

EAC Meeting Minutes Note
12/6/2017

- Meeting commenced 7:05pm
- Committee members present: Claire Golding (CG); Corey Burnam Howard (CBH); Mike Knapp (MK); Brett Gibbs (BG); Phil Gott (PG); Phoebe Moore (PM)
- Acronyms:
 - o EAP – Environmental Action Plan
 - o PMLD – Princeton Municipal Light Department
 - o RFS – renewable fuel standard
- No Public comments
- Public Speaker: Brian Allen (BA), PMLD
 - o Light plant formed 1912
 - o Autonomous board; not under select board or town administrator
 - o 3 member board directs
 - o a non-profit corporation under Dept of Public Utilities
 - o Different business-model than investor-owned utility
 - Any profit (capped at 8%) has to go back into plant
 - o DPU has no jurisdiction over rates, established by light board
 - o Historically, muni light plant not subject to RFS
 - o Unique demographics of Princeton
 - 1500 residential customers; no industrial base; small commercial base
 - as compared to Sterling, which has 50% of its load profile from industrial sources
 - 2nd smallest muni light plant; Chester only one that is smaller
 - o Looked into possibilities of “peak-shaving” generators; but lack of access to natural gas made rate of return unfeasible
 - o Financial accounts improving as far as savings
 - o Small Staff: 3 linemen; 2 office-workers; eliminated meter-reader position
 - o Recent substantial investment in changing town street-lights to LED
 - o Relationship with state government
 - DEP looking at clean energy standard that may impact muni light plants
 - All muni’s belong to organization of Muni Energy Association of Massachusetts (MEAM)
 - MEAM was opposed to legislative requirements
 - MEAM members already far and above clean energy requirements that would be in legislation
 - Bill hasn’t passed yet
 - o 100% of energy purchased from NextEra Energy
 - Long-term contract provided stability/certainty at 5.2 cent power for 10 years

- 2023 contract expires; adjustments may be made annually
 - 44% non-carbon emitting
 - 14.6% renewable
 - Source portfolio dictated by NextEra
 - To address sources, would have to renegotiate contract
- Mass Municipal Wholesale Energy Corporation (MWEC) partner, still involved on windmills
- Town sells all energy produced by windmills
 - Town [energy use?] peaks at 3 megawatts, windmills create far greater than that.
 - To keep the wind power generated in town would cost money
 - West Boylston buys 16%, Sterling 8%, remaining sold off into real-time market
 - Towns buy at near 8 cents
 - Real-time market even lower than that right now (3 cents)
 - Initially windmills projected to get over \$100 kw/h, in reality getting around \$60
 - Lose around \$500,000 year annually on turbine operations
 - Renewable Energy Credit market is tanking
 - 2026 is when turbine debt will be retired
- Thomas Prince School is 2.5% of PMLD load
- Implications of greater solar use on PMLD
 - More of load that goes to solar, less revenue to PMLD
 - PMLD might have to consider increased distribution charges to renewable users who don't actually use PMLD energy
 - No current incentives for PMLD to encourage energy reduction
 - PMLD spent \$18K on HELPS energy reduction program
 - Sterling has capped their net metering at locational marginal price
 - What factor does contract with NextEra play on this:
 - 90% take or pay, but based on rolling 3-year average. So if use less, the required amount to purchase goes down
 - Looked at larger solar project on old landfill – wasn't financially doable; couldn't get energy cheaper than what we get it at now
 - Looked at battery on windmill – wasn't financially doable
- MA Clean Energy Standard includes nuclear energy
 - Princeton would meet the current proposed standard until 2040 based on current portfolio

