



OBSERVER CORPS REPORT

Name of Committee: Marblehead Municipal Light

Meeting Date: 2/27/24

LWVM Observer: Maggie Smist

In Attendance:

Light Commissioners: Jean Jacques Yarmoff, Michael Hull, Simon Frechette, and Lisa Wolf (chair)

Light Department: Joe Kowalik (General Manager), Colin Coleman and Matt Barrett.

1.Call to Order at 4:40 pm

Minutes approved, Reading of Land Acknowledgement and there were no Public Comments

2. Outstanding items and requests from previous meetings

a) Polco Survey (Employee Satisfaction Survey) - Joe spoke to Polco yesterday about concerns of MMLD. Small employee population so identifiable demos will NOT be used on the survey (gender, age etc). MMLD wants to emphasize confidentiality and anonymity of employees – there will be no way to track back to employee. Survey will be MAILED to employee by Polco and will take 15 minutes to complete. The MMLD will see questions before they go out. A summary report will be provided back to MMLD once info is gathered. Polco is

preparing price for survey and MMLD would like to get it done by end of April.

b) **FY 2023 Goals Review-** Progress tracking report was sent out over the weekend by Joe on a word document. Commission members should review and send comments on goals directly to Joe.

c) **FY 24 Goals Setting-** The GM proposed some minor wording changes to of a few items on the GM objectives document which were briefly discussed. This document was voted and approved.

d) **FY24 Budget Comparison with FY23 budget and actuals** Financial spreadsheets were reviewed. And this included the expanded headcount. There a discussion about reviewing portfolio re-allocation for 2024 and the Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company will come to discuss in March when all of the Commissioners are in attendance.

3. Itemize payroll for expected new hires Green Marblehead

Committee and MMLD - Aligning goals and priorities Lisa Wolf introduced the new Sustainable Coordinator, Logan Casey, and he introduced himself. Logan gave his past work experience and how he started a car-share program. He will be working initially on Transportation with bike plan/EV chargers and Town Buildings where he will work with the DPW and the Town Planning Department especially with all the municipal buildings. All of this will involve applying for state and federal grants. He discussed Green Communities and working with them as Mhd moves forward. GC will open us up for more grant funding.

Lisa presented out a planning document to begin aligning Green Mhd with MMLD with carbon free goals – she reviewed MMLD goal and Logan will begin working on this document after he has settled in a bit

more. MMLD goals are 10-20 year goals. Joe asked for more specifications on these goals which will be discussed in March. There was further discussion on Logan's work in town and the coordination between the departments in town.

4. General Manager Updates

a) **Critical hires** IST (Information Services) manager positions will have interviews next week and Simon and the new HR Director will be assisting Joe with interviews. Lisa asked if this will possibly become an assistant GM in the future. Joe said this is possible as the IS position is crucial for working with the billing systems and other infrastructure. Our future work with MMWEC will also rely on good and timely data.

Capital Project Mgr position is the new focus of the recruiter. A posting is being prepared for a new department mechanic.

b) Tioga Way

A map was reviewed of the Battery Electric Storage facility along Tioga Way/Hood Lane. The site looks adequate and Joe will begin working on easement access. An outside engineering firm will likely be contacted about a final evaluation of the full parcel including drainage and the wetlands. There was a discussion about whether to install ballistic walls which would be quite expensive (about \$500k). There was further discussion about battery storage options and further expansion.

c) Village 13

Joe stated there have been two bid documents sent out.

Land Bridge Precast contract signed. Bridge install bids are opening on 2/28 and work should be done by early May. Transformer will be delivered on 4/29. There was a discussion about timing of project and

minimizing of costs with the project. Joe would like the MMLD to speak to the Select Board further about the project scope and timing.

d) Power portfolio '23 actuals

Good news: wholesale power costs were down 6.3% and total wholesale power costs down 4%. ISO NE peak was in September and those costs are down 16.9% which gives us capacity cost relief in 2024.

Sobering news: Carbon free generators such as wind and nuclear didn't perform as well in 2023, and the carbon free % of the MMLD portfolio was down to 41% from 44%.

There was a discussion about the results and what that may mean.

e) Pilot (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) Payment to the Town

Joe was approached about this. Usually the MMLD votes on this in March. There is data out there on how it will impact rates. They MMLD will discuss this further in March once they can analyze the data. It was discussed how Green Marblehead surcharges may also affect cost to ratepayers.

The Next Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 26

5. Meeting adjourned at 5:58 pm