

**Concord Municipal Light Board
May 8, 2019
FINAL**

Pursuant to a notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, a meeting of the Municipal Light Board was held on Wednesday, May 8, 2019, at 7:30 AM, at the Light Plant Public Meeting Room. Present were Board members Gordon Brockway (remote), Lynn Salinger (Acting Chair), Wendy Rovelli (Chair), Dan Gainsboro, and Peggy Briggs. Also in attendance were David Wood, CMLP Director; Laura Scott, CMLP Power Supply and Rates Administrator; Carole Hilton, CMLP Customer Service, Jan Asceti, Energy Conservation Coordinator; Michael Lawson Select Board; Brian Foulds, Alice Kaufman, David Allen, Gene Chang, Louise Berliner, Kari Winchell, Charlie Parker, Brad Hubbard-Nelson

Note: definitions for acronyms used in these minutes:

- *AMI: Advanced Meter Infrastructure*
- *CMLP: Concord Municipal Light Plant*
- *COSS: Cost of Service study*
- *EV: Electric Vehicle*
- *HAT: Hanscom Area Towns*
- *MLP: Municipal Light Plant*
- *NISC: National Information Solutions Cooperative*
- *REC: Renewal Energy Credit*
- *RFP: Request for Proposal*
- *TOUR: Time of Use Rate*

Meeting handouts:

1. RFP: Cost of Service Study & Rate Design Consulting Services, dated 4/26/19
2. Electric Vehicle Program Statistics
3. Public EV Charging Stations – Concord MA
4. 2019 Heat Pump Program Statistics as of 5/7/9

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 AM. It was noted that the meeting was being recorded by the Director in the absence of the recording secretary. It was noted that while a new chair would be elected during today's meeting Ms. Salinger has agreed to chair today's meeting.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

It was moved by Ms. Salinger, seconded by Ms. Briggs and voted unanimously to
Elect Ms. Rovelli as Chair of Concord Municipal Light Board.

Ms. Salinger noted that today is Mr. Gainsboro last meeting as a board member and thanked him for his many contributions over the years.

Ms. Salinger noted that there is also a need to reappoint Ms Rovelli as our representative to the Financial Audit Advisory Committee. It was moved by Ms. Briggs, seconded by Mr. Gainsboro, and voted unanimously to

Appoint Ms. Rovelli as the Concord Municipal Light Board representative to the Financial Audit Advisory Committee as of June 1, 2019

FUTURE MEETINGS & MINUTES

It was moved by Ms. Briggs, seconded by Mr. Gainsboro and voted unanimously to
Approve the Minutes, for the April 10, 2019 Light Board Meeting.

Due to due availability conflicts for several board members, the next meeting will be June 19, 2019 at 7:30 AM. In general, future meetings will be the second Wednesday of the month for the remainder of calendar year 2019.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Wood reviewed the status of several ongoing projects:

- **HVAC** – Renovations are underway. The roof unit delivery date was delayed and the Light Plant is now expecting completion by the end of April. The existing RTU unit contract was revised to address the extended project due date.
- **Recruitment** – Two full time line workers have been hired. This week a first class line worker and an electrical engineer are also starting. We have brought in temporary staff to help with administrative staff responsibilities, including future meeting transcriptions. We also have interviews schedule with four candidates for the Assistant Director position.
- **Underground** – The Light Plant has identified four areas containing direct buried lines that need to be replaced. The light plant originally thought they were privately owner, but they are not. The first is in the Williams Road areas and is expected to be done in the next week. The next is on Barkus Farm. The new installations will position the area for fiber as well. The goal is to get through all four by the end of the summer
- **Smartmeter RFP** – Drafting of the RFP is in process and a draft is expected to be presented to the board at the June meeting.
- **Fenn School** - Fenn school is interested in putting up solar with storage. The Light Plant is meeting with a storage company to understand the options. The solar array is anticipated to be somewhere between 75 – 100 KWs, but that depends on funding which is not finalized at this time.
- **Strategic Plan** –Staff will be reviewing the current status of initiatives and overall plan with a goal to provide an update to the board at the next meeting and update the web site.

