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John M. Driscoll, *General Manager*

**Light Commissioners' Meeting  
March 6, 2018**

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

Employees present were: General Manager John Driscoll  
Light Superintendent, Thomas Berry  
Business Manager Jennifer Belliveau

The meeting was called to order at 6:46 p.m. by Dana.

The agenda was approved on a motion from Chris, seconded by Dana, 2-0 in favor.

The minutes of December 13, 2017 were approved on a motion from Gregg, seconded by Chris, 2-0 in favor.

The minutes of January 24, 2018 could only be approved by Dana and Chris since Gregg did not attend that meeting, 2-0 in favor.

**Old Business:**

The General Manager (GM) had a handout for the Board on the Cost paid so far to Eaton Corporation for the AMI metering system. The total amount paid out as of the end of February was \$137K, which is 21% of the total AMI cost.

The Light Superintendent (LS) updated the Board on the Eaton AMI metering system. The LS said the Gateway installed on Holman St was trying to communicate with the current meters installed, but we had a Gateway here at the office too. Today, TMLP had to disconnect the Gateway on Holman St so the office one could communicate with the meters, we are now reading 36 out of the 50 meters. It takes 1-2 days for the meters to find the Gateway, and by tomorrow we should be able to communicate with all 50 of them. In 1-2 weeks we can start mass replacement of the meters. The LS did say we still need to verify the billing report export with Tony Gallati from ASABSD and Mark from Eaton. The GM stated that Eaton has been good to work with. TMLP will next get the testing done and send the files to Billtrust.

The GM updated the Board on the battery storage. Two people Doug A and Chris Q from NEC plus Jason V from MMWEC had stopped by earlier in the week to speak with the GM on battery storage. The GM said that where TMLP was at was looking at sole-funding of a battery absent any MA DOER granted funds. He handed out 2 models, each 2 pages. One proposal was with 100% financing from TMLWP and another was with 72% (this was contingent on the TMLP's desire to pay back the rate stabilization funds in addition to the MRT and leant funds). The lifespan of these batteries is 15 years. If TMLP was to fund half of the cost and utilize MMWEC Pooled Financing to fund the other half (equivalent to a 10-

year note at 4% APR) the project was still viable. There would be a 6.9-year payback utilizing a pooled financing PLUS TMLP trust funding methodology. The GM recommended funding the non-leased portion of the total \$2,049,654 (\$1,024,827) with \$458,616 from Working Capital Trust and the remaining \$556,211 from Rate Stabilization Fund, both held at MMWEC.

Gregg commented on the spreadsheets as being just more projection data; that he would like to see a project plan to absorb this better. He said these pages are all based on market assumptions and he would rather see plans on how this would physically work. The GM told Gregg that he was only trying to assess the Board's willingness to move forward at all with battery storage or not. He stated that MMWEC has a line of credit from Bank of America of close to \$30M and currently Templeton was "in line" for \$1M of pooled financing. MMWEC would need an absolute answer from us by October 2018 so that they could secure our portion of the total amount of funds to be borrowed in time. Gregg and Dana both wanted more project detail first before committing to anything on funding/spending.

Dana asked how SMLD's battery system was running thus far. The GM said that their 2 MVA/3.9 MWH system had been online since December 2016 and had been able to reduce Sterling's transmission hourly peak for 13 out of the last 15 months, missing only 2 hourly peaks. He added that SMLD also had the battery discharging at 100% of its output during the capacity hourly peak in June 2017. The GM stressed that about 60%-70% of the battery system's revenue comes from the annual capacity peak rather than the sum of the transmission peaks. He added that the savings to Sterling Light in 2017 had surpassed their \$400K expectation. The GM apologized for his constant reference to the Sterling battery system along these few months, but explained that there were no other projects this size in New England online that he was aware of; only in conception like us. Ashburnham's and Wakefield's battery system would not be online for another 9-12 months so it would be more like 18-24 months before any appreciable data would be available for comparison. The GM agreed to suspend this battery discussion till he had more information beyond projected savings to TMLP.

The GM provided the Board with copies of an email from Bob Rodophele regarding the MA Senate S.2302 ("An Act to Promote a Clean Energy Future"), a.k.a. the "Pacheco" bill. He also provided copies of letters that he had sent to Templeton's legislators, Representative Susannah Whipps and Senator Anne Gobi asking for their assistance in objecting to the Pacheco bill. The GM still found this bill to be the most problematic should it become a law, and added that MEAM would have to file a law suit if it was ever signed into law. There was a MEAM meeting coming up in the third week of March where the clear majority of the MLP Managers would be on a united front on our course of action in the next few months.

The GM told the Board that the average MEAM MLP has a power portfolio consisting of 41% non-emitting resources (MMWEC average is slightly higher at 43%) based on 2015 data submitted to the Mass DEP in our AQ-31 and AQ-32 reports. The IOUs' portfolios are down in the 8%-10% range for the same statistic, even while already operating under state mandates.

