

Ashburnham Municipal Light Board
Conference Room 24 Williams Rd.
Ashburnham, MA 01430

Meeting Minutes

May 3, 2017

Commissioners: Richard Ahlin, Chairman

Mark Carlisle, Vice Chairman

Sarah Davis, Clerk

Attendees from MMWEC: Matthew Ide, Brian Quinn and Jason Viadero.

Others attendees: Anne Olivari, Jane Dancause, Brooke Czasnowski, Jeremy Holmes, Jeffrey Schrecke and Jordan Gendron.

Meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm by Ahlin, with a roll call vote. Davis aye, Carlisle aye and Ahlin aye.

Carlisle made a motion to accept agenda as written. Seconded by Davis. All three Commissioners voted to accept agenda as written.

Ahlin recognized the members of MMWEC and asked that they proceed with their presentation regarding battery storage. Ide gave a brief explanation of MMWEC and its offering to municipals. He continued with mentioning the unique position AMLP is in. The tight generation of solar vs the daytime load. He stated Mass Clean Energy has programs offering financial assistance. Ide outlined why storage makes sense for AMLP, store production for higher cost peaks, etc. Ide also gave the next steps if AMLP is interested in going forward with battery storage with or without grants.

Viadero discussed looking at AMLP load April 2013 compared to 2017. At this time AMLP is unable to expand the solar program due to daytime solar output, the energy efficiency programs are helping consumers but also causing the safe margin or demand to solar output to be too close for comfort. Battery storage would help balance the load, allow for purchasing of power to be regulated to more cost effective time periods by using storage for peak times. Storage would open doors to increase solar installations and wind projects also. The state is encouraging these grants of up to 50% of costs but there would only be 10-15 projects awarded statewide.

Quinn reviewed the huge saving that could be realized by AMLP customers. The projected pay back time with out the grant would be 8 years, and shorted with the grant. The project has a projected lifetime of fifteen years. MMWEC would finance if AMLP wanted to go that route. There was some discussion on the various charges and factors being considered as to how MMWEC arrived at the numbers stated. The application is due June 9, 2017 and grants would be awarded in September.

General discussion followed as to how many residential and commercial projects and sizes that could be possible if storage was installed. MMWEC's rate for financing would be approximately 4%. Type of battery uses, "shovel ready" project, MMWEC to apply for grant on behalf of AMLP as they are bound by more flexible procurement rulings. The Board agreed they were interested and asked MMWEC to go forward with the grant application. Carlisle was to contact DOER to let them know we are interested, have the land and the site is close to substation. The MMWEC members left at 7:35 pm.

Manager's report and upcoming events: No expenses.
Community day is scheduled for June 24th with AMLP providing the tent, tables and chairs. Touch a truck day is June 26th from 1-4 at the Library.

Next union negotiations is Friday, May 5th.

Search committee update: possible seven candidates.

Group to come and discuss banners for streetlights/poles did not attend.

Interim Manager: Ahlin stated under the guidance of counsel a interim should be appointed to deal with the basic daily invoices, warrants and daily business. Czasnowski was asked if she was interested in the position. A new manager would not be appointed to start to August 12 the earliest. Czasnowski stated she was interested in the position. The compensation was to be discussed in Executive session. Carlisle made a motion to appoint Czasnowski as interim manager assuming an agreeable compensation amount was reached. Davis seconded. All Commissioners voted aye.

Gun policy: Dangerous weapon policy was reviewed by the Commissioners. Per counsel it gives a good legal standing if it was ever an issue. It is for the safety of the employees. Carlisle made a motion to accept and enact the policy. Davis seconded. All three Commissioners voted to accept the policy.

Electronic policy: Still in the works not ready for review at this time.

Wage/Cost of living adjustment for office staff: A request was submitted in February. It was decided to discuss item in Executive session.

Transfer of funds: Dancause spoke on process as Town holds funds for AMLP. The new truck is approximately 230k, the telephone system was 6k and funds will be transferred for in lieu of tax payment to the Town. Board asked to be kept informed so this can be done in a timely matter.

Landscaping: A discussion regarding mulch vs stones, the build up of mulch, customers driving on mulch. Czasnowski was asked to get several estimates for future consideration.

Unpaid invoices: Old invoices were presented, discussion on why they were not paid. Board agreed to pay them.

Approval of Past Minutes: Carlisle made a motion to approve the Minutes as written from April 12, 2017. Motion was seconded by Davis. The vote passed unanimously.

Heather Issaccs is to be in the office on May 31st. Next Board meeting was scheduled for May 31st at 4 pm.

Future agenda items are: electronic policy, website updates, inventory and meters.

Minutes are to be kept in written form with signed copy and originals in the safe.

Carlisle made a motion to adjourn the regular meeting and to go into Executive session under M.G.L. Chapter 21A & 21B to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining of litigation (IBEW). 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 and to return to open session only to adjourn. Motion was made at 8:45pm. Davis seconded. A roll call vote of Davis aye, Carlisle aye and Ahlin aye.

Sarah Davis, Clerk