

**Mansfield Municipal Electric Department  
Minutes of Light Commissioners Meeting  
September 24, 2019**

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

The meeting was held at the Mansfield Town Hall Room 3AB and called to order at 6:00 PM followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Chair Rhein 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 May 15, 2019; July 2, 2019 and August 28, 2019 Light Commissioners meetings  
(Schoonveld/Delvecchio) Passes 5/0

**Financial Statements for June 2019** – Manager Sollecito told the Board that the net operating income year-to-date through June is \$94,972. He explained that the generation charge accounts receivable was decreased by 50% which is an adjustment to correct a previous error that was discovered by MMED’s new accountant Joe Pereira. Manager Sollecito stated that MMED’s operating cash position as of June 2019 is \$14,047,740. He reported that residential and non-residential revenue credits total \$2,060,723 which is right on target. He said that energy sales are up 3.2% for the year. He also said that MMED’s depreciation fund balance is \$3,143,219 which is what he was expecting.

**Renewable Energy Option Program “Go REO”** – Manager Sollecito reminded the Board that in the last year they have discussed options for being more environmentally responsible such as using the Mansfield landfill for a solar project. MMED found that the options were cost prohibitive. Now there is an opportunity which is optional and affordable for ratepayers which could be implemented with the assistance of Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (MMWEC). The ratepayer would voluntarily match their energy consumption with a Massachusetts Class I “Renewable Energy Certificate” (REC). The ratepayer would choose their level of participation but would have to agree to commit to twelve months.

Clerk Schoonveld asked if MMED’s percentage of renewables would go up because of the customer’s participation in this program. Manager Sollecito said it would as the RECs that are purchased with the customer’s investment would go into MMED’s portfolio.

Vice Chair Delvecchio wondered how this would make MMED greener. Manager Sollecito explained that when customers sign up, it’s guaranteed that MMED can track it and MMWEC can go out and purchase the RECs for investment in future renewable projects.

Commissioner Aptowitz inquired about the downfall of saying no to this program. Manager Sollecito said there is none.

**Motion: To approve the “Go REO” renewable energy option program (Aptowitz/Trowbridge) Passes 5/0**

**MMWEC Connected Homes Pilot Program** – Manager Sollecito presented to the Board MMWEC’s potential PILOT program for residential customers to respond to peak energy periods. The customer would register their equipment with MMWEC such as their thermostat or hot water heater and MMWEC would have control of them during peak periods while the customer received a monetary incentive for their participation. MMWEC would send the customer notification of the date and time of a peak energy period and request control of their devices. The customer would then have the option to participate or not on that particular day. Manager Sollecito said this could occur anywhere from 1-5 times a month. MMED’s internal cost would include the \$6,600 administrative fee as well as the cost of the rebate incentives to the customers. Manager Sollecito does not anticipate a lot of customers would participate but believes he knows of three who would be willing to try it.

Commissioner Trowbridge had concerns about liability. He gave the example of turning off someone’s hot water heater and then the customer claims it was working before it was shut off and now it is not. Manager Sollecito said that the participating customers would be required to authorize control and use before participating.

Commissioner Aptowitz said he had concerns about the cost of the incentives if a lot of people signed up for this program. Manager Sollecito noted that this is a pilot program which will help MMED structure something more permanent.

**Motion: To approve the MMWEC Connected Homes Pilot Program with a maximum of 300 customers to be revisited in one year (Trowbridge/Delvecchio) Passes 4/1 (Schoonveld against)**

Clerk Schoonveld said he was voting against the program simply because he thought they should have alternatives.

**MMWEC Bond Retirement** – Manager Sollecito gave the Board notice about MMED’s debt retirement. The debt was restructured and has come down on multiple projects. MMED, like other utilities, has shared ownership of these projects. He stated that this is very beneficial for the ratepayers.

**Wireless Attachments** – Manager Sollecito continued the previous discussion about wireless carriers being allowed to mount their 5G devices on MMED’s poles. He told the Board that 5G allows more content to be downloaded and also does it faster. He said it is a necessary requirement for the Board to approve this before wireless carriers could mount their wireless attachments which would be done somewhere within the primary and secondary electrical space on the pole. He noted that this would not pertain to the public way, only to MMED fixtures.

