

***Paxton Municipal Light Department
578 Pleasant Street
Paxton, MA 01612-1300
Light Commission Meeting
March 9, 2021
Via Zoom***

- I. Call to order: The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Orell at 5:35 p.m. Members present via Zoom: Yvette Orell, Mike Benoit, Emerson Wheeler and Tara Rondeau, Manager. Public Attending Via Zoom: None.
- II. Approval of Agenda: Benoit motioned to approve the agenda; Wheeler seconded. Motion passed 3-0.
- III. Approval of Minutes: Wheeler motioned to approve the February 9, 2021 minutes; Benoit seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0.
- IV. Public Comment: None
- V. Managers' Report:
 - A. Operations and Electrical Systems Updates:
 - 1. The linemen continued trimming and chipping on South Street.
 - 2. They:
 - a. Installed primary wire on West St. for a temp service.
 - b. Replaced a pole on Nanigan Rd. that had been damaged by wind.
 - c. Upgraded a transformer on Camp St., due to low voltage.
 - d. Set up a temp service for a home on Camp St. that has a bad underground service needing replacement.
 - e. Straightened a pole on Winter St. that was loosened from a tree on its wires.
 - 3. The linemen performed a streetlight patrol. They found 3 lights out (Pierce Circle, Arrowhead Dr. and Marshall St), 2 that were cycling (Pierce Circle) and 2 that were very dim (Richards Ave.). All have been fixed.
 - 4. They did a visual review of all lease lights to update the spreadsheets.
 - 5. The linemen performed street patrols for branches on wires after each storm.
 - 6. Outages: Nanigan Road, Blackhill Rd. and West St-customers were without power for 5.5 hours. A very large tree took down lines and pulled the pole over. Affected 72 customers.
 - B. Office and Operations:
 - 1. Still waiting for one of the office staff to get vaccinated before opening up to the public.
 - 2. PMLD signed up with the Paxton Lions Club to provide information and giveaways for new resident "welcome baskets".
 - 3. PMLD's accounts receivable 90 days past due balance is \$30, 946. Last year at this same time it was \$26,064.87.
 - 4. Derek Peto, 1st Class Linemen from Holden, will be starting on April 1st.
 - 5. The manager pushed off the Landis & Gyr launch date from the week of April 5th to the

12th, due to the new linemen starting that first week. The first week will be online training and the following week they will be working in the field with techs from Landis & Gyr performing field surveys.

6. Installation of EV Charger at AMC has been delayed. Waiting on their electrician to perform the wiring.
7. 2 more residential solar applications came in, one on Pleasant St. and the other on Howard St.
8. The manager is working on job evaluations.
9. Matt will be returning in April to work part-time as Operations Coordinator. He will be working on numbering of the utility poles and updating the maps, meter inventory and covering for office staff vacations.

C. Fiber Optic Update/911 System: Nothing new to report.

D. Financials-January 2021: January revenue increased from December by \$77,965. This does not reflect power costs which have not posted yet for January. They are typically 2 to 3 months behind. Residential sales increased by \$71,976 from December 2020. All other rate class sales were stable.

The financial spreadsheets look a little different than past months. After an update in Power Manager, the data no longer lines up properly and needs to be adjusted. Orell stated that this has happened in the past.

E. MMWEC Project Updates:

a. Berkshire Wind-The year-to-date availability factor was 76.75% and the capacity factor was 31.74%. These percentages reflect a lower than historical average wind production in January caused by an intermittent outage on Tower 5a due to a main bearing needing to be replaced. The bearing was replaced in January but trouble shooting carried over into February, due to heavy icing on the mountain access was considered unsafe and MMWEC staff was not able to get 100% operational.