- NextEra looking at possibility of green energy upcharge opt-in option for consumers
- Estimate that 15% of current Princeton properties are capable of supporting solar
- Light Board currently resistant to major financial outlays for new projects while still paying debt off of wind turbines
- PMLD has looked at the Green Communities option
 - Assessed that there were very few people that would take advantage of rebates made available through Clean Energy Center
- Windmills displace about 6,000 metric tons of GHGs every year
- PMLD does 5 year analysis with budget
 - Examine usage trends
- Doesn't foresee any net metering for PMLD in the near future
 - No contractual/regulatory barrier to PMLD enacting net metering
- Currently about 17-18 solar customers in town
- \$200 meter charge for switching to solar is just the price for the net-meter installation—not a “surcharge” or penalty
- Public comments
 - Tom Harmon: after PMLD changed its solar policy 2-3 years ago, how many people have added solar?
 - BA: 11 new customers
 - Tom Harmon: Electric car usage may go up and therefore drive up load. Could there be a different rate for electric rates based on when car was charging?
 - BA: no discussions about that at this time
 - Tom Harmon: anything solar home over-produces, PMLD resells it to other customers at full retail rate, but only pays homeowner 8 cents. So solar-home actually subsidizes other homes currently.
 - Jim Whitman (Chairman of Light Board):
 - Mass DOE has been charged with setting goals for clean energy standards
 - Run into internal conflict in example of putting in big solar fields: requires clear-cutting of forests
 - Holden had plans for large solar field, but cancelled after set rebate rates were cancelled
- Minutes:
 - Request for improvements of minutes:
 - List full names of attendees
 - Indicate votes more clearly
 - More explanation
 - Add “Respectfully submitted”
 - CG added changes to last two meeting minutes to make them more robust

- Motion to approve minutes of 11/1 (cg), seconded PG
 - Unanimous approval
 - Motion to approve minutes of 11/1 (cg), seconded CBH
 - Unanimous approval
- Update on the Survey:
 - PM: currently 180 responses online, 99% Princeton residents
 - About 20 paper copies
 - We have not collected from library or town hall yet
 - Based on quick review:
 - #1 interest was to improve access to green energy options
 - ACTION ITEM: PM will do summary report by January meeting
 - Unanimously agree no need to extend timeline (voice)
 - Need to move on and start working on Environmental Action Plan
 - Any update on a survey for kids at TP School?
 - PM still working on it, but prioritizing analyzing data survey
- Working draft of Environmental Action Plan produced by PG, shared with committee members
 - Assigning environmental categories to individual committee members for research
 - Energy:
 - PM; PG; CBH will work on
 - Waste Materials Management:
 - MK; CG will work on
 - Natural Systems and Natural Resources Management:
 - CG; CBH will work on
 - Land Use
 - BG; CBH will work on
 - Others
 - Assigned members will bring summary of their research at each meeting
- EAC web links for helpful resources has gone live
 - ACTION ITEM: CBH will draft message to send out in Town News providing notice of links
- Next meeting:
 - December 18th: Rick Rys will present
- Additional visits to meetings?
 - Should we pursue meeting with light department manager of Groton (Kevin)?
 - Unanimously agreed to put-off for the time-being
 - Rep from MA Clean Energy Council (CEC)
 - Would be happy to speak with us, but EAC would have to become a member of the Council

- Not clear if EAC can do that without Select Board approval
 - CG will do further research regarding this possibility
 - CG would like to understand town finances further so as to understand implications from potential recommendations in EAP
 - Possibly speak with current and past BOS, advisory committee members
- Public Comment – Christine Trudeau:
 - When you do survey, can you extrapolate the address so you know how big of portion of Princeton responded to survey?
 - Meeting minutes: great examples of board minutes on town website
 - Important to show amount of committee members in vote
 - Acronyms: can use them after you spell them out first
 - Invitations: consider Board of Health which oversees water and sewer
 - Would help with understanding waste haulers, issues
 - PMLD does not discourage solar in town, up to individual homeowners to make that decision
- Agenda items for next meeting:
 - Public comment period
 - Public Speaker: Rick Rys
 - Update on any research in EAP subject areas
 - Review and Approve minutes
- Motion to adjourn PG; PM seconded; unanimous
 - Adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Mike Knapp