Chair Rhein said he has concerns about potential health issues with 5G. He quoted from a study that the biological effects of it have not been studied. One source that he read from questioned the FCC safety guidelines. He feels that people's health is more important than rushing to be one of the first to allow the 5G devices.

Clerk Schoonveld said he has similar health concerns as Chair Rhein. He also questioned some of the wording in the proposed document, saying he did not like the word "prefer" in appendix 4.

Manager Sollecito let the Board know that he too has concerns about the wireless carriers and their devices interfering with MMED operations and causing safety issues.

Vice Chair Delvecchio agreed with Chair Rhein and Clerk Schoonveld regarding their health concerns. He also expressed concern about aesthetics. Vice Chair Delvecchio commented that KP Law, who drew up the document, is reputable but this is a new field. He wondered if there were any other law firms knowledgeable about this.

Manager Sollecito said that MEAM paid a law firm out of Washington, DC to provide opinion on wireless attachments. He noted that the agreement that the Board was being asked to approve addresses liability and legal aspects but does not address health concerns.

Vice Chair Delvecchio asked, with the health and aesthetic concerns, what the benefit is to adopting this agreement. He wondered if adopting the agreement just opens the door.

Commissioner Trowbridge suggested adopting the standard and then the Board could tweak it as often as they wanted.

Commissioner Aptowitz pointed out that they would probably not have any health information in a matter of months but that it would probably be years.

**Motion: To adopt the proposed contract for Wireless Communications Attachments as well as the Technical Standards for Wireless Communications Attachments (Rhein/Trowbridge) Passes 5/0**

**Motion: To permit the installation of wireless attachments (Schoonveld/Trowbridge) Fails 0/5**

**"Light Up Navajo" Project** – Manager Sollecito told the Board that there is 27,000 square miles across the Navajo nation where 20,000 homes do not have electricity. He said that last year three utilities from Massachusetts sent linemen to help with the mutual aid project that has been established. The linemen would work 40 hours and be paid by their own utility. Their own utility would also cover the cost of transportation. He said that the linemen usually end up working 12-14 hours a day for 1-2 weeks and that this is all voluntary. He said he was not looking for a vote on this, just the Board's thoughts.

Commissioner Aptowitz told Manager Sollecito that this would be his call.

Vice Chair Delvecchio asked how many linemen would MMED send. Manager Sollecito said 2 at a time, 2 one week then 2 others the next week.

Chair Rhein questioned liability if someone got hurt. Manager Sollecito said he will find out the details of that. He knows they would be covered under MMED's workmen's comp.

**Commissioners Comments** – Commissioner Aptowitz said that the Audit Committee had met the previous night and discussed the Town Accountant's presentation about Munis. Commissioner Aptowitz would like to talk about where this system is going with MMED at the next Light Commissioners meeting.

Chair Rhein then reviewed the performance evaluations that each of the Board members did for Manager Sollecito. He read a summary of the 5 evaluations. Manager Sollecito responded by saying thank you and that he appreciated the feedback.

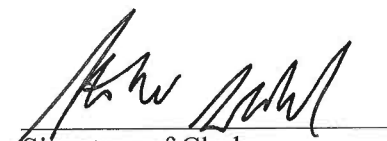
Commissioner Trowbridge suggested that Manager Sollecito send a brief report to the Board members every couple of weeks, similar to what they receive from the Town Manager.

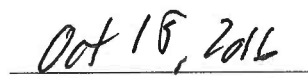
Vice Chair Delvecchio thought the evaluation document itself for Manager Sollecito should be updated, possibly by Human Resources, as it is rather old. He believes the document should be more about what Manager Sollecito actually does.

Chair Rhein questioned addressing the salary piece of Manager Sollecito's evaluation. Commissioner Trowbridge suggested setting up an executive session to do that before their next Selectmen's meeting. It was noted that going forward the evaluation would be done at this time of year.

**Motion: To adjourn at 7:50**  
**(Schoonveld/Trowbridge) Passes 5/0**

Respectfully submitted: Jacqueline Lee

  
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Signature of Clerk

  
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Date of Approval