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**BOARD OF LIGHT COMMISSIONERS**

**FEBRUARY 13, 2013**

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**The meeting was called to order at 6:06 PM.**

**Present were: Scott Bigelow – Chairman, Don Steadman – Commissioner, Chris Conway – Commissioner, and Brian Allen – General Manager. Also Present were: John Mollica**

**Agenda:**

The Board voted unanimously in favor (3-0) to accept the Agenda as presented.

**Meeting Minutes:**

* The Board voted unanimously in favor (3-0) to accept the 12/12/12 regular meeting minutes as written.
* The Board voted unanimously in favor (3-0) to accept the 01/06/13 excutivesession meeting minutes as amended.

**Financial Updates:**

The Board reviewed the bank balances as of February 13, 2013. The MMDT Depreciation account was adjusted by moving $35K from it to the Citizens Bank Operating Account for the anticipated purchase of a used bucket truck.

Mr. Allen explained that energy costs for January are coming in very high currently at $99K compared to the $60K in recent months. Generation plants are the issue; the ISO reports show the volatility of the pricing per hour. The last time PMLD had to pay bills this high it was in January 2011. Mr. Allen is watching the market closely and will report to the Board as appropriate. Mr. Allen explained that the high costs will have a big impact on our budget and cash flow; and that it appears that February is headed even higher, based on today’s price at $175 per MWH. This equates to $0.17-$0.18 of our $0.192 rate will have to be used to satisfy purchased power bills. The Board reviewed the year-to-date proposed to actual budget report and acknowledged that January’s numbers are not all available due to timing of bills. It was agreed that January will be reviewed in March and any changes to the operating budget to manage expenses will be made after that review. Everyone agreed that the 1st quarter will be reviewed in May. Mr. Allen explained the plan to adjust the MMLDWEC monthly payment to a lower amount (reduce it from $76K to somewhere between $65K and $61K). The Board discussed the level of service and the cost to pay MMWEC to manage the Co-Op books and everyone agreed to formally request that the Co-Op financial books to be transferred to PMLD to manage internally to eliminate those service issues and fees. The Board thanked Mr. Allen for all his efforts in managing the financials, watching the market and pursuing solutions to minimize the financial burden on the department.

**Unfinished Business/New Business:**

* ***Tree Trimming of Private/Common Driveways –*** acknowledged that the policy review by Town Counsel has been elevated to a higher level. Attorney Judy Pickett is working on a number of items (i.e. list of common driveways, clarification on easements, homeowner associations, etc.) that need to ironed-out before she can make a determination on the proposed policy. Mr. Allen explained that the bigger companies like National Grid and NStar have easements; an internal department to handle them and those easements are on file with the state. PMLD’s easements and rights are unclear and additional research is needed (i.e. deed review). Counsel is also working on the details of liability. Commissioner Conway would like to know more about release of liability as well. Everyone acknowledged that there are many key components to nail down this policy so that everyone has a clear understanding of their responsibility, rights, and associated costs. A clear and concise definition regarding tree trimming and repairs is needed, so that everyone has a proper understanding and course of action. Commissioner Bigelow suggested some kind of declaration on the deed or property sale information sheet that the home is on a private/common driveway and that there are additional responsibilities assumed by the homeowner. The Board asked Mr. Allen to continue with the effort and acknowledged that there is no urgency or current issue at this time. Mr. Allen will work with Town Counsel to nail down all the finer details and present the Board with an update and/or draft policy to review at a later date.
* ***Blizzard of 2013 –*** Mr. Allen confirmed that there was no power outages reported in the Town of Princeton MA.
* ***2013 Charles Hall Scholarship Essay Contest –*** The Board acknowledged that 150 letters went out last week. The essay contest has been advertised on the website, flyers have been placed at the Library, Town Hall and PMLD Office. The hope is to get the information into a March edition of the Landmark newspaper.
* ***“From the Desk of the General Manager” Letter to Ratepayers –*** The Board and Mr. Allen discussed putting together another letter to ratepayers. The last letter was sent in October 2012. Everyone agreed that once movement and information can be shared about key business activity then a letter will be drafted. The Board will address the topic again at a future meeting.
* ***Traveler’s Insurance –*** Mr. Allen explained his efforts and his Attorney’s efforts to contact and request a decision on the claim for the wind turbine. The broker Tom Lynch, from Eagle Insurance contacted Mr. Allen and also sent a letter to Traveler’s on our behalf urging them to make a determination for claim and sited reasons for approving payment for the claim. Mr. Allen also satisfied the list of items Traveler’s requested prior to renewal of the policy; however Mr. Allen has challenged the ‘certified maintenance contractor’ requirement and has requested clarification on the need for it. Mr. Allen explained the certifications, training, routine maintenance, experience and vested interest PMLD’s lineman have and currently perform along with the ability to hire specialists to perform the big jobs (i.e. bore scope, infrared thermal scanning, electrical fixes). Commissioner Conway and Commissioner Bigelow asked Mr. Allen to contact Representative Kim Ferguson and Attorney Scobbo to reinforce PMLD’s position. The Board also agreed to continue to utilize Attorney Scobbo’s services to pursue the claim payout.
* ***$94K Escrow Funds held by Furhlaender Germany –*** Mr. Allen shared that he called his contact (Eva) in Germany and left her a message asking about the whereabouts of the money and Furhlaender’s plan to return it.
* ***Lumus Lawsuit Judgement –*** Mr. Allen shared that PMLD was awarded the $1.2M from Lumus. Attorney Scobbo is looking into the appropriate course of action to collect.

**At 7:10 PM the Board voted unanimously in favor (3-0) to adjourn.**

***Respectfully Submitted,***

***Christine Trudeau***

***Recording Secretary***