

Paxton Municipal Light Department
578 Pleasant Street
Paxton, MA 01612-1300
Light Commission Meeting
February 22, 2022

- I. Call to order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Wheeler at 5:32 p.m. Members present: Emerson Wheeler, Yvette Orell, Mike Benoit, and Tara Rondeau, Manager. Public Attending: None.
- II. Approval of Agenda: Orell motioned to approve the agenda; Benoit seconded. Motion passed 3-0.
- III. Approval of Minutes: Benoit motioned to approve the December 16th, 2021, minutes; Orell seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0.
- IV. Public Comment: None
- V. Managers' Report:
 - A. Operations and Electrical Systems Updates:
 1. The linemen have continued trimming and chipping on Asnebumskit.
 2. They:
 - a. Performed streetlight maintenance on Pleasant St., Crocker Hill, Lancelot Dr., Baxter Dr., Indian Hill and Richards Ave. Benoit informed the manager that there was a light out on Pleasant St in front of Conte Insurance.
 - b. Removed a temporary meter and energized a house service on West St.
 - c. Replaced an HPS lease light with an LED flood light at Kettlebrook.
 - d. Set a pole and relocated a house service on Pleasant Street.
 - e. Removed a temporary meter, energized a transformer and house service on Suomi Street.
 - f. Investigated a complaint of flickering lights on Old Lantern Circle. No problems or issues located.
 - g. Replaced a pole on South Street due to a MVA.
 - h. Energized a secondary service for a barn on Grove Street.
 - i. Repaired primary wire that came off an insulator due to high wind on Grove St.
 - j. Investigated a pole hit on Marshal Street, found no damage.
 3. The linemen removed trees on the wires on Grove Street, Elm Street, and Brigham Rd. They also removed branches on the wires on Grove Street and Marshall Street,
 4. They performed routine maintenance at the Substation, filling the batteries and fixing a stuck pump float in the oil containment tank.
 5. The linemen repaired the chipper and manufactured a new part to replace a broken one on the bucket truck.
 6. They energized the AMI routers and installed 14 test meters with the help of Landis & Gyr techs.
 7. The linemen removed the Christmas lights of the Town common.

8. They completed the year-end inventory count.
9. The linemen have continued renumbering utility poles on the bad weather days.
10. Outages:
 - a. January 23rd: Hill Street. Affected 2 customers. A fuse was blown, cause unknown, possibly a weak fuse link. Power restored within 45 minutes.

B. Office and Operations

1. PMLD's accounts receivable 90 days past due balance is \$21,727. Last year at this same time, it was \$24,751.
2. The 2014 Ford Explorer sold at auction for \$8500. We received after commission \$7905.
3. Ben B. graduated from NEPPA's linemen school on December 17th.
4. Truck #62 (pickup) needed to have plow work performed, it was under warranty.
5. On February 7th a new apprentice started. Thomas (TJ) has completed the Georgia lineman's schooling but has no hours to complete his certification. Currently, we have 2-1st class linemen and 2 apprentices. Both 1st Class linemen know that this is a big sacrifice on their part, so an agreement has been made providing additional compensation for their efforts. The manager will routinely check in with the linemen to ensure no one is getting burnt out.
6. The manager is working on defining new business goals for PMLD which if completed will be included in the Spring newsletter.
7. The manager will begin in March working with the linemen in the field one day a week.
8. PMLD now offers rebates on rechargeable yard equipment such as lawn mowers, snowblowers and hedge trimmers.
9. August financials: Operating revenue increased by \$128,100. Power costs increased \$34,019. Overall net income increased from July by \$18,117. This is attributed to a \$100,000 in residential electrical sales, \$9000 increase in AMC sales and small increases in sales in the other rate classes.
10. September financials: Operating revenue decreased from August by \$101,486. Power costs decreased by \$102,000. Some of this decrease is the elimination of the summer generator cost as well as a partial refund for July's generator costs. Overall net income decreased by \$99,000. Residential electrical sales decreased \$78,942, commercial sales decreased \$9,000, AMC decreased \$6000 and the other rate classes had small decreases in sales.

C. MMWEC Updates

- a. Seabrook: In the month of December Seabrook operated at 100%-unit availability and 100% capacity. Nextera is moving their current engineering services to their corporate offices in Juno, Florida. This is causing low morale and discontentment amongst the staff. Currently there is not a problem but something MMWEC feels is worth noting. The decommissioning funds held in escrow have been released back to MMWEC for all the municipal participants. MMWEC is setting up a trust for the funds.
- b. Millstone: Operated at full power for the month of December. No Operational issues.
- c. Stonybrook: Peaking availability was 99.23% and capacity was 0%, intermediate availability was 100% and 0% capacity for the month of December.

- d. Berkshire Wind: Decembers' availability factor was 58.61% and capacity was 29.4%. Its monthly production was lower than historical average. This is attributed to staffing shortages at GE and MMWEC where faults were not able to be diagnosed on 4 of the towers resulting in no production for 16 days.
- e. Eagle Creek: Oct- December production of 9698 mWh was higher than average attributable to higher-than-average fall precipitation.
- f. Hancock Wind: October to December produced 32,538 mWh of energy comparable to the prior year's production.
- g. Offshore Wind: MMWEC is still working on some hopeful offshore wind projects. Once they have the specifics ironed out, formal packages will be sent out to each member.
- h. MMWEC has changed the name of its rebate program from Munihelps to Nextzero.

D. AMI Updates: Collectors and routers are operational; software has been installed and working properly. Test meters were installed and functioning properly. We are currently testing out the billing compatibility from Landis & Gyr to Power Manager before moving forward with more installations. The goal is to install a minimum of 20 meters a day, at least 3 days a week. This leaves room for them to perform other jobs as well as continue with tree trimming.

E. Fiber Survey results: The board was provided with graphs that reflect the answers to each question on the survey. We had 870 responses. 820 felt that low-cost high-speed internet was important to the future of the community. 786 said that they would be interested if a new or alternate internet service was offered. Reliability was the most important criteria followed by availability and value. All were very favorable towards fiber. The Board asked the manager to put out a request for a consultant who could provide PMLD with a business model and financial projections to ascertain whether fiber would be viable in Paxton and how long it would take for ROI. Benoit suggested that PMLD investigate two different models: one where we provide internet to just the municipal buildings and the other town wide.

VI. Other Business:

- 1. A sympathy gift was dropped off to the Smith family in remembrance of Harold.
- 2. PMLD will be participating in Paxton Days in June.
- 3. We have 2 new solar installations in town, one on Pond St and the other on Richards Ave.

VII. Adjourn Benoit motioned to adjourn, Orell seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0.

The meeting adjourned at 7:02 pm.

The Next Meeting is April 12th, 2022, at 5:30 pm.

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Approved Minutes Submitted on behalf of the Paxton Light Commission

by Tara Rondeau on 4/12/22 Tara Rondeau

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