

*Paxton Municipal Light Department*  
*578 Pleasant Street*  
*Paxton, MA 01612-1300*  
*Light Commission Meeting*  
**April 13, 2021**  
**Via Zoom**

- I. Call to order: The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Orell at 5:32 p.m. Members present via Zoom: Yvette Orell, Mike Benoit, Emerson Wheeler and Tara Rondeau, Manager. Public Attending Via Zoom: Adam Schremser.
- II. Approval of Agenda: Wheeler motioned to approve the agenda; Benoit seconded. Motion passed 3-0.
- III. Auditors Report-Presented by Adam Schremser from Goulet, Salvidio & Associates, P.C.

PMLD received a qualified opinion from the auditors due to the dates of the reports received from Worcester Regional Retirement System not being in compliance with GASB standards. Actuarial data provided by WRRS is from January 1, 2018, which is over the 30 month and one day government accounting standard for actuarial data reporting.

Operating revenue decreased by 2.6% and operating expenses increased by 1.6% from the prior year. The decreased revenue was due to a \$.02 per kW decrease in the PPA charge for the second half of 2020. The increase in operating expenses is primarily due to a 36.7% increase in PMLD's pension expense. The pension expense increase was offset by a 26% decrease in administrative and general budgetary expenses

PMLD's net worth decreased by 7.3% from 2019. PMLD had a net loss of \$208,374 which was a decrease of \$136,578 from the prior year. The net loss is due to PMLD's current rate structure and the PPA charge as well as the increase in liabilities attributed to pensions.

Benoit asked Mr. Schremser if PMLD should be using some of the money in OPEB to decrease our liabilities by paying for retiree's health insurance out of that account. Mr. Schremser believes that question would be better answered by Parker Elmore who completed PMLD's actuarial study. The Manager will speak with Mr. Elmore.

This year, Anna Maria College did not qualify as a major customer for PMLD. Since they had been closed for some time due to COVID, their sales were down and under 10% of PMLD's overall electric sales. A major customer is one whom contributes 10% or more to PMLD's sales.

Mr. Schremser stated that he has had numerous conversations with the Manager and knows that PMLD is in the process of changing its rate structure. These changes will increase our operating revenue and decrease our liabilities, which should avoid an operating loss going forward barring any unforeseen expenses, changes, etc.

Mr. Schremser left the Zoom meeting.
- IV. Approval of Minutes: Wheeler motioned to approve the March 9, 2021 minutes; Benoit seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0.
- V. Public Comment: None
- VI. Managers' Report:
  - A. Operations and Electrical Systems Updates:
    1. The linemen continued trimming and chipping. They are currently working on Tanglewood. They have completed Larchwood St., Knollwood St., and Ashwood St.

## 2. They:

- a. Dug, set a pole and transferred service on Pleasant Street due to a motor vehicle accident.
  - b. Installed fiberglass brackets on Grove Street for new primary wire.
  - c. Upgraded transformers on Grove Street.
  - d. Removed a bad underground service on Bumbobrook. Wire was not in a pipe and had been frozen in the ground.
  - e. Removed 2 off peak meters for customers no longer utilizing them.
  - f. Resagged primary and secondary wire on Pole #7 Indian Hill.
  - g. Ran a new service on Davis Hill.
  - h. Repaired an underground streetlight on Old Lantern.
3. The linemen performed street patrols removing wires on the branches on: Hill St., South St. and Marshall St. They also removed a tree on the wires on the corner of Pleasant St. and Ledyard.
  4. They performed diagnostics on a transformer and a customer's meter to investigate a complaint of high usage by a customer on West street.
  5. The linemen participated in a one-day kick-off training with Landis & Gyr for the AMI metering system.
  6. They performed streetlight maintenance and repairs in Spencer.
  7. The linemen fixed the wall in the parking lot of the Town Hall and removed the net on the baseball field.
8. Outages:
    - a. Bumbobrook-affected 1 customer. Primary wire failed.
    - b. Corner of Richards Ave. and Streeter Rd. Fuse blew on Streeter Rd affecting 1 customer.
    - c. Howard Street-Customer cut tree and pulled their service off their home.
    - d. Camp Street-Excavator dug up the underground service. Wire was not in a pipe. Outage affected 6 customers.