b. Millstone-The year-to-date availability factor was 84.4% and the capacity was 82.99%. These numbers were impacted by a 4-day unplanned outage on Unit 3 due to a feedwater heater that needed to be repaired. Next scheduled refueling outage will be in the spring of 2022. During that outage, the Reserve Station Service Transformers will be replaced, and major maintenance will be performed on the generator and exciter. After these repairs, it is anticipated that Unit 3's output will increase by 20 MW of which MMWEC will receive 1 MW for their 4.799% ownership rights

c. Stony Brook- The year-to-date availability factor for the peaking unit was 100% and the intermediate unit was 99.91%. The capacity factor was 0% for the peaking unit and .25% for the intermediate unit. As of February 8, 2021, they have 34.9% remaining fuel oil inventory left from the total usable storage capacity purchased in 2016. All units were operable for dispatch in January. Intermediate was down for one day for training purposes.

d. Seabrook- The year-to-date availability factor was 100% and the capacity factor was 100%. Seabrook operated at 100% power for the entire month of January, with no operational issues. In December 2020, the cylinder liners and B emergency generator were replaced. The next scheduled refueling outage will be in October 2021, which will be for 24 days. During that outage, the reactor vessel will be inspected, and the main feed pump rotating element will be replaced.

In 2019, the license for Seabrook was extended to 2050. The watchdog group, C-10, challenged the extension due to the ASR that was found in 2011. The NRC closed the case and the appeal process time has passed. They are continuing to monitor the ASR that was found in 2011 to ensure no issues.

e. NYPA-Under the Niagara Redevelopment Act of 1957, the license stipulates that 10% of the project power generated must go to the neighboring states: Conn., Mass., NJ., Ohio, Penn., RI., and Vermont. Mass is entitled to 53 MW. NYPA's agreement, which expires in 2025, is with the Mass DPU who works with MMWEC. MMWEC wanted the NYPA committee to get working on an extension of the agreement when COVID essentially put things on hold. Without an executed agreement extension, ISO will not accept the Mass. portion into the forward capacity auction for 2025 which occurs in February 2022. At this point, ISO has agreed to accept a one-year extension. The holdups include: COVID-19 and neighboring states wanting more shares.

F. End of Moratorium- Governor Baker has extended the moratorium on residential utility shutoffs to Jul 1, 2021. This only applies to IOU's. A polling of other munis shows a divide, some will not shut off and agree to the moratorium others are not. The Manager asked the Board how they would like PMLD to proceed. The Board's opinion is to follow the moratorium.

VI. Other Business:

A. The climate action plan bill is on the Governor's desk to be approved. It will call for zero net carbon emissions by 2050. The bill has interim reduction targets for MLP's of 50% by 2030, 75% by 2040 and net zero by 2050.

B. MIT is building a 47-acre research and manufacturing campus in Devens, Commonwealth Fusion Systems. They plan to bring fusion power to the market by using an experimental fusion device called SARC. Their power promises to be carbon free with only a small fraction of the radioactive waste of traditional nuclear power. To date, scientists have not been able to maintain a fusion reaction that creates more energy than it actually absorbs. MIT's fusion uses super-hot plasma and powerful magnets to make the hydrogen atoms fuse and release energy. A demonstration of the magnet will be held in June 2021. Benoit stated that he saw this on 60 Minutes and Bill Gates is part of this project.

C. Palmer Biomass- An article was printed in the Boston Commonwealth Magazine by a commissioner from Reading Light. The article states that Governor Baker gave \$175 million to this project because all the municipalities in Ma. wanted it to add to their portfolios in anticipation of the proposed climate bill. This commissioner wanted it known that Reading did not authorize the manager to invest in this project, they are not happy with the decision. Only 8 municipal light departments out of the 40 in Ma. invested in it. PMLD's manager wrote letters to our constituents letting them know that PMLD was not one of the 8.

D. The manager is going to be participating in a Zoom meeting with NEPPA and Senator Markey to discuss 3 issues: COVID relief for struggling customers to help pay their energy bills, rising transmission costs, and the FCC's 2018 policy on utility pole rental fees and their procedures.

E. Benoit asked about the MMWEC newsletters which he used to receive in the mail and no longer does. The Board would like to have MMWEC newsletters forwarded to them.

F. The Manager is looking into URD streetlight grants for LED.

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:22 pm.

The Next Meeting is April 13th, 2021 at 5:30 pm.

Approved Minutes Submitted on behalf of the Paxton Light Commission

by Tara Rondeau on 4/13/21 Tara Rondeau

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