

**MINUTES OF THE
MUNICIPAL LIGHT BOARD MEETING
May 14, 2019**

PURSUANT TO notice given, the Merrimac Municipal Light Board (“Board”) met in the Municipal Light Department’s (“MLD” or “Department”) Administration Building, 10 W Main Street, at 3:30 PM.

PRESENT

Those present included Chairman Larry Fisher, Vice Chair Norman Denault, Secretary Paula Hamel, MLD’s General Manager Francisco Frias, and Office Manager Tara Aniello.

MEETING START

A motion was made and accepted to bring the meeting to order at 3:31 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioners voted 3-0 to accept the April 9, 2019 Board Meeting Minutes as written.

GENERAL MANAGER’S ITEMS

Nomination & Election of MLB officers:

The Merrimac Light Board voted to have Norman Denault as the new Chairman, Paula Hamel as the Vice Chair and Larry Fisher as the Secretary.

March 2019 Financial Information:

The General Manager (“Manager”) asked the Board if there were any questions regarding the financial information for the month of March 2019. The Department saw a total net income of \$65,158 compared to a forecasted income of \$42,288. The total net income without interest earned would be \$33,814 and the year-to-date net income is \$289,190.

Cash Allocation and Investments:

The Manager informed the Board that the Department moved \$500,000 into a 12 month CD at the Haverhill Bank at a rate of 3%. The Manager asked the Board if they wanted to allocate that money to the Rate Stabilization fund and they made and unanimously accepted the motion to do so.

Green Deals and Power Hedging Discussion:

The Manager looked into the options for green energy purchases that Energy New England has available. Participating in these projects would be important because of the additional non-emitting resources in the Department’s power portfolio. The Department should take advantage of these projects since there are not many projects available at this point. A motion was made by the Board to move forward with participation in the green deals Energy New England has presented. The Manager will keep the Board updated on the status of these projects.

Solar/Battery Storage Opportunities Update:

The Manager met with Robert Sinibaldi and Carol McLeod about their interest in possible solar opportunities and battery storage. It could help out not only the Department but also the Town. Robert Sinibaldi will be looking into possible sites that would be good for a solar and battery installation. Consolidated Edison, the company that built the 1.8 MW Solar project behind the Post Office, will also be coming to talk about different possibilities for the Department and the Town to consider. The Manager will update the Board as information becomes available.

Metering System & Verizon 4G Network Upgrade:

At the end of the year, Verizon will stop supporting the existing 3G network and this will require the Department to upgrade the wireless modems, used for the metering system, to be upgraded to 4G. Unfortunately, the company that manufactured the 3G modems the Department has is not upgrading to 4G. The Manager found a product from another company that he believes should work and he is testing it. If everything works then he will upgrade all modems before the end of the year. These are not typical modems but units suitable for extreme outdoor weather and compact in size. The Manager will keep the Board updated.

National Grid 23 kV Work Upgrade:

The Department has been working with National Grid to improve the reliability of the two supply lines coming into the Town by installing a gang switch and fault indicators. All this work has been completed by National Grid. This modifications and equipment should help in the future if there are issues on the supply lines, beyond the Merrimac territory. The Manager is trying to get National Grid to do some tree trimming on the lines near the gang switch to further prevent future outages.

Line Superintendent Objectives:

The Manager put together nine objectives for the Line Superintendent Ken Buzzell to complete during 2019. These objectives were provided to the Board and the Manager asked for any comments or suggestions. The Board was satisfied with the objectives presented. The Manager also indicated that Ken was out for close to three months at the beginning of the year and was having a late start with the objectives.

Other Items:**Workforce Update:**

The Manager gave the Board an update on how things were going with the Operations personnel. Kenneth Buzzell continues to fully recover from his surgery while working full time. Scott Saunders had to be out for about one month but returned to work on May 10, 2019, without any restrictions. Matthew Shwom is in the process of coming back on light duty after his surgery.

DPW Letter:

The commissioners signed a letter of support for the DPW in regards to a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Program. The Manager will send this letter back to the DPW Director.

Flags on Poles:

The Manager is going to attempt to get a plan in place to put flags on the poles for Memorial Day, although it looks like it will be difficult with the limited time. The plan will be to install flags on the wood poles of the four streets coming into the center of Town.

Office Re-Design:

The Manager recently had the architects come in with a construction company to survey the project. They are in the process of coming up with a cost estimate for the project. The Manager should be getting it back in the next week or so. The commissioners mentioned using storage at the Garage and having things ready to take over when the time comes to do the redesign.

Battery Storage:

Commissioner Norman Denault asked if the Department could put battery storage at the MLD garage next to the substation. The Manager said it was a possibility, however, a location for battery storage is not a big concern, compared to a solar installation, because battery storage can be anywhere in the system since the footprint of the battery container is relatively small.

MEAM Conference:

The Manager and Commissioner Larry Fisher will be attending a Municipal Electric Association of Mass., Inc. conference on May 16th and 17th.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:27 PM


Chairman

Vice Chair


Secretary