COST OF SERVICE & RATE DESIGN STUDY

Mr. Wood noted that a revised red line version of the Cost of Service Study & Rate Design RFP was distributed and incorporates feedback from last month's CMLP Board meeting. Ms. Briggs noted that the reference to providing a fixed price for "Scope of Work items 1-6" (at the bottom of page 5) was unclear as section IV. Scope of Services section contains references to either A.Tasks or B.Deliverables. Laura will review the revise the language to reflect the entire scope of services.

The timeline anticipates that the Cost of Service Study (COSS) work would start in September with the final report in March 2020. This would give the board time to discuss and prepare for rate changes likely for 2021. There has also been considerable discussion in the industry about TOUR that should be considered. The Smart Meter (AMI) timeline is currently estimated to complete in mid-2020. The board acknowledged that moving toward TOUR has been under discussion for some time and it would be important to leverage the expertise of the existing board members in evaluating rate design options. Ms. Salinger asked whether we could compress the contracting timeline such that the report could be available earlier, possibly in mid-January. The Board anticipates scheduling public hearings after the report is completed. The Board will have to plan for these meetings given the numerous public hearing leading up to Town Meeting.

Mr. Foulds noted the battery storage can impact the plant costs as it allows the Light Plant to avoid forward contract pricing and that should be incorporated into the COSS. He further cautioned that the board be careful in establishing a timeline. A 2021 implementation timeline for TOUR maybe OK as there are of lot of issues to carefully consider, but the Board needs to be diligent on moving the process forward.

Mr. Allen asked that the board ensure we address the costs that should be addressed through a fixed charge. He also asked whether there was an opportunity for the consultant to provide interim recommendations and to allow board input prior to finalizing the report. Ms. Salinger acknowledged that the consultant will work with staff throughout the process, but it is most likely the consultant & staff will present options for discussion.

NISC ENTERPRISE SOFTWARE PROJECT

Mr. Wood noted that the installation was completed this past Sunday and the first billing is this Friday. Careful review of bills will occur including special accounts such as solar. This Monday the SmartHub functionality will be rolled out to customers and the Light Plant will have extended hours to support

customer inquiries. There will be 5 years of history available on line. Based on NISC experience, about 30% of customers pay on-line through the portal. One piece of functionality the team is working with the Town House on is called Cash Register. It allows funds to be credit to an account immediately which is important for customers who may be close to having service shut off due to lack of payment. The Light Plant it also looking into set-up of Kiosks which allows customer self-service to make payment (similar to a bank ATM). Mr. Wood that customers in other locations have found the kiosk very helpful and they may also free up staff time.

The second phase of the project, the Accounting and Business Solutions is in process and slated to go live in September. The project overall remains on schedule.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE ADOPTION AND REBATES

Mr. Wood reviewed the graphic on Public EV Charging Stations which illustrates the increased number of charging sessions/month used which correlates highly with the actual stations installed. Ms. Scott provided a quick overview of the EV programs available to customers, including educational programs. The Light Plan has contracted with ENE to set-up public outreach events. Some of the recent events included the Beede Easter Egg Hunt, the Musketaquid Earth Day Event. Usually the Light Plan will have a table set-up to help answer questions and provide additional information. The Musketaquid event included a ride and drive, but due to competing events only one Prius Prime plug-in was available. It takes about a year to plan a ride and drive event, so there will be just one additional ride and drive event in the fall.

From the Town Assessors office, the Light Plant was able to determine that there are about 330 electric vehicles registered in Town (there are roughly total 17,000 vehicles registered). Currently there are 67 customers participating in the EV miles program and 26 have registered to receive a rebate on the EV charging station. In addition there are currently 47 customers on the TOUR. Together, about 1/3 of customers are participating in one of the Light Plan EV programs. The state also offers a rebate program (currently \$1500) for registered EV customers and only 206 (or 2/3s of EV) customers in town have applied to the state program. Customers who lease a car are also eligible for the state program.

Ms. Briggs noted that the RFP (page 4 item G) has a reference to a fixed fee subscription fee for the EV drivers. The Light Plan should be cautious to avoid the situation incurred with ETS customers (where the Light Plant was not charging enough).

