



OBSERVER CORPS REPORT

Name of Committee: Marblehead Municipal Light

Meeting Date: 9/27/22

LWVM Observer: Maggie Smist

Members in Attendance:

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

Joe Kowalik General Manager

Meeting Summary:

Michael Hull called meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

August 30, September 8 and 14th meeting minutes approved.

Bill Bullock of EMWIC reported out on meter battery action project.

He reviewed process to date and said there were 9 bidders. 3 finalists for project: Agilitas Energy, Convergent and Delorean Power.

Discussion of benefits and costs of the three finalists. Bill will be collected on saved transmission and capacity charges. It is hard to project capacity but transmission charges are expected to go up over 20-year life of battery. EMWIC will review the invoices.

Delorean Power out of Albany NY was chosen. Service technicians are relatively close. They have put together a team to start the contracting process. Delorean is willing to add projects if Tioga Way and Village 13 works out. 50/50 split with savings with Delorean. There was extensive discussion about next steps.

Bill updated MMLD on residential battery program

Considering rolling out an incentive for battery manufacturers since Inflation Reduction Act will also be offering incentives for homeowners to install batteries. He talked about current rebate program during the general discussion. Savings with residential program is specific to each project and can be substantial with tax credits.

Fire Chief visited to discuss residential battery program

Chief asked for summary of why MMLD wants to add batteries. Lisa spoke about savings with renewables being added and taking pressure off natural gas at peak times. Long term plan is to reduce peak capacity by adding batteries.

Fire Chief asked for us to not have tunnel vision: we need to measure whether risks outweigh the awards. Green is good but we need to be aware of downsides. Batteries need to go in garages and not homes. Fire code, building code and electrical codes will be overlapping.

Jean-Jacques mentioned there are revisions to codes going on now – he mentioned there is a demand from residents so how do we work with everyone to make it happen. He mentioned that other towns have it so we want to be able to offer it. It would be good for homeowners to have process to get battery.

Fire Chief does agree everything has risks and we have to weigh risks. He said current state parameters are not complete.

Mike Hull recommended putting together a task force from MMLD department, MMLD Board, Fire Department and Building Department to work thru this issue. He said we had a similar approach with solar panels.

General Updates by Joe Kowalik

Tree trimming program is moving forward and will be done by October. Spoke about Hurricane update in Florida. Marblehead sent one truck to Florida. Waiting for Switchgear proposals. State Grant received from Coastal Management – it will take 4 parcels near MMLD down to Marblehead Trading and improve public access and provide security for MMLD location. Money will also go towards raising seawalls. There is a Solar Array dedication belonging to MMEWEC/MMLD.

MMLD Financial Update by Joe Kowalik

MMLD is having a bad year with expenses. We raised PPA twice this year and we have to raise it again. Increase is due to prices in 'day ahead' market. New England is constrained with bringing in natural gas this winter. Germany is being cut off from getting gas from Russia and they stockpiling natural gas. Price going up 60%. PPA will go up for average bill to go up \$22. Joe asked for guidance on moving forward – committee supported Joe's data and decision.

There is a discussion about deferred capital maintenance and revisiting this at a future maintenance. Joe wants to also look at vendor to service/upgrade the equipment that feeds meter information back to the MMLD. Currently, the MMLD has been monitoring the meter feeds. They will come in with a proposal to remotely monitor our fiber optic system.

Strategy working group report out by Jean Jacques Yarmoff

Long list of possible actions and what should be prioritized for coming year presented. All 33 issues will impact financials etc. He reviewed the list and the impact via rates, emissions etc. He is asking for guidance.

He spoke specifically on forecasting load with maximum electrification. He spoke about not selling new gas cars by 2035. MMLD has to anticipate 2000 new Electric Vehicles each year. MMLD has ten years to work out how it will affect the load. Per Jean Jacques, ISO New England forecasting is not good. Joe asked who is best suited to handle this problem? He doesn't think the cities and towns should be dealing with it and the state planning commissions should be looking at it.

Goal is to have the board continually bring back information to the meetings. Group should meet off line with several commissioners and incorporate members of the community be part of this group. They brainstormed people who can be part of this team including engineering people or planning people.

Sustainability committee report out by Lisa Wolf and Simon Frechette

Fire Chief reported out and they spoke about hiring a Sustainability Officer. First role would be developing a robust communication strategy. This role would pay for itself through his/her work. Adam asked to see job description. Joe would be making the decision and he asked if the committee has fully decided to hire this position. Mike Hull said we need to backfill other positions.

Lisa asked about timing of department goal setting and asked for it to be on the next agenda.

Jean Jacques asked about new General Glover project – Joe said one building will be in Marblehead and we already have power going to the sight. There was further discussion on this upcoming construction project.

Other Comments

Guest, Frank Cashner, commented that Ukraine war puts us all in competition for the same power source. It has made the MMLD board and department job even more challenging. He is encouraging more dialogue with the community.

Jim Zisson is on Brown School Committee and he asked about solar project at the school being on an agenda.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm