

Concord Municipal Light Board Minutes
March 22, 2023

Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Municipal Light Board was held on Wednesday March 22, 2023, at 7:30 AM, via a Zoom Webinar. Present were Board Members: Brian Foulds (Chair), Warren Leon, Alice Kaufman, Wendy Rovelli, and Pam Hill. Also in attendance were David Wood, CMLP Director; Jason Bulger, Concord CIO, Carole Hilton; CMLP Customer Service Administrator; Laura Scott, CMLP Power Supply and Rates; Joe Repoff: CMLP Assistant Director, Matt Cummings: CMLP Financial Manager/Accountant, Karin Farrow; CMLP Sr. Admin, Jan Aceti; Energy conservation Coordinator, Mary Hartman; Select Board liaison to the Light Board, Eric Simms; Sustainability Director, and residents: Jerry Frenkil, Dean Banfield, Pamela Dritt, Andy Puchrik, Mark Howell, Phil Thayer, Charles Parker, Janet Rothrock and one call-in listeners.

Note definitions for acronyms used in these minutes:

- **CSEC:** Comprehensive Sustainable Energy Committee
- **CMLB:** Concord Municipal Light Board
- **CMLP:** Concord Municipal Light Plant
- **CMS:** Concord Middle School
- **DOE:** Department of Energy
- **EV:** Electric Vehicle
- **PV:** Photovoltaic – the conversion of light into electricity using semiconducting materials.
- **NYPA** – New York Power Authority
- **SDA:** Solar Design Associates

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Foulds called the meeting to order at 7:30 AM. Meeting recording will be posted to the Minuteman Media Website as soon as it is available.¹

MEETINGS & MINUTES

Upcoming Meeting Dates: April 12, 2023, April 26, 2023, May 10, 2023, May 24, 2023, June 14, 2023, June 28, 2023, July 12, 2023, August 9, 2023, September 13, 2023, October 11, 2023, November 8, 2023 & December 13, 2023.

TOWN MEETING ARTICLE DISCUSSION² – presented by Director Wood (Timestamp 0:40)

Review of the Warrant Articles for the next Town Meeting that the Board may want to take a position on.

Articles 5 and Article 6 – two versions of the Comp and classification schedule. One version is structured the same as last year and the second version will be based on the Class and Comp Study currently in process. Only one article will be moved. The old version will be moved only if the new structure is not completed. Mr. Wood recommended the Board hold on taking a position until the new schedule is completed. The new schedule is based on assigning each non-union position a point value based on duties and responsibilities with exempt and non-exempt in the same point range being grouped together which differs from the current rate schedule.

¹ Minuteman Media YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c4nf9wj0Q6U>

² <https://www.concordma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/40669/2023-Annual-Town-Meeting-Warrant>

Concord Municipal Light Board Minutes
March 22, 2023

Article 21 – Light Plant Solar Expansion – Middle School
CMLP \$7.5million borrowing authorization request.

Ms. Rovelli moved the Board vote in favor of affirmative on Article 21. Ms. Kaufman second the motion and with a unanimous roll call vote in favor the motion passed.

Article 22 - Citizen Petition: Municipal In-Town Solar Generation Task Force

The Light Plant is still working on the Solar expansion plan/timeline requirement of last year’s Article 38. Mr. Wood explained a task force may not be needed if the plan is finished before Town Meeting. Board members expressed concern over the Article as written. Ms. Kaufman agreed to piece together for Board Member and staff suggestions, a proposed amendment or a statement stating based on the progress being made, we think within the broad parameters of this proposed taskforce here are the things we think that would be most useful for them to focus on.

Due to time constraints and a lack of Board consensus, the decision was made to defer taking a position on the Article at this time.

Mark Howell pointed out that Article 22 did not change the status of last year’s Article 38. Attempting modification of the article should include the involvement of the Climate Action Advisory Board.

Article 23 - To determine whether the Town will vote to adopt the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) Municipal Opt-in Specialized Stretch Code of 2022 as the building code applicable for new construction of residential, commercial, and mixed-use structures, effective January 1, 2024, or take any other action relative thereto.

Ms. Kaufman stated it’s in line with the Light Board’s goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and creating an all-electric future and we have a significant role to play to encourage that.

