



MUNICIPAL ELECTRIC POWER ADVISORY BOARD
Minutes
April 27, 2023
HMLD Community Room, 1 Holden Street, Holden, MA
6:00 pm

Members present: Pete Liddy II, Steve Sendrowski, Richard Farrell, Scott Carlson and Dan Golden

Not Present: Peter Elkas

Staff Present: Barry Tupper, General Manager – HMLD; Callie Knower, AM

Public Present: Jane Dye, 39 Lovell Rd and Dennis Mahoney, 56 Fox Hill Dr

Determination of quorum

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by S Sendrowski and determined there was a quorum.

Public Comment

Jane Dye, 39 Lovell Road stated that she knew Seabrook was offline for over a month now and no body is talking about it. She stated we rely a lot on Seabrook and if anything happened with that, it would affect us overall and our rate. She wanted to know what HMLDs plan is to diversify and grow the non-emitting portfolio as we go forward.

Approval of Minutes

February 23, 2023

Motion by R. Farrell, seconded by P. Liddy to approve the February 23, 2023 minutes. Unanimously approved.

Financials

C. Knower shared the financials.

- The Light Department has balanced cash with the Town through March.
- Operating revenues are \$774,192.91 higher than we budgeted, and power production expense is \$995,138.50 under budget. We are still waiting on December, January and February resettlement charges that will lower this number, but our overall power expense is drastically lower than projected due to the mild weather and the proactive hedge purchases we made a few months ago.
- Total distribution expense, overhead/underground line expense, customer install expense and maintenance of street lights, admin and general, outside services, injuries and damages and maintenance of general plant are all under budget through March. Station Expense is over budget due to multiple invoices to repair the overheating issues downstairs. We also took over 7 Adams Road and are splitting the gas and electric costs with the Fire Department which are charged to this account. Maintenance of Overhead Lines is overbudget due to the two winter storms we had when we had to call in for mutual aid.
- We projected to have a net loss of \$508,109.32 for March and we currently have a net income of \$1,141,189.29.
- The HMLD's total metered load for the month of March was 8,964,650 kWh, which is a 2% decrease from the 2022 figures.
- HMLD hit a demand of 16,497 on March 7th at 7:00pm.
- The total transmission costs were \$353,354.60.
- The total billings for electric sales and bills were \$1,864,492.42 and 8,299 bills were sent out.

- The total cumulative over collection for Power Expenses and Power Revenue, as of is \$1,121,599.93 at this time, we are still waiting for resettlement charges for December, January and February from ISO-NE which will decrease this over collection. Our meters at the Chaffins Substation were not being read properly during those months so there was estimated load each month. Barry explained that the meters were not being read due to a connectivity issue. The meters we ordered are on the way, so we had to borrow meters from National Grid. National Grid has a very secure connection so there were issues with MMWEC being able to read them. We just got the November resettlement in March, so our hope is to have the resettlement entered by the June invoice. Along with waiting for the resettlements, we still need to transfer \$915,619.85 from the over collection to our Rate Stabilization fund. This is the amount we pulled from Rate Stabilization to fund our Working Capital early last year. We are waiting to make this transfer until all the resettlement have posted. Another item affecting our current power bills is the Mystic COS charge. Our Mystic COS charge was \$73,864.04 for the March power bill. We have no control over these charges and MMWEC is working diligently to try and get more answers and a better forecast for what local MLPs can expect for the rest of the year from Mystic. We are hopeful that by June/July we will be able to transfer the full amount back to rate stabilization and lower the PCA rate for our customers at that time.
- The July 2022 power bill was the first bill to include a monthly billing from ISO-NE for the Mystic Generating Stations reliability-must-run contract. This is an allocation of the supplemental capacity payments made to Mystic to retain for fuel security. ISO-New England asked the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for a waiver from its market rules so it can keep two units of the Mystic Generating Station, a gas plant near Boston, online beyond 2022. ISO-NE said enacting cost recovery for the 1,700 MW of generation is necessary because the units' retirement would likely mean the closure of an adjacent liquefied natural gas (LNG) import facility the grid operator says is essential for "fuel security." The waiver is needed because current rules do not allow cost recovery for such risks. ISO is allocating a large charge to MMWEC based on the total membership MWh's and then MMWEC is replicating the same allocation to each Member based on your own MWh usage. We are following the same allocation convention; however, the largest issue is that there is no transparency behind how the total charge is calculated and assigned to MMWEC. MMWEC is continuing to express disappointment and press ISO and others including FERC commissioners for further information on these charges.
- MMWEC's NextZero program completed 9 