**MUNICIPAL ELECTRIC POWER ADVISORY BOARD**

**Minutes**

**February 22, 2024**

**HMLD Community Room, 1 Holden Street, Holden, MA**

**6:00 pm**

**Members present: Steve Sendrowski, Richard Farrell, Pete Liddy, Scott Carlson, Ryan McCarthy and Dan Golden**

**Member not present: Peter Elkas**

**Staff present: Barry Tupper, General Manager; Callie Knower - DFA**

**Public Present: Jane Dye; Denis Mahoney**

**Determination of Quorum**

The meeting was called to order at 6:09 p.m. by S Sendrowski and determined there was a quorum.

**Public Comment**

Dennis Mahoney, spoke about thinking about solar on the landfill. They have been doing research on this and how to get the project started. They learned the landfill is not officially closed so its not a good foundation for this project at this time. They are reaching out to various Town Departments to get the landfill officially closed.

**Approval of Minutes**

*Motion by D. Golden, seconded by R. Farrell to approve the January 25, 2024 minutes. Unanimously approved.*

**Financials**

C Knower shared the financials.

* The auditors were in house on February 14th and 15th for their field work for the 2023 audit. They will be following up over the next few weeks for any additional documents they need, and the audit will hopefully be finalized in late spring.
* Cash is balanced through December with the Accountants Office, we have not yet reconciled January yet.
* Budget to Actuals – we collected $50,805.73 less than we had planned for revenue due to lowering the PCA rate back in October.
* We are underbudget on distribution expense, customer accounts expense and the administrative and general expenses.
* As of 12/31 our depreciation fund stands at $3,916,851.12 and the reserve trust $4,508,211.04.
* The HMLD’s total metered load for the month of January was 10,191,743 kWh, which is a 10.8% increase from the 2023 figures.
* The peak demand for the month of January was 18,140 which occurred on Tuesday, January 16th at 6pm.
* The total transmission costs were $268,290.31
* MMWEC’s NextZero program completed 11 residential home energy audits during the month of January totaling $3,737.80. The total rebates for the month of January were$3,227.56: Appliances $240.00, HEI $2,000.00 and Audit Inspections $600.00.
* As of the end of January, the total arrears is $33,445.84 compared to January 2023 which was $47,249.00. The total past due balance includes $15,546.70 for shutoff protected accounts, amount to 46% of the total arrears. The total arrears for January compared to our January operating revenue is 2.4%

**Manager’s Miscellaneous**

B Tupper shared updates:

* Battery Energy Storage System (BESS): Progress is underway at the substation concerning the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS). The communication cable from Industrial Drive Road to the Chaffins substation riser pole has been successfully installed. Derek and Mike have held meetings with the contractors to review the site and discuss the excavation process, which is scheduled to commence the week of March 16th for installing necessary infrastructure. Additionally, the transformer for the BESS project was delivered on February 14th, 2024, and we anticipate the arrival of the batteries in mid-May.
* AMI First Article Testing (FAT)
  + All Polyphase meters have been updated with the new software to correct the reverse power reading issue, awaiting approval confirmation should be next week
  + Water Departments Gen 5 500w (water meters) security key configuration issue has been resolved, Derek as set the motion for these to be picked up by the AMI system, once communication has been established he will reach out to the Water Department so they can finish the first article testing on their end.
  + Ap’s and relays (pilot program) are fully operational and the F.A.T. (first article testing) with water and electric meters is in the process of communicating
  + AMI Relays have arrived, we will be installing AMI relays in coming months
  + We are still awaiting 5 more Cellular AP’s
  + 8600 residential meters have been approved and ordered, scheduled to arrive March 18th.
* Revenue Meters: at Bullard and Chaffins: The town IT is still working on configuration of proper firewall security and networking to install new Revenue meters at Chaffins. Bullard substation revenue meter has been returned from the factory it was sent in to be rebuilt due to malfunction, all systems are back up and running 100%.
* Derek Peto (our Substation and Utility Foreman) has been putting in tremendous effort, collaborating with various entities and contractors to address the myriad of issues we've encountered. I wanted to take a moment to express my gratitude for his hard work and dedication, which has been instrumental in bringing us this far.
* DOT project for Shrewsbury St/Holden St.: Gas Company contractor has been working in front of the light department the last few weeks. This has created some issue with noise and customers accessing the office. We are optimistic that work will be completed by early next week.
* Town Wide Hazardous Trees: James (Tree Warden & Forstery Foreman) and I have been working with the DPW and the Town Manager to try and keep funding in the DPW FY2025 capital budget to be used to remove a growing list of hazardous trees in town

**Operations Update**

B Tupper shared updates:

* January Outages – 3 instances with a total of 5 outages.
* Multiple development projects, new services and service upgrades are ongoing some of which are as follows:
  + Shrewsbury St DOT improvement project has started, pole relocations are being installed (forty pole relocations on Shrewsbury, Chapel, Holden, Doyle and Brattle St.
  + Avery Heights Project – pole installs are complete, two of the three conductors are in. We are hopeful to have this completed by the 1st week of March (weather permitting)
  + Elmwood Ave – Four homes built and complete and four more lots which are not under construction at the moment
  + Fisher Rd EXT. down payment has been received and work has started on phase one of the project. Phase 2 designs will be in the works in the next coming months
  + Paquette Concrete reconductoring and metering upgrade has been completed.
  + Jackson Woods (multiple service connections have been completed as well as another transformer installation) project is on going
  + Tea Party (multiple service installations have been completed in the third phase of the project) project on going.
* New signage has been purchased for detours, road closures and safe work zone areas
* The Forestry Department
  + Trimming on Main St. from Holden Hills toward the Rutland line.
  + Princeton St. (on going) and North St is 90% complete.
  + Lovell Rd has been added to the mix
* Building and Improvements
  + Garage door #1 new motor and safety eye system installation are on order. (We have had some issue with the doors recently and are addressing that.)
  + Garage heater are in the process of being repaired (two small ceiling units)

**Other Business**

* Board congratulated Callie on her promotion to Director of Finance and Administration
* Steve asked if anyone wanted to take over the Chairman position, all in favor for Steve to keep the position.

*Motion by Rich F, seconded by Scott C to adjourn the February 22, 2024 meeting at 6:35pm. Unanimously approved.*