Ms. Rovelli moved the Board vote in favor of affirmative on Article 21. Ms. Kaufman second the motion and with a unanimous roll call vote in favor the motion passed.

Article 24 - To determine whether the Town will authorize expenditure without further appropriation of the income from sales of electricity and from servicing and jobbing during the ensuing fiscal year, together with the balance of operating cash in the Light Plant Fund, under the direction and control of the Town Manager for the expenses of the Light Plant for that fiscal year, as defined in Mass. Gen. Laws c. 164, § 57; or for other plant extensions, enlargements, additions, renewals and reconstruction; and further, to authorize a transfer of \$459,000 or any other sum, from the Operating Fund of the Light Plant to be used by the Board of Assessors to reduce the tax levy for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024; or take any other action relative thereto.

Ms. Rovelli moved the Board vote in favor of affirmative on Article 24. Ms. Kaufman second the motion and with a unanimous roll call vote in favor the motion passed.

Article 36 - That the Concord “Construction Noise Bylaw” shall be renamed Concord “Noise Bylaw” and Section 1 shall be replaced as follows: Section 1. Noise. It shall be unlawful for any person or persons to create, assist in creating, continue or allow to continue any loud noise which either annoys, disturbs, injures, or endangers the reasonable quiet, comfort, repose or the health and safety of others within the Town prior to 7:00 A.M. and after

Concord Municipal Light Board Minutes
March 22, 2023

8:00 P.M. on weekdays, prior to 9:00 A.M. and after 5:00 P.M. on Saturdays and anytime on Sundays and the following holidays: New Year's, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. The Select Board may issue a special permit for any activity otherwise forbidden by the provisions of this bylaw or may amend this bylaw, including but not limited to exemptions or enforcement.

The Article as written has no exemption for the Light Plant as written which would be problematic for both normal operations as well as the Light Plant's emergency response.

Ms. Rovelli moved the Board vote in favor of no action on Article 36. Ms. Hill second the motion and with a unanimous, (of those Board member present – Ms. Kaufman left the meeting at 8:20) roll call vote in favor the motion passed.

REDUCTION IN GHG EMISSIONS FROM POWER SUPPLY AND FUTURE PLANNING – (Timestamp 55:44)

Topic deferred to a future meeting.

DISTRIBUTION TRANSFORMERS - presented by Mr. Wood (timestamp 55:55)

Due to supply chain issues coupled with excessive lead times, we have a significant issue in front of us. The five-year capital plan may need to be altered due to price increases. To make matters worse, at the end of 2022, the DOE increased the efficiency rating requirement for transformers, with the new standards coming into play in 2027. Their studies indicate that transformers would be more efficient if made from amorphous core steel. However, not all the current transformer manufacturers utilize amorphous core steel. The new efficiency standard would therefore further limit supply.

Ms. Rovelli - does this mean that we ought to be contemplating a bond for funding? and how soon should we be taking action?

Mr. Wood - at this point, it's not a borrowing for transformers, it's more of an adjustment of depreciation and possible reconsideration of the funding source of some projects. We are keeping a very close eye on our inventory and plan to order what we need for the future. This will affect the 5-year capital plan to some level.

Mr. Leon -asked in reference to the deferred Agenda item, if we defer are we at risk of missing out on the possibility of new contracts at a favorable price?

Mr. Foulds responded that there were not any contract opportunities available at this time.

LIAISON AND PUBLIC COMMENTS (Timestamp 1:11:25)

Pamela Dritt - I just want to urge you to consider being in favor of the solar group because it seems to be very similar to the sentiment on the Board about the Broadband completion group, and that the benefits of that group were tremendous and very helpful. And I think this would be the same.

Eric Simms - a quick comment regarding that earlier discussion about the Article for the task force. The Climate Action Advisory Board no longer exists and neither does the CSEC committee. They've both have been disbanded in favor of a new Climate Action Committee. I will make the group aware of the discussion that's happened here. and we'll have it on the radar that if that article does go forward, we'll be happy to work to figure out how to best arrange whatever structure that might wind up being with that task force in that particular committee.

Concord Municipal Light Board Minutes
March 22, 2023

Ms. Rovelli moved to adjourn. Mr. Leon provided the second and with a unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45AM.

Respectfully submitted,
CMLP Staff