The GM updated the Board on the NEPPA Mutual Aid in St Thomas, USVI and our reimbursement for Nick and Shane and Truck #27. He shared an email from Scott Edwards regarding the FEMA/WAPA check that was received by NEPPA for Wave #2 made out for \$3M rather than the full \$3.8M; they held back 22% of this full invoice without explanation. For the Wave #1 reimbursement check they had held back 5% similarly even though there was no such provision in our mutual aid agreement with them. The TMLP's share of Wave #2 reimbursement was \$115K so we should be receiving \$90K or so next week once NEPPA generates all the individual systems' checks. After the 2008 Ice Storm, the TMLP only received 75% of our total reimbursement from FEMA months after power restoration efforts completed. The GM remembered that they were to wait for the remaining 25% to come from state funds rather than federal funds but in the end, we only received an additional 12.5%, leaving about \$50K left over for us to pay out of our own operating budget. The GM decided that we will no longer be sending our crews outside of the New England states for mutual aid.



Dana asked how much we received for our truck; the GM said \$65 per hour (FEMA rate) for a total of about \$40K. He said that our rate for trucks in town is only \$22 per hour. Dana was glad that the higher margin on the truck made up for the lower margin on the labor.

The GM did let the Board know that we sent a crew Hingham Light on Saturday, March 3 and they were then transferred to Taunton Light on Sunday, March 4. He thought that they would be done on Wednesday, (tomorrow) March 7. The GM already received an email from Paul H at Hingham Light expressing their gratitude for our quick mutual aid response and that our crew could not have been more helpful to them. Paul said that our crew was on-time, courteous and hard-working. Dana asked who the TMLP sent; the LS said they had to send two rated linemen and Nick H and Joe P elected to go this time.

The GM updated the Board on the progress of Pera Surveying and the TMLP property at #11 3/4 Elm St in Baldwinville. Weather had been a problem for Chris Pera thus far in 2018 and the information available from the Town or from the Registry of Deeds was insufficient to warrant a site visit to start putting boundary markers in OR look for existing ones. Chris Pera was to attend the February meeting but we could not achieve a quorum. He will contact him before the April meeting.

The GM discussed the status on UniBank online bill payments with the Board. Online payments have been available since March 1 and thus far the TMLP had received 4 payments. Notices to customers will be going out with the East Templeton bills this month. The GM stated that our only cost for the UniBank system startup was for Tony G from ASABSD.

The GM talked to the Commissioners about the FY2019 Contribution to the Town. TA Carter Terenzini had sent an email to the GM with some ideas. The GM said they were a bit alarmed by having to pay ALL of their electric and municipal lighting bills again after paying \$0 for 4 fiscal years. He asked if the Town could enter a tiered program and pay for 20% in FY2019, 40% in FY2020, 60% in FY2021, etc., till they are back to paying it all on their own. Some other ideas included:

- \$8,500 toward a John Deere Tractor GX45
- \$5,000 toward an infield groomer at Gilman Waite Rec Dept.
- \$10,000 toward 10 SCBA Tanks for part-time firefighters
- \$20,000 toward a "Vision Software" upgrade
- \$6,500 toward Bridge St Engineering and Design

The GM was not sure what the \$20K toward Vision Software upgrade was but he suspected (was not certain) it may have something to do with the Sewer Department and the Town's plans to take over their bill collections. Gregg was concerned that this was some new yet-to-be-tested accounting software product and didn't really want Templeton being the test case for it. The GM thought the Bridge St Engineering & Design plans should be our priority and added that ALL our visiting customers are issuing complaints to us about the road's condition. Chris suggested instead of the \$20K Vision Software contribution the TMLP would contribute the \$20K to this Bridge St effort. Dana thought either that or buy more of the SCBA tanks with the funds; Gregg agreed. Chris would like to see the TMLP stop paying the Town's electricity bills in full for a fifth year. At this time, a vote took place as follows:

*"On a motion by Chris, seconded by Gregg, 3-0 in favor the Board voted on the FY2019 Contribution to the Town for \$82,000; \$8,500 for the tractor, \$5,000 for the groomer, \$20,000 for the tanks and the balance to go to the Bridge St Reconstruction effort."*

*Gregg – Aye*

*Chris – Aye*

*Dana – Aye*

**New Business:**



The GM discussed the AMI System Meter Opt-Out Policy. Steve D of #18 Drury Ln was in attendance as a resident who DID NOT WANT an AMI meter on his home; he felt that by law we must respect that. The GM agreed in principle and stated that the electric customer-of-record has the right to object to the installation of such a RF device on his/her premises. He then added that this opt-out policy is determined by the cost of our employees' time, both operational and administrative, to read a new non-RF meter AND process the customer bill manually. The labor cost is based on 15 minutes of labor for the lowest paid lineman and the lowest paid office employee along with a one-time charge to the opt-out customer for a residential meter with all the AMI meter capabilities less any RF ones. The Year 1 cost would be \$16.29 per month increasing annually by 3%. A 10-year schedule had been laid out by the GM, who did not see the point in expanding the schedule any further; labor and meter costs will fluctuate year-to-year.

