

**Mansfield Municipal Electric Department
Minutes of Light Commissioners Meeting
October 23, 2017**

Present: Chairman Jess Aptowitz, Vice Chairman Frank Delvecchio, Clerk Steve Schoonveld, Commissioner Michael Trowbridge, Director Joseph Sollecito and Financial Assistant Jacqueline Lee

The meeting was held at the Mansfield Town Hall Room 2AB and called to order at 6:30 PM. Chairman 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 of the September 11, 2017 Light Commissioners meeting
(Schoonveld/Delvecchio) Passes 4/0**

Social Services Electric Assistance Fund-Director Sollecito introduced Debra Surprenant who is the new Director of the Council on Aging (COA). She explained to the Board that since the 1990's Social Services has had an emergency fund for MMED customers having trouble paying their electric bill which is funded by MMED. There is approximately a \$1600 balance in the account right now and she is looking for an additional amount to be approved.

Chairman Aptowitz questioned how often this is done. Director Sollecito said he wasn't exactly sure but thinks the last donation was made a couple of years ago and was approximately \$25,000. He also recommended that it be made as a "below the line" expense since it is consistent with previous DPU rulings that such transactions must come from unappropriated earned surplus. MMED does have a legal opinion to show that it should be processed that way.

Clerk Schoonveld wondered why this was not done annually, like \$10,000 per year. Ms. Surprenant said that it is hard to determine year to year what the need will be because of factors such as the economy and how bad the winter weather will be. She also mentioned that they do make an effort to change these customer's behaviors regarding payment of their bills. She said they will tell them that Social Services will pay a certain amount towards the customer's bill after the customer makes a payment of their own.

**Motion: To allocate \$25,000 from unappropriated earned surplus to be treated as a "below the line" expense to the MMED Electric Assistance Fund
(Schoonveld/Delvecchio) Passes 4/0**

Chairman Aptowitz mentioned the COA luncheon to be held on Friday, October 27.

Distributive Generator Project-Director Sollecito stated that MMED awarded MiltonCAT the bid for the distributive generator. There was also a construction bid for the site work. Twelve bidders attended a meeting then five of them submitted bids. Director Sollecito said he then had a discussion with MMED staff and they are recommending that Sertex LLC be awarded the bid as they were the lowest 'qualified' bidder.

Commissioner Trowbridge asked if MMED was familiar with any of their work. Director Sollecito said they did have references and PLM knows them as well from several previous projects.

Motion: To award the bid for the site work to be done at Gilbert Street Substation for the Distributive Generator to Sertex, LLC at a cost of \$540,000 (Trowbridge/Delvecchio) Passes 4/0

Commissioners Comments-Chairman Aptowitz would like to put a review of the Light Department Director as an item on the agenda for the next meeting. He said he ran this by Town Counsel Paul DeRensis who concurred. Clerk Schoonveld wondered if Director Sollecito had goals and objectives. Commissioner Trowbridge asked if he perhaps had an evaluation from Taunton. Director Sollecito said that he actually had one here in Mansfield after he was here for three months which he could share.

Items Not Anticipated by the Chairman 48 hours prior to meeting-Director Sollecito said that he didn't have this information ready to bring to this meeting until last Friday but in his notes from the last meeting they had discussed customer overdue balances being placed on tax bills. He said that he did have a list of seven customers whose balances total \$47,000 and who do meet the criteria for this. He noted that as a past practice MMED has not done this with a protected customer who is someone with both a medical issue and a financial hardship. Last year out of the 16 customers who met the criteria, 6 were not liened because of a hardship; 4 were given payment plans; 1 was foreclosed and 5 were liened.

Commissioner Trowbridge said that even though these customers may be on a payment plan and their service can't be terminated because they are protected, there should be a lien in place. He said if they don't place the lien then the Board hasn't done their fiduciary responsibility to the other ratepayers. Chairman Aptowitz made it clear that the Board doesn't know who these protected customers are and are making this decision based on the information provided to them. Vice Chairman Delvecchio asked if this had all been run by the Town Tax Collector and Director Sollecito said it had.

Motion: To allow MMED to lien the properties of protected customers if they so choose based on the customer's response to the certified letter they received from MMED (Trowbridge/Delvecchio) Passes 4/0

Motion: To enter into Executive Session for the following reasons and to not return to open session: A) 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 related to Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (MMWEC) proposal for an ownership interest in a renewable power

generation project, the disclosure of which will adversely affect the Commission's ability to conduct business in relation to other entities

B) To approve Executive Session minutes of June 5, 2017 at which the Commission invoked Exemption 6, to discuss the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property where an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the Town's negotiating position and the Chair so declared.

(Schoonveld/Trowbridge) Passes 4/0

Roll Call Vote: Trowbridge-yes; Delvecchio-yes; Schoonveld-yes; Aptowitz-yes

Respectfully submitted: Jacqueline Lee



Signature of Clerk



Date of Approval