AIR SOURCE & GROUND SOURCE HEAT PUMPS ADOPTION & REBATES

Ms. Asceti walked through the handout which summarizes the 2019 Heat Pump Program statistics. The rebates are for residents only, but the Light Plan is looking to expand that. Currently we are not seeing heavy installation to date, but it usually picks up at this time of year. The Light Plant will be promoting the program with billing inserts in the next couple months. The rebate program for heaters has not accelerated as expected. Mr. Hubbard-Nelson shared that there will there is event June 8th at CCHS where there will be representatives from the Home MVP program which helps promotes financing options and incentives to save energy. In addition vendors supporting the Home MVP program will be available to answer questions. There is an identical program to be offered in Wayland.

POTENTIAL ENERGY CONTRACTS

Mr. Wood clarified that we have this on the agenda so we can make the public aware of these projects, and the Light Board will go into Executive Session at the end of the meeting to discuss related pricing. ENE has been actively looking to find carbon-free or near carbon-free projects for their customers. Three projects have been identified: the first project is Wind, the second one is Bio-Mass which is not carbon-free, but is renewable vs. fossil such a gas contract, and the third project is solar. The projects aligns well with our current portfolio and combined would represent about 22% of annual energy needs. The biggest component is off-shore wind (9%) which supports expansion of a state program; the Bio mass would represent 6.8%; the solar project combines solar (2%) with a nuclear (4%) component which mitigates the intermittent output of the solar (and is offered as an energy block). The Wind project is part of RI project referred to as Revolution Wind. An attractive element of this bid is that the capacity would be expanded on a turbine by turbine basis for municipal participants (at roughly 56 MW). This would be a 20 year term starting on 2024. Another element of this contract is that the vendor is offering to give back cash to help

municipalities procure storage, which is very advantageous. These contract could bring us up to roughly a 40% renewable level (assuming a flat load). Deepwater contract would begin 12/31/2023.

The energy Futures Task Force did support the nuclear as a carbon-free energy source. The board has discussed this in the past and has endorse its use. Mr. Brockway noted that the last time we added nuclear into the portfolio, it was slated to start in 2024 and end in 2043.

Mr Foulds requested that we consider the price of a gas contract when considering these alternatives. It is good that we are getting away from gas.

LIASON & PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Allen thanked Mr. Gainsboro for his commitment and contributions over the years.

Mr. Foulds inquired about the state municipal solar rebate program. Mr. Wood suggested that there have been no recent updates, but he will inquire again about the status. Ms. Asceti noted that we have received 2 solar rebate applications. These are customers who have decided to proceed without the state matching program – these customers will receive the additional \$0.60 contribution from the CMLP rebate proram.

Ms. Berliner read a prepared statement regarding concerns with SMART meters. Ms. Berliner statement referred to previous introductory materials forward to the board a year ago related to actions on SMART meters by an Oregon Municipal light plant. She is requesting that the Light Board slow down the RFP timeline and provide more time for discussion and to share expert opinions from others. She is not aware of any public discussion about possible vendors or the RFP timeline. There is a concern over the investment of technology that may not integrate with renewable grid of the future and that wireless may not be truly renewable as it consumes more energy. There is also concern over security and health effects. There is a question as to whether the meters could also connected to our fiber network. Mr. Wood will forward the statement to Board members. Ms. Salinger felt that it would make sense to have an evening meeting to talk on both sides on the issue. This will take 2-3 months to plan out. The Light Board has been aware of these concerns and it is now time to discuss these concerns.

In addition, she asked whether there would be an update on the 5G meeting discussed recently at the HATs meeting. Mr. Wood indicated there was not time on today's agenda to cover that topic, but it will be reviewed in the future. She also asked whether the letter from Virginia Hynes had been distributed to the Light Board members.

It was moved by Ms. Briggs, seconded by Mr. Gainsboro and unanimously approved at 8:52 a.m. to:
Adjourn the meeting and move into Executive Session to discuss pricing of proposed energy contracts.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Rovelli, Acting Clerk