

**Mansfield Municipal Electric Department
Minutes of Light Commissioners Meeting
February 28, 2022**

Present: Chair Frank DelVecchio, Vice Chair Jess Aptowitz, Clerk Neil Rhein, Commissioner of MDE Trowbridge, Commissioner Steve Schoonveld, and Light Department Manager Joseph Sollecito

The meeting was held at the Mansfield Town Hall Room 3AB and called to order at 5:00 PM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair DelVecchio stated that this meeting is being televised and taped for future broadcast and asked if anyone in the audience was intending to record the meeting to please state their intentions. No one did so.

A complete copy of the Board packet containing all documents that are referenced in the minutes is on file at the Mansfield Municipal Electric Department office.

Citizens comments – None

**Review and approve Board Minutes of January 24, 2022
(Aptowitz/Rhein) Passes 5/0**

General Manager's Report

- a. Discussion with TBA Architects (Annika Nilsson Ripps and Justin Humphreys) regarding bid results of Equipment Storage Building and possible vote to award contract

Almost twice as many new bids were received in January, as were received in the summer. The low bid, submitted by Tower Construction, was \$2,197,000 with an add alternate for the rain garden of \$10,000. Mr. Aptowitz inquired about how much of the cost would be towards environmental cleanup. He wanted to determine the cost per square foot of the building itself. Ms. Ripps answered that though the cost was built in and she did not have the specific number, the remediation would be around \$600,000-\$700,000. There was conversation about what would happen if we did not build. That would require ongoing reporting about the stability of the site. But the building was designed to disturb the site as little as possible.

**Motion: To approve the lowest responsible bidder as proposed on the estimates.
(Trowbridge/Aptowitz) Passes 5/0**

- b. Discuss capital project request for Gilbert Street Substation Storage Shed

This is to replace a storage container with a larger modular building. This is already in the capital plan. Mr. Rhein asked if it was necessary with the other building being built. Yes, because storage is needed for items at that particular location near the distributive generator.

**Motion: To approve going out to bid for the storage shed at the Gilbert Street Substation.
(Trowbridge/Schoonveld) Passes 5/0**

- c. Discuss capital project request for MMED Office Renovations at 125 High Street

The first part is removing the wall between the cafeteria and hallway to allow for a large gathering space. The second part is creating two offices out of the one large one, and then creating an office for the business manager out in the open part of the office. This would give all staff their own space. The third aspect is to renovate the seven bathrooms, which have not changed since the building was built. Chair DelVecchio questioned if this is part of the capital plan. It is, so it will be discussed as part of the capital planning

process. The scope of the project expanded to include the offices because the pandemic showed that there was a need for individual spaces. The commissioners decided not to move forward yet as there was concern about the need for seven bathrooms for 23 people. The Board did ask for a more detailed architectural plan to show what layout options may be feasible.

- d. Discussion with MMWEC (Matt Ide) and possible vote for MMED to join Project 2021A (off-shore wind project)

There will be no vote on this item. Matt Ide noted that off shore wind is a technology we will need to take advantage of for the power portfolio to meet climate bill needs. More details will be discussed in executive session.

- e. Discussion with MMWEC (Matt Ide) and possible vote for MMED to join Project 2022A (battery storage project)

At the January 26, 2022 MMWEC Board of Directors meeting, they voted to establish project 2022A, a 100MW battery storage project, on the MMWEC campus in Ludlow. This project will allow us to comply with the climate bill, as well as hedge the capacity and provide rate stability to the ratepayers. MMWEC has been allocated 35% of the project, while the other 65% will be allocated to their development partner. This partnership was done for economy of scale and expertise.

Currently our capacity portfolio is 65% covered by entitlements, which have fixed rates, and the other 35% is purchased from the open market, which has variable rates. This project would allow us to reduce our open capacity by an additional 5%, bringing it down to 30%, providing more rate stability to our customers. In addition, this would benefit the New England power grid by reducing the dependence on fossil fuels.

Further discussion will be continued in executive session.

- f. Discuss and possible vote to update Information and Requirements for Electric Service policy (Section 202 – Availability of Service)

Due to an issue in determining a customer's potential load, Mr. Sollecito would like to set more clarity in the Requirements for Electric service policy. In instances of large customers, we will need a system impact study, performed at the customer's expense. Some customers have overestimated their power needs, bringing forth a need for these studies.

**Motion: To approve the new policy as presented.
(Trowbridge/Schoonveld) Passes 5/0**

- g. Discussion and possible vote on policy for Community Promotions and Advertisements

MMED was recently solicited by the Mansfield Police Association to be a sponsor in their Business Directory fundraiser. Because of this, Mr. Sollecito would like a policy to set guidelines for community promotions. As a public entity, there needs to be consistency in donation choices as well as responsibility to the rate payers. The commissioners asked Mr. Sollecito to write a policy for the next meeting.

In the meantime, an answer for the Police request is needed before that time.

**Motion: To allow the director to spend \$500 on the Police Association fundraiser.
(Schoonveld/Trowbridge) Passes 4/1**

h. Review financials for December 2021

Comments from the Commissioners

Mr. Rhein had a question about why we do not put solar at the Mansfield Green. There was a company that made a proposal and won the right to build. However, they could not follow through with that. An analysis was done to find the costs for MMED to build our own solar farm, but at approximately \$2.5 million, that was not feasible. We have not solicited proposals for this, nor has any entity come forward to propose such a project.

Mr. Schoonveld brought up that Mr. Barry LaCasse, the finance director, asked to keep the PILOT at the same level. The board voted yes and the money would come from surplus. But Mr. Schoonveld would like to consider more appropriate ways to make that kind of determination. Mr. DelVecchio noted that the issue has been addressed for this year and the discussion should be tabled until a later meeting.

Any items not anticipated by the Chair 48 hours prior to this meeting

None

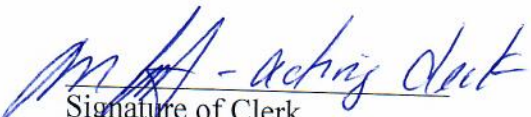
Vote to enter into Executive Session for the following reasons and to not return to open session for the following reasons:

- a. Review and possible approval of minutes of January 24, 2022 Executive Session where Exemptions 3 and 10 were declared
- b. Pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 164, Section 47D and M.G.L. Ch. 30, Section 21, Exemption 3, to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and the chair so declares.
- c. Pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 164, Section 47D and M.G.L. Ch 30, Section 21, Exemption 2, to conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel.
- d. Pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 164, Section 47D and M.G.L. C. 30, Section 21, Exemption 10, 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 department of public utilities pursuant to section 1F of chapter 164 and when such governmental body, municipal aggregator or cooperative 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 and the chair so declares.

Motion: To enter into executive session and not return to open session.

(Trowbridge/Aptowitz) Roll Call vote: Rhein – Aye, Trowbridge – Aye, Aptowitz – Aye, Schoonveld – Aye, DelVecchio – Aye. Passes 5/0

Respectfully submitted: Katherine Duggan


Signature of Clerk


Date of Approval