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John M. Driscoll, *General Manager*

Light Commissioners' Meeting

February 2, 2022

Members present were: Chairman Dana Blais
Clerk Chris Stewart
Member Gregg Edwards

Employees present were: General Manager (GM) John Driscoll
Light Superintendent (LS) Thomas Berry

The meeting was called to order at 6:37 p.m. by Dana.

The agenda was approved on a motion from Chris, seconded by Gregg, 3-0 in favor.

Old Business:

The LS gave the Board an update on the status of the two (2) construction projects going on at the office, the garage expansion and the storage building. Most of the HVAC work and installation of garage doors are still left to complete in both areas. In the storage building, the electrical, fire alarm and personnel doors still need to be done. There is also some miscellaneous cleanup/painting to be done before Construction Dynamics can close out this project and get their final payment of about **\$65,000**.

New Business:

The GM informed the Board that the Farnsworth Rd Solar Array had been offline from November 19, 2021 until January 11, 2022 (53 days). He said that the power it would have provided based on its performance from November 19, 2020 to January 11, 2021 was about 245 MWH for **\$14,956**. The replacement power bought from the market would cost about **\$20,985**, which was an added cost of **\$6,029** for 2021 power supply. The GM said he didn't know the reason for this 6-week solar outage or why the array owners were OK losing almost \$15,000 by waiting to go back online.

The LS informed the Board that Templeton Wind had been offline since mid-January and explained that the unit was repeatedly tripping offline due to converter errors. The converter is what takes the AC voltage present in the nacelle and converts it to DC voltage that can be used for controls and relaying. The LS said that there was a difference of opinion between AMSC the controls manufacturer and Baldwin Energy who routinely perform our wind turbine maintenance. He wanted to wait for AMSC to make a final determination on whether or not to replace the existing converter control board with a spare board that we had refurbished. The LS will update the Board again once this issue is resolved.

The GM update the Board on the status of our OPEB Trust as of January 31, 2022. The balance was **\$591,657** which was comprised of **\$407,685** in deposits and **\$183,972** in fund returns. The Light Plant was about 51% funded for their current UAAL of **\$1,170,233**. Dana asked if these funds were available right now to use to lower our

healthcare costs. The GM responded that yes, they were, but it wasn't necessary at this time based on the recent increases the Light Plant had seen in premiums. If there were ever a drastic enough increase in healthcare premiums that it could actually affect electric rates directly, the GM stated that then it would be time to draw down the OPEB Trust somewhat to subsidize our premium payments.

The GM presented the Board with an update net revenue report on the Templeton Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). From May 2019 thru December 2021 the BESS had provided \$833,000 in revenues (capacity, fuel, transmission) against \$292,000 in expenses (loan principal/interest, MMWEC charges, electricity) yielding net revenues of \$541,000. The GM stated that at this point the BESS is on track to either match its 5.3-year payback term or surpass it.

The GM informed the Board that at the upcoming annual town meeting in May 2022 the commissioners' salaries would be included in the warrant for a town vote by those present. He had already had a conversation with the Town Administrator on this insisting that it was a bad idea. The GM didn't want the Light Plant and the Town to be at odds over this (long-resolved) issue at the annual town meeting before an audience of voters. The GM told him that neither he nor the Town Administrator would appear to know what they're doing and that those in attendance would not know who was right and who was wrong. The GM knew that Selectman Bennett was the driving force behind this issue as he'd been in the past, and he couldn't imagine any of the other member Selectmen concerning themselves with this issue at all; that they had more pressing matters at hand. Chris suggested that we get a formal legal opinion from counsel to give to the Town to at least cover ourselves, even though all present agreed that the Light Commission solely governs all Light Plant salaries including their own.

Other Business:

There were four (4) handouts tonight:

1. January 2022 Power Supply
2. 2021 Power Supply
3. 2021 Sales Summary
4. 2021 Wind Generation
5. 2021 Retail Rates

[The Light Plant came out in 5th place out of 39 electric utilities in MA on residential rates for 750 kWh monthly usage for the 4th quarter of 2021. The Light Plant came out in 7th place on average out of 37 electric utilities in MA on commercial/industrial rates for 3,000 to 1,260,000 kWh monthly usage for the 4th quarter of 2021. Both according to MMWEC's rate comparisons for Q4 2021.]

There being no other Open Session business to discuss, on a motion by Gregg, seconded by Dana, 2-0 in favor, the Light Commissioners' Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



John M Driscoll
General Manager