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John M. Driscoll, *General Manager*

**Light Commissioners' Meeting
March 9, 2021**

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

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 p.m. by Chris.

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

The minutes from March 9 could not be approved yet since Gregg was at this meeting but Dana wasn't.

Old Business:

The General Manager (GM) updated the Board on the MEAM Legislation. The GM provided handouts of email from Bob Rodophele sent back in January to all the MEAM members regarding the passing of the Climate Bill through the Senate and House. Governor Baker received the Bill and returned the Climate Bill to the legislature with proposed amendments. The MLP language would not be changed. This new law will require the TMLP to be 50% non-emitting by 2030; the GM told the Board that the TMLP is already at 47% as of 2020.

The GM handed out a copy of his proposed 2021 TMLP Budget to the Board. Like in December 2020 there were only 2 commissioners present at this March meeting, so there was no discussion or vote on the budget this time around either.

The GM updated the Board on the construction status of the building expansion and the storage facility. Dana was concerned with the back corner of the garage expansion because the footing was not 4' underground as the plans had called for. He was concerned that the outside weather would ultimately push the footing up. Dana did not want Construction Dynamics to backfill this area until the footing was lowered to where it should be. He asked who was checking the grades for the excavation and if it was Paul Lienek doing it. The LS said Paul Lienek would be on-site tomorrow. The LS suggested getting Bill Murray to come to the site and look at its elevations. The LS told the Board that there needed to be a

change order to the project involving the electrical service to the garage expansion. Instead of extending an existing circuit over there from the panel in the garage already, but the LS and the electrician agreed that it made more sense to wire a new panel in the expansion with larger conductors to account for the distance and voltage drop. Other project aspects were running smoothly.

There was another discussion about the TMLP poles located on Ross Rd off of Dudley Rd. Dana said that the Chrusciels had blocked off the entrance to the driveway for #3 Ross Rd (the GM and the LS were already aware of this on January 2). Dana said that if these poles were on private property then they should be moved to somewhere else. The GM and the LS cited differences amongst the various deeds presented to them by Chrusciel, Lisenbee and Furr. The GM stated that the easement located to the right of #1 Ross Rd was not designated as a utility easement on any of them. The Chairman of the Board of Selectmen had already been in contact with both the GM and the LS in order to get some information on this situation; he said that they were now getting pressure to get involved in this situation in an effort to get the driveway unblocked. The GM stated that the poles located on Ross Rd only have the electric service on them for #3. Similarly, the blocking of the entrance to the driveway also affects only #3. He felt that this was clearly a property dispute between Chrusciel and Furr (Lisenbee is collateral damage); why have the TMLP get involved and/or pick a side? The action of blocking the driveway alone warrants action in land court to be initiated by Furr. The TMLP should only be involved if called as a court witness or included in a court judgment as a party responsible for re-locating utility poles.

New Business:

The GM discussed with the Board the idea of retiring our WRECs for Berkshire Wind and Templeton Wind beginning in 2021, i.e., no longer having MMWEC sell them to the IOUs on our behalf in the WREC market. Giving up the WREC revenues from both projects would enable us to now count our 1,666 kW of owned wind assets as non-emitting resources under the law. In our 2020 power supply Berkshire Wind produced \$90,316 in WREC revenues, while Templeton Wind provided \$61,549 in the same. Eliminating Berkshire and Templeton WREC revenues in 2020 would increase our wind power costs by 34% and 26% respectively, but it would only have increased our 2020 total power supply cost by 4%. The GM stated that had we retired our WRECs in 2020 instead of selling them to the IOUs our 47% non-emitting figure would have increased to 53%. The Board would wait till the next regularly scheduled meeting with a full quorum to decide on this issue.

