

**Mansfield Municipal Electric Department  
Minutes of Light Commissioners Meeting  
September 19, 2022**

**Present:** Chair Jess Aptowitz, Commissioner Mike Trowbridge, Commissioner Neil Rhein, Clerk Diana Bren, Light Department Manager Joseph Sollecito and Business Manager Joseph Pereira

The meeting was held at the Mansfield Town Hall, room 3AB and was also virtual via GoToWebinar. It was called to order at 5:30 PM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

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**

**Motion: To approve the minutes from the July 18, 2022 Light Commissioners meeting (Rhein/Trowbridge) Passes 4/0**

**Motion: To approve the minutes from the August 22, 2022 Light Commissioners meeting (Rhein/Trowbridge) Passes 4/0**

**Banner Hanging Policy -**

**Motion: To approve the Banner Hanging Policy that was approved by the Select Board on August 17, 2022 (Rhein/Trowbridge) Passes 4/0**

**Reservoir Street Area Access Road and Pole Work -**

**Motion: To approve the Reservoir Street Area Access Road and Pole Work at a cost of \$50,000 (Trowbridge/Rhein) Passes 4/0**

**Update on Power Supply Rates and Impact –** Manager Sollecito gave an update on the rate increase. He explained that all factors nationally and internationally impact MMED's rates. He noted that MMED previously had the second lowest rates in the state. He told the Board that a newsletter had been sent out to customers with an explanation of the rate increase. He presented a graph of annual sales and the extraordinary growth in 2021 which means MMED has to purchase that amount of power. Manager Sollecito also reviewed a "Sources of Energy" graph and an "Actual Energy Price vs. Future Energy Price" chart. He said things are very volatile and that he has never seen prices like this in the industry. He explained that the energy supply is tied to natural gas and there have been natural gas supply problems in New England for several years. ISO New England came out with a report to show there is a possibility that there won't be enough natural gas to meet demands under certain contingencies.

Commissioner Trowbridge asked when the next newsletter was going out and suggested putting something in it about the gas supply. This would be to avoid having customers say you knew about possible blackouts and you didn't inform us.

Commissioner Rhein wondered how a customer would get the rate increase information if they are paperless. Manager Sollecito explained that the customer gets an email and there is a link for them to click on with the explanation. Commissioner Rhein suggested including educational tips in the newsletter such as checking your insulation.

Manager Sollecito stated that the average overall rate increase is about 60% for all ratepayers as compared to the same electricity prior to April. He is sympathetic to the ratepayers but MMED has to pass this cost on to them. He explained that last year MMED under collected power supply costs and now has to make up for that and collect the costs going forward.

Chair Aptowitz said that they need to be clear about this. Things could get better in the world and prices could drop down tomorrow but MMED is still short and needs to make up for the under collection. Manager Sollecito said that is correct but he is optimistic going forward.

**Municipal School Rate** – Commissioner Trowbridge said he did not expect an answer this evening but asked if some thought could be put into ways of stabilizing the Municipal and School rates. This will be a discussion at a future date.

**Equipment Storage Building** – Manager Sollecito gave an update on the equipment storage building. As expected, the contractor had to treat the contaminated soil and then do follow up tests to determine what has to be treated as hazardous waste and what could be put back into the ground. After testing, a good amount of the soil they dug up was good to be put back into the ground minus the top nine inches. The remaining will be shipped off appropriately. The architect does not know where they stand until the final soil tests come back but Manager Sollecito is optimistic.

**Gilbert Street Shed** – Manager Sollecito reported that the architect is working on the specs for the shed. This will go out to bid in October.

**MMED Interior** – Manager Sollecito said that the office renovations are on a similar schedule as the Gilbert Street shed but are a little further out.

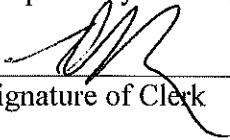
**Town Hall Parking Lot Lights** – Manager Sollecito said there was a problem with getting the wire through the duct work in the Town Hall parking lot. They could not get a snake through it and are going to try a DPW sewer camera. He said this project is a priority for MMED and they will get it done.

**Key Accounts Conference** – Manager Sollecito announced that next Wednesday, September 28 at 8:30 AM, MMED will be having a Key Accounts Conference at the Envision Hotel. All large industrial customers were invited. He said that 22 customers will be attending as well as 18 dignitaries which include Town employees, Board members and speakers.

**Comments from the Commissioners** – Chair Aptowitz said he would like to set a date for the next Light Commissioners meeting. A date was set for Monday, October 17, 2022.

**Motion: To adjourn at 6:10 PM  
(Trowbridge/Bren) Passes 4/0**

Respectfully submitted: Jacqueline Lee

  
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Signature of Clerk

10/19/22  
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Date of Approval