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John M. Driscoll, *General Manager*

**Light Commissioners' Meeting
November 12, 2019**

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

Employees present were: General Manager (GM) John Driscoll (conference call)
Light Superintendent (LS) Thomas Berry
Business Manager (BM) Jennifer Belliveau

The meeting was called to order at 6:55 p.m. by Dana.

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

Old Business:

The GM updated the Board on the status of the MA MLP legislation filed in January 2019 by MEAM, House Bill H.2863. He had communicated with Bob Rodophele at FSR who told him that the bill was being looked at in various House and Senate committees and it was unlikely that there would be anything substantive to report on the bill's progress till July 2020.

The GM updated the Board on the status of the Light Plant's audited financial statements for the calendar year 2018. He offered that much of the delay on getting this wrapped up was his own out-of-work time in June/July/August/September. He had been in communication with Melanson-Heath and provided responses to their comments on the various accounting controls and procedures that needed improvements in their opinion. The GM stated that the final draft of the 2018 audit was not far away and would contain not only Melanson-Heath recommendations on accounting practices for the Light Plant but also contain the GM's responses from the Light Plant in the same document. He stated that the net income for 2018 would be in the range of \$400K to \$500K.

The GM brought up to the Board the issue of a generation credit that was due to our Rate 4 customers (C4, M4, P4) from May 2019 thru December 2019. He said it came down to a discrepancy between the Light Plant's stated generation rate per KWH on the TMLWP website of \$0.0458 and our actual generation rate of \$0.0548 per KWH. It had been noticed by Melanson-Heath during the regular course of their preparing our 2018 audited financial statements; the suggestion to refund these customers the

difference between the two rates (-\$0.0090) from May 2019 thru December 2019 was to protect against a potential false advertising claim. Rebates to our 46 rate 4 customers would equal \$13,692 in total and the GM required a board vote to authorize such a bill credit to electric customers. The Board took no issue with this as the customers would be receiving a credit against their electric bill rather than an additional charge to it. The GM thought it to be easier to produce bill credits for each of the 46 electric customers on their December 2019 bills rather than be tasked with producing 46 light warrant checks; the Board agreed. At this time a vote took place as follows:

On a motion by Chris, seconded by Gregg, 3-0 in favor, the Board authorized the GM to issue the 46 electric customers credits totaling \$13,692 in order to account for the Light Plant's discrepancy between its posted rates and its actual ones.

Dana - Aye

Chris - Aye

Gregg - Aye

The LS updated the Board on the status of the new Truck #29 that was already supposed to have been delivered to the Light Plant weeks ago. He still had no firm delivery date from the municipal vehicle vendor and, like the GM, was mystified by its taking so long without any real explanation. He would let the Board know at the next meeting if anything had changed with this truck's delivery.

The GM had nothing new to report on the status of the property survey at 11 3/4 Elm St, the site of the old light department operations facility. He had been in contact with Pera Surveying before tonight's meeting but had not gotten any feedback on the survey status before this meeting began.

The GM and LS told the Board that we had lost a 2nd class lineman to NHEC back in August, and we had spent upwards of \$12K on his training to become a 2nd class lineman. The Light Plant would now get no return on our investment in this education as they would not be able to get any production out of this (now) former employee. The GM told the Board that both Ashburnham and Sterling had also lost linemen in a similar fashion to NGRID and had as a result added union contract language to prevent repeat occurrences. The language simply outlined a percentage of the lineman's training cost that would need be paid back to the light department if the lineman chose voluntarily to leave the TMLWP for other employment as a lineman. The union here was supportive of the new contract language since none of their existing members would be affected by it. The GM said that our current group of linemen had already put in anywhere from 6 to 39 years of service here and thus the light department was in no danger of losing out on the training investment. Both the GM and the LS wanted to have this in place before a replacement lineman was hired at entry level, and the Board agreed with them.

New Business:

The GM distributed to the Board a draft operating budget for the calendar year 2020 totaling \$7,435,418, which was the same budget total for the 2019 budget year. The LS noticed that the figure for Account #593 seemed too low to include enough of the tree-trimming that we had been having done as of late. The GM agreed and would have to go back to his draft budget to adjust; there would be no board vote on the 2020 budget tonight.

The GM distributed copies to the Board of the 2018 APPA Survey results for retail electric rates for last year. The TMLWP came in at #5 out of 42 at 11.89¢ per KWH, including National Grid who came in at #38 out of 42 at 20.63¢ per KWH. In the same survey spots #1 thru #4 were occupied by Hudson, Shrewsbury, Boylston and Peabody respectively.

The Manager had four handouts for the Board tonight:

1. October 2019 Power Supply
2. October 2019 Wind Generation
3. October 2019 Kilowatt-Hour Sales and Revenues
4. November 2019 Retail Rates

Other Business:

There being no other Open Session business to discuss, on a motion by Chris, seconded by Dana, 3-0 in favor, the Light Commissioners' Meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

John M Driscoll



General Manager