Steve D addressed Dana as Chairman, stating that no one in town knew that this was taking place and stated that there will be RF radiation and fire issues with these AMI meters. Steve D did not see the need in changing the analog (existing AMR meters are NOT analog) meters which were working fine now. He was also concerned with the additional cost to opt-out as a residential customer. Dana responded to Steve D's assertion that this Board had not "done their homework" on these AMI smart meters; he stated that we had been working on cost-benefit analysis for a Templeton AMI system for over a year now. Many hours and dollars had been expended to rule out any factors that could make this project not worthwhile. Steve D stated that was all well and good but it did not address the safety concerns with these AMI smart meters. Gregg then stated that it was the responsibility of Eaton Corporation to properly assess any hazards to human health tied to these types of meters, as it was their name on all the AMI products. Dana reinforced this by adding that this is what independent test laboratories are for, and it was not the role of the TMLP to conduct any type of scientific testing on equipment that it would be installing on someone else's property; that this had already been handled.

Steve D said that it would be nice if the TMLP was less concerned about "profit" (MLPs are not allowed to profit) and more concerned about safety. The GM responded to this by telling him that a 30-year savings of over \$6M to not have a meter technician earning wages and receiving benefits, a 9-year payback, an 11% return-on-investment AND an outside consultant's report on our proposed AMI system were not things that could not be ignored. He added that other companies had already performed due diligence with for more resources than the TMLP could obtain. Steve D provided the Board with a copy of a state legislative bill that was supposedly going to make illegal the utility practice of charging their opt-out customers more than the other ones. The GM stated that actually this was a bill and not a law yet, and he thought that perhaps Steve D was referring to the Eversource matter on solar distributed generation (some state legislators did not like the idea of Eversource charging residents for demand who had their own solar generation; this had nothing to do with AMI or smart meters). Steve D then stated that if the TMLP were to install one of these meters on his home then it would be our insurance liability if it were to cause any harm or damage. The GM stated that this would only be the case if the state fire inspector determined that it was in fact our meter that started a fire and not one of the numerous other factors on the residents' side. Steve D stated that insurance companies had already refused to offer homeowners insurance coverage if an AMI smart meter were present on the structure. Dana asked Steve which insurance company he used for homeowners insurance and was it one of the ones refusing to offer coverage? Steve S responded that the resident stated they should have consent and if not then the TMLP is "taking away their rights". He (Steve) threatened to file suit if we installed such a meter without his consent; the GM stated that he did not understand his point, that there was to be an opt-out policy put into place for residents like Steve D who did not want to have one. There would be an additional cost for this manual meter reading expense. At this point, Dana said that we (the Board) would take Steve's comments under advisement. (Gregg did say that Steve may have a point on the additional opt-out cost, and that perhaps our electric cost-of-service should already be covering it.)

The GM provided the Board with an estimate of FY2019 health insurance premiums and an increase of 5.69% for the Light Plant. The Town has 90+ insured employees, retirees and spouses but only 2 on a

PPO plan rather than HMO, which costs both the employee and the Town more. The Town wanted to eliminate the 2 PPO plans and MIIA had increased PPO premiums to the point that it would be absurd for these 2 individuals to remain on it. The GM stated that our increase of just 5.69% was predicated on ALL town employees getting off PPO.

The GM had five handouts tonight:

1. January 2018 Power Supply
2. January/February 2018 Wind Generation
3. January/February 2018 Kilowatt-Hour Sales/Revenue
4. February/March 2018 Retail Electric Rates (TMLP)
5. March 2018 Residential Electric Rate Comparisons

**Other Business:**

At this time a vote was taken as follows:

*"A motion was made by Chris, seconded by Gregg, 3-0 favor for the Board to enter into Executive Session pursuant to MGL Ch 30A Sec 21(a) to discuss trade secrets or confidential, competitively sensitive or other proprietary information provided in the course of activities conducted by a governmental body as an energy supplier under a license granted by the DPU pursuant to MGL Ch 164 Sec 1(f) when such governmental body determines that such disclosure will adversely affect its ability to conduct business in relation to other entities making, selling or distributing electric power and energy."*

*Gregg – Aye*

*Chris – Aye*

*Dana – Aye*

[The Chairman did state that the Board would re-convene in Open Session following Executive Session only to Adjourn.]

There being no other Open Session business to discuss, on a motion by Chris, seconded by Dana, 2-0 in favor the Light Commissioners' Meeting adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



John M. Driscoll  
General Manager