on call, time of the call, materials used, stormy weather, private property, town property, et cetera. All agreed with "installation, maintenance and repairs will depend on the Union Labor rates in effect at the time and these can be impacted by events like linemen working during storm duty or other overtime events."

Solar Bylaw Proposal- The Planning Board has been working on a Solar Bylaw proposal for Princeton. Commissioner Rys received a copy of the proposed document and spoke of two items on the proposal. One concern was the size allowed which would allow thirty-seven kilowatts of power. PMLD solar policy only allows up to

thirty kilowatts of power. The Board proposed panels be parallel to the roof line. Commissioner Rys thought a rack system should be allowed for homes with a flat roof, also trees would need to be planted- twenty feet high thirty feet deep. The other concern was intended use of solar, which should be up to the customer. Commissioner Gott mentioned it was to avoid commercial operations in a residential area- how big the installation compared to the lot size. The next meeting will be next Wednesday, March 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:30pm to finalize the proposal for a ballot vote at the town meeting.

**IRA/State Laws-** Commissioner Chase discussed Rewiring America, a group who put together a website for consumers to see what options and rebates are available for different technologies. There is also another group who looks at government policies. There will be an online seminar tomorrow, March 10<sup>th</sup> at 2pm.

**Interconnection with Sterling-** As of this meeting, no word on a new manager for the Sterling Light Department.

**Facebook/Website:**

No updates

**New Business/Parking Lot:**

No new business

**Public Session:**

No guests for public session

At 4:25 pm the Board voted unanimously in favor (3-0) to adjourn the meeting.

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Karen Mammone*

*Recording Secretary*