



OBSERVER CORPS REPORT

Marblehead Municipal Light Commission: 3/25/25

LWVM Observer: Maggie Smist

In Attendance:

Light Commissioners: Michael Hull, Jean Jacques Yarmoff, Simon Frechette, Adam Smith, Mike Hull, Lisa Wolf (chair).

Light Department: Joe Kowalik (General Manager)

4:03 Meeting Called to Order

Land Acknowledgement was read. 5 documents were sent around for approval of a number of minutes for meetings held in March. Motion moved to approve all documents.

1. Employee survey – Survey is ready to go and employees can do by phone, on paper or on departmental computers. It will remain open for two weeks. Joe stated he has had meetings with employees to explain the survey and the importance of doing the survey.

2. 2025 Department Goals – Joe distributed the goals to the commissioners and there was discussion of the mission statement, the training section, engineering goals and the current chain of command. There was also a discussion of the target goals around carbon emissions and electrification grants. There was a discussion of the difficulty in getting grants with the current administration – resiliency grants may

survive. The commissioners want to keep goals as part of the plan and wait for the dust to settle.

Goals were moved and approved.

3. General Manager Updates

-Village 13 Update (Substation Construction Contract) – The site work is on schedule and contractors are very good communicators. Switchgear manufacturing delivery is being delayed from late April into May and this equipment is important to get asap. There are some concerns about sewer main pipe near Swampscott and new options are being considered. Additional engineering and planning will be required.

-Utility Scale Battery - There is a signed contract for doing base line noise study. Joe has also come up with six ways to do other site evaluations. These were discussed and included environmental impact, location of batteries around town, cost and impact to residential areas. There was extensive discussion with the Commissioners on the use of batteries in Marblehead.

- Value of BESS (Battery Energy Storage System) in Marblehead – It will lower wholesale power costs in Marblehead, and the calculations were presented by Joe. It will also allow for resiliency during unplanned outage, and it may allow us to defer some capital investments.

-Wilkins Plant Upgrade – receiving functional grants

-Open Employee Positions

AGM Engineering Project Manager – expanding the search

Energy Efficiency Project Manager – interviews are ongoing

Department Mechanic – one offer declined and another interview planned

Substation Specialist – job posted with possible internal candidate

Working Foreman – position is posted

2ND Lineman – new employee started 3/23/25

-APPA Excellence in Reliability – MMLD was a 2024 Certificate Winner

Meeting went into Executive Session at 5:15 pm