



OBSERVER CORPS REPORT

Name of Committee: Marblehead Municipal Light

Meeting Date: 10/25/22

LWVM Observer: Maggie Smist

Members in Attendance:

Lisa Wolf, Jean Jacques Yarmoff, Michael Hull (Chair), Simon Frechette and Adam Smith

Joe Kowalik : General Manager, and the Financial Director

Meeting Summary:

Michael Hull called the meeting to order at 4:34 pm.

1. **Approve the minutes of September 27th.** Motioned and approved.
2. **Lisa requested that meeting time change to begin at 4 pm** – motioned and approved.
3. **General manager's report: Battery / solar update.** Meeting was held last week on 10/13 which included fire, light and board of health departments. Goal was to assemble documents which would show benefits and risks of the use of residential and utility batteries. He showed all of the relevant document links on a slide and suggested they go up on MMLD website after the list is vetted.

The board had a discussion about the fire department's cautious stance of residential batteries in Marblehead. There are issues with town permitting process due to fire department stance. Lengthy discussion followed on ConnectedHomes program and the Tesla program.

Further discussion on residential batteries will be after January 2023 when new regulations come out.

3. Financial update. We are looking at another 573k revenue shortfall based on cost of wholesale power this past year. War in Europe has made energy demand become worldwide issue. We need to adjust PPA once again. PPA will continue to be updated monthly likely thru April, 2023. Rate restructure will still happen in January, 2023.

Operating cash is in a solid position. Non-energy expenses below budget.

There was lengthy discussion of these unprecedented conditions and how to communicate it to the public. An insert will go out with bills and thru email. Jean Jacques asked if we can have a public forum which was initially discussed over the summer. It is to discuss the rate restructure but the current situation will also be discussed. Two dates being considered before holidays but the board wants to check town calendar.

4. Ludlow Solar update: largest municipally owned project in MA. Joe attended the ceremony to open it and said it was impressive and moving. It could power 160 homes and displace 700 tons of CO2 emissions.

4. Strategy committee update. Jean Jacques reported out that the group met two weeks ago. There was consensus that benchmark forecasting will be done at the next meeting.

5. Sustainability committee update. Group has met twice since last meeting. They are developing customer journey map – there were 7 action items from meeting. First item is a customer survey. They discussed survey with an individual who had proposed a survey in the past. They decided to go with this individual and will develop consolidated set of questions for the survey. Survey would go thru billing insert or on-line. It would be out over two billing cycles. Goal is to have results by January. There was discussion on how to build it and what to cover.

There was a discussion of whether the new sustainability position was posted. It has not been. There was discussion on how the position will pay for itself and how it fits in 2023 budget.

There was further discussion on having the Board and GM come up with sustainability goals which hasn't been done yet. The starting point for the discussion is the document that Jean Jacques has put together already.

Observer had to leave the meeting at 6:55 pm.