The GM suggested to the Board that our C1 (M1,P1) rate be decreased by 10%. His justification was the last year or so of rate comparisons for residential, commercial and industrial customers. The TMLP had come in 1st, 2nd or 3rd place in most of the rate categories except for 100,000 kWh, which is about what a C1 rate customer uses here. The TMLP's placement here was often 11th, 12th or 13th place rather than in 1st, 2nd or 3rd. The GM said that not only would this help out our largest private customers but our largest public customers as well (NRHS, TC School, Templeton WWTP, Gardner WWTP). Dana felt that yes, if we could afford to do this then we should do it; Chris agreed. At this time a vote took place as follows:

On a motion by Chris, seconded by Dana, 2-0 in favor the Board

*On a motion by Chris, seconded by Dana, 2-0 in favor the Board
voted to decrease the C1/M1/P1 rates by 10%, effective April 2021.*

Dana- Aye

Chris - Aye

The LS told the Board that the TMLP desperately needed a new forklift. Recently, WD Matthews had been out here on three different service calls to address the failing brakes which now appear to be functioning properly. The LS researched different state programs and NITCO, who currently services our backhoe, has a larger model forklift available for purchase than what we currently use. This newer model forklift, while only slightly larger than our existing unit, has roughly double the lifting capacity. The LS made a trip to see one of these larger forklift units and noted the benefits of a hydraulic lift and dual fuel system (gasoline or propane). The TMLP could get a good price for this forklift unit as a member of the Massachusetts Higher Education Consortium (MHEC), so the LS signed up the TMLP with them. He said that NITCO currently has ten (10) units on order for May 2021. At this time a vote took place as follows:

*On a motion by Dana, seconded by Chris, 2-0 in favor the Board
voted to purchase a new Model H60UT Forklift through the State of MA MHEC program.*

Dana - Aye

Chris- Aye

The GM provided the Board with a 2021 MEAM Pilot survey. For 2020 TMLP had paid \$81,987 to the Town as a PILOT for products and services. He said that he had not yet heard from the Town on what their needs might be for the upcoming FY2022. The GM said that beyond covering 20% of the Town's electricity bills we have no other contributions planned at this time. He will reach out to the new Town Administrator for some feedback on this issue.

Other Business:

The LS updated the Board on the plan for substation upgrades and SCADA system expansion. The LS stated that PLM had begun the design of the upgraded protective relaying and a standby generator for the control to keep the batteries charging should the A1 line trip offline again for an extended period of time as it did in December 2008 (ice storm). PLM will install two (2) new relaying docks with modern relays and protective schemes and recloser controls that will allow us to perform much of our routine substation from within the control house. The designs are being approved by National Grid right now. The LS estimated the cost of these substation upgrades at somewhere between \$150,000 and \$200,000. The TMLP will need to go out to bid for this project. At this time a vote took place as follows:

*On a motion by Dana, seconded by Chris, 2-0 in favor the Board
voted to go out to bid for the substation upgrades*

Dana- Aye

Chris - Aye


The GM wanted to let the Board know about some issues regarding the occupant at #18 Drury Ln in Templeton. To date the occupant had refused to pay the one-time non-AMI meter fee of \$125, so the GM had been left with no choice but to terminate his electric service in mid-April for non-payment. Once the occupant learned of this he was somehow able to secure a letter from the Templeton Board of Health Agent citing his need for electricity for reasons of hygiene. Once the GM received this letter he opted to place a municipal lien on the property for electric arrears. But when the TMLP attempted to do this process in an attempt to collect the \$125 from the lien in May/June the Templeton Board of Assessors informed us that they would no longer be processing liens for the TMLP for any properties, including #18 Drury Ln. The TMLP now really had no way to collect our \$125 owed for the non-AMI meter installed at this occupant's location. The GM would reach out to legal counsel on this matter before pursuing a small claims court filing, which would be an incredible waste of time and resources to collect just \$125. But the TMLP would not be able to simply do without all of the other municipal liens on all of the other properties with electric arrears. The GM would update the Board at the next regularly scheduled meeting on his legal findings on this lien matter. [The GM thought it important for the Board to know about the actions of both the Templeton BOH and BOA before they made a final decision on any kind of contribution to the Town for FY2022.]

The GM had five handouts for tonight:

1. 2020 Year-End Power Supply
2. 2020 Year-End Sales Summary & Revenues
3. 2020 Year-End Wind Generation
4. MMWEC Rate Comparisons for Q4 2020
5. March 2021 Retail Rates

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 7:29 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



John M. Driscoll
General Manager