

**Mansfield Municipal Electric Department  
Minutes of Light Commissioners Meeting  
April 29, 2019**

**Present:** Chair Jess Aptowitz, Vice Chair Neil Rhein, Commissioner Steve Schoonveld, Clerk Frank Delvecchio and Light Department Manager Joseph Sollecito

The meeting was held at the Mansfield Town Hall Room 2AB and called to order at 6:00 PM. Chair Aptowitz 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

**Motion: To approve the minutes from the March 6, 2019 Light Commissioners meeting (Schoonveld/Delvecchio) Passes 4/0**

**Power Supply Budget for FY20** – Mayhew Seavey of PLM presented MMED's power supply budget for FY20. He said one of the major changes is the decrease in capacity costs due to the forward capacity clearing price dropping. Other good news is that the debt service on the MMWEC project will also end this year. Transmission costs, however, continue to go up and energy costs are higher this year than last year. He is recommending zeroing out the current PPA (purchased power adjustment). Mr. Seavey told the Board he sees no significant increases and predicts things will remain flat for the next five years.

**Projected PCA & Credit Factors for FY20** – Manager Sollecito reviewed the projected PCA and credit factors for FY20 which will determine how much money is being refunded to the ratepayers. Clerk Delvecchio questioned why they were only returning 50% to the customers and Manager Sollecito said they have traditionally done it over a two year period. Mr. Seavey explained that when looking at this they felt there would be a lot of fluctuations from year to year so doing it over the course of two years makes it smoother. Mr. Seavey also pointed out that a lot of revenue was made in 2018 because of the very hot summer.

Commissioner Schoonveld questioned the five year projection and if it would be presented shortly. Manager Sollecito said that it would.

**Operating Budget for FY20** – Manager Sollecito reviewed the operating budget for FY20. Vice Chair Rhein questioned the increase in administrative costs due to outside engineering. Manager Sollecito explained that it was necessary because of the transformer replacement at Gilbert Street Substation. Clerk Delvecchio questioned the surcharges on the credit card payments. Manager Sollecito said it is on commercial account payments only, not for residential. Chair Aptowitz commented that he thinks MMED has too much cash.

**Capital Budget for FY20** – Manager Sollecito went over the highlights of the FY20 capital budget. He explained that half of the FY20 budget is made up of FY19 projects that were

committed to but have not been paid for as of yet. He mentioned the new projects and reviewed the purchases that are going to be made in FY20.

Clerk Delvecchio questioned whether the purchase of the hybrid vehicle makes sense and Manager Sollecito said he thought it did. Clerk Delvecchio asked if it would put MMED ahead of the curve if they apply for green status and Manager Sollecito said it would.

Chair Aptowitz questioned replacing the car for the office staff saying it only goes a couple of miles a day. He wondered why MMED doesn't just drive it into the ground. He also pointed out ratepayer's perceptions and how he believed he would get questioned about this. Chair Aptowitz recommends keeping the new vehicle in the budget but to procure it only if it is needed.

Manager Sollecito pointed out the five year projection in the capital budget packet which Commissioner Schoonveld had previously inquired about.

**Motion: To approve the recommendation to change the Purchased Power Cost Adjustment (PPCA) to zero while making no change to the Credit Factors (Delvecchio/Schoonveld) Passes 4/0**

**Motion: To approve the MMED FY20 Operating Budget (Rhein/Delvecchio) Passes 4/0**

**Motion: To approve the MMED FY20 Capital Budget (Schoonveld/Delvecchio) Passes 4/0**

The Board agreed to approve the capital budget as it stands while publicly stating that Manager Sollecito will hold off on the purchase of the vehicle to replace the 2005 Ford until absolutely necessary.

**2018 DPU Report** - Manager Sollecito stated that MMED Staff Accountant Thomson spends a lot of time and does a great job each year with the DPU report which must be approved by the Light Commissioners and submitted annually.

**Motion: To approve the 2018 DPU Report (Delvecchio/Schoonveld) Passes 4/0**

**Technical & Aesthetic Standards for Small Cell Siting** – Manager Sollecito presented the most recent draft of small cell siting standards from CTC (Columbia Telecommunications Corporation) stating it is their last draft and that he can take it from here. He said that he has been working with the Town on this, and although they don't know all of the details as of yet, this is a good starting point.

Chris Pollart, an Attorney from KP Law, was in attendance to talk about the legal side of this. He explained that under state law municipalities are under no obligation to allow these pole attachments from wireless providers. Manager Sollecito told the Board that the maintenance for these attachments would be at the provider's expense and not the expense of MMED. He also said that there would have to be some training for MMED as it has been made clear to

possible 5G providers that MMED would have to be hired by them to perform the maintenance. Manager Sollecito has had several discussions with both Town Manager Dumas and Town Planner Shaun Burke about all of this. Attorney Pollart will be developing the necessary documents for MMED.

