

Wendell Municipal Light Plant (MLP) Board Meeting

Tuesday, August 15, 2023 6:30 pm

Minutes

Present: MLP Board - Robert Heller, Laurie DiDonato, Lou Leelyn(Chair); MLP Manager - Ray DiDonato.
Meeting called to order 6:43 pm

Minutes - Approval of June 27th minutes - Laurie made a motion to approve the minutes, Robert seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

MLP Manager report:

- Follow up to the customer who lost service but was away and didn't realize it - Whip City said they would credit the customer for the months their service was down and will also credit the MLP, so Ray will convey that we are in agreement on that. Ray followed up to make sure this would happen after they backtracked on refunding the MLP. There was discussion on whether there should be a policy on this kind of situation for the future. The MLP feels we will not cover this cost if Whip City does not. Should Whip City get an alarm when service goes out, or is it the owner's responsibility? We should let Whip City know that if they are not going to cover in this situation, we won't either.
- Hut alarm was fixed when Ray did a reset of the Bosch security system. There is a reset button in the case on the left when you enter the hut and there is a key on the wall to open the case.
- Subsidy - minimum drop cost is now \$1100. The threshold for a subsidy can be based on ACP eligibility criteria. 1 year service commitment would be needed. Subsidy amount could be up to \$1200. This will not be offered retroactively. It aligns with the price hike, as well as digital equity efforts, and our retained earnings make it possible. New customers can apply with Whip city, and get approved for ACP. How to let people know. Press release type of memo that is public facing. Lou will draw that up. Do a pilot program of up to 10 applicants. Generally we are putting in 3-5 services a year. Will think about press a little more.
- From Whip city estimate of redundancy cost will be \$64,157, and we set aside \$50k . Plus another \$15k for Nokia services, so the total is around \$80k. They want a 40% deposit. We are waiting on a contract.
- Potential bill of prior year - Power generated preventative maintenance service. Ray thought it was already paid, but it wasn't so we owe them the fee. If there is trouble having it paid now Ray will pay and get reimbursed after approved at Town meeting.

New website content -

A new town website will launch in October, with a beta launch in 2-3 weeks. Probably need to update the MLP page. Website is wendell-ma-proudcity.com. We will need to determine who will be admin.

Operations-

- Lou tried to meet with Andrew from Whip City to finalize the payment plan process. Board agreed that whoever is on the call can make the decisions on minor changes that are needed.
- 4 installations in July . We had a total of 366 bills. A Jennison Rd. install is on hold so it may need work from us. 363 bills went out in August.
- There was an outage on Mormon Hollow that we haven't received a bill for yet. Costs for past repairs are usually \$4-5k for minor outages. A major storm or any cost over \$10K would trigger insurance.
- National grid is putting up poles in Shutesbury now and doing tree work on Lockes village Rd for upgrade to electric service.
- Smartphone apps - we have two of them. One allows us to see the hut through a camera when we get an alarm and also allows you to open the door. Laurie and Ray will work to write out instructions before the next meeting.

Next meeting time - Sept 12th, 6:30pm in person.

Meeting adjourned at 7:42pm