## B. Office and Operations:

1. The office staff will be receiving their second COVID vaccination shots the last week of April. After that, we will then open the office to the public on May 3.
2. Office staff is back to working full-time on site.
3. The office staff participated in a kickoff training for the AMI metering system.
4. PMLD's accounts receivable 90 days past due balance is \$46, 016. Last year at this same time it was \$40, 228.
5. Next week, techs from Landis & Gyr will be in town performing tests on the strength of the radio signals at the proposed locations of the routers.

6. Installation of the EV Charger at AMC has been delayed. The electrician is waiting on a coring company to drill a hole through the concrete wall for him to run wires. The EV charger must be operational by May 6. The manager is requesting a one-month extension with the DOER.
7. Matt's last day was March 19<sup>th</sup>. We had a luncheon attended by only staff. PMLD gave him a lamp made from a restored vintage 1911 Westinghouse meter. April 5<sup>th</sup> Matt will start working part-time as the Operations Coordinator.
8. The spring 2021 newsletter will be going out the end of this week.
9. Derek Peto, 1<sup>st</sup> Class Linemen, started on April 1<sup>st</sup>. He is working out great.

C. MMWEC Project Updates:

- a. Berkshire Wind-The year-to-date availability factor for Feb. was 83.97% and the capacity factor was 28.73%. These percentages reflect a lower than historical average wind production in February caused by mechanical issues and wind speeds below season averages. There were repeated outages on Towers 3 and 1. Tower 3 had multiple battery and charger faults and required a pitch motor replacement. Tower 5 needed a main bearing replaced. Adverse weather conditions and lack of available personnel at MWEC resulted in these issues not being immediately addressed causing significant down time. The manager will be looking into this further.
- b. Millstone-The year-to-date availability factor for Feb. was 100% and the capacity was 101.21%. Millstone Unit 3 had a down day for Turbine Valve testing. Otherwise, it operated at full power for the month. A most recent audit concluded with an excellent safety performance noted for the station. The next audit will be this May. As noted last month, in the spring of 2022 significant upgrades to Millstone 3 will be performed which should result in increased output. MMWEC's share of the upgrade cost is \$1.38 million which is projected to take 6 years to pay back. Paxton's share of costs and additional kwh output is 4%.
- c. Stony Brook- The year-to-date availability factor for Feb. for the peaking unit was 100% and the intermediate unit was 99.91%. The capacity factor was 0% for the peaking unit and .13% for the intermediate unit. Stony Brook was not dispatched in February. There were no outages in February resulting in 100% availability.
- d. Seabrook- The year-to-date availability factor for Feb. was 100% and the capacity factor was 100%. Seabrook operated at 100% power for the entire month of February, with no operational issues. Next scheduled refueling outage is October 2021, which will last 24 days. Vice President, Eric McCartney, announced his retirement. He will be replaced by Brian Booth, the sites maintenance director.
- e. NYPA-No reports received.

D. Governors Climate Bill- On March 26, 2021 Governor Baker signed the new law, Senate Bill 9 – *An Act Creating a Next Generation Roadmap for Massachusetts Climate Change*. MMWEC will be meeting individually with light depts. to discuss how this bill will impact their current power portfolios and what our future paths and options will be. Currently, PMLD meets the benchmarks through the year 2035.

If Governor Baker does not seek reelection in 2022, Democratic candidate Ben Downing has an even more aggressive campaign proposal for climate change that would move all deadlines up 10 years.

VII. Other Business:

A. The air permit for the proposed Palmer Biomass Plant has been revoked.

B. Starting in 2021, the Charter pole rental fee will go up 61%. This rate has not been changed since 1992.

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:24 pm.

The Next Meeting is May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 5:30 pm.

Approved Minutes Submitted on behalf of the Paxton Light Commission

by Tara Rondeau on 5/11/21 Tara Rondeau

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