Chair Aptowitz questioned if this is the trend the world is going in and Attorney Pollart answered that it is. Attorney Pollart further explained that it can be regulated but everything has to be in place before you get an application from a 5G provider. It cannot be done after the fact.

Chair Aptowitz asked what the recommendation is. Manager Sollecito said he was not looking for a vote tonight but at the next meeting. He told the Board to forward him any questions they may have before then.

There was discussion about the aesthetics and who makes decisions regarding this, the Town or MMED. Attorney Pollart said this is the tricky part as it has to be the Town, not MMED. Chair Aptowitz informed Attorney Pollart that MMED is owned by the Town. Attorney Pollart then explained to the Board that operationally and legally the Light Department is a separate entity. He further explained that the intermingling of the two creates problems so keeping them separate is the correct thing to do. He let them know that he is representing the Light Department.

Vice Chair Rhein commented that allowing these attachments might attract businesses to Mansfield. Attorney Pollart said it is all about where your poles are and where your users are so that they are close to the load you are serving.

Commissioner Schoonveld suggested a public hearing may be in order. Manager Sollecito pointed out that they need to move quickly on this.

**North Main Street Lighting** – Manager Sollecito told the Board that he has been working with Town Manager Dumas, Lee Azinheira (DPW), and Mark Cook (Highway Dept) in regards to the LED conversion process for the streetlights in Mansfield. Previous attempts at this conversion for the lights on North Main Street were not feasible because of the excessive cost to replace both the light pole and lamp assembly to LED. After evaluating the new LED retrofit lamp, the current recommendation is to resurface and repaint each light then to retrofit it with a 45W LED technology. The lamp spec will be a ‘warmer’ toned lamp (3,000 K). This would also include installing a new photocell and GFI receptacle in each for the purpose of mounting a holiday decoration. The cost would be \$32,952 and he is looking for approval from the Board.

**Motion:** To approve the recommendation to resurface and repaint each of the streetlights on North Main Street and to retrofit each with a 45W LED technology including the installation of a new photocell and GFI receptacle in each at a cost of \$32,952 to be paid for by MMED  
(Schoonveld/Delvecchio) Passes 4/0

**Outdoor Holiday LED Lighting Decorations** – Manager Sollecito said he has also been working with Town Manager Dumas regarding holiday decorations and is looking for

approval from the Board as these expenses will be from MMED's net cash position. Town Manager Dumas has requested additional financial assistance from MMED for the purchase of these decorations at a cost of \$34,425.

**Motion: To approve the purchase of holiday decorations for the Town at a cost of \$34,425 to be funded by MMED  
(Schoonveld/Delvecchio) Passes 4/0**

**MMED's New Website** – Manager Sollecito told the Board that MMED's new website is very similar to the Town's website. He noted that it was very affordable compared to the cost that the Taunton Light Department paid when he was employed there. He gave a demonstration of the new website and pointed out the area where a customer can go to report an outage. It is currently not working but he hopes this automated system will be in place the year after next.

**2018 APPA Reliability Award** – Manager Sollecito stated that MMED has been given the APPA Reliability Award. He said this is the fourth year in a row that MMED has received this award.

**2018 Residential Rate Comparison Charts** – Manager Sollecito reviewed the residential rate comparison. The chart shows that MMED has the fourth lowest rate in Massachusetts. Manager Sollecito said that this is a credit to the MMED staff and the Board.

**2018 Commercial Rate Comparison Charts** – Manager Sollecito also reviewed the commercial rate comparison charts. He pointed out that for the large industrial customers MMED has the fifth lowest rate.

**Comments from the Commissioners** – Chair Aptowitz said this was the last Light Commissioners meeting before the election and at his last meeting as Chair, he wanted to thank his colleagues and the MMED staff for doing a great job.

Manager Sollecito announced that Chair Aptowitz would be receiving the Philip W. Sweeney Public Service Award from MMWEC. It recognizes exceptional service to the public in advancing the goals of public power.

**Motion: To enter into Executive Session for the following reasons and to not return to open session:**

- 1) Pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 164, Section 47D and M.G.L. Ch. 30A, 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.
- 2) Pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 164, Section 47D and M.G.L. Ch. 30A, Section 21, Exemption 6, to consider the purchase, lease or value of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body.

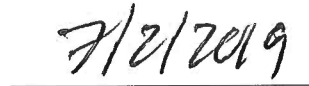
- 3) Pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 164, Section 47D and M.G.L. Ch. 30A, Section 21, Exemption 10, to discuss trade secrets or confidential, competitively-sensitive or other proprietary information, the disclosure of which will adversely affect the Commission's ability to conduct business in relation to other entities and the Chair so declared.

(Delvecchio/Rhein) Passes 4/0

Roll Call Vote: Delvecchio-aye; Schoonveld-aye; Rhein-aye and Aptowitz-aye

Respectfully submitted: Jacqueline Lee

  
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Signature of Clerk

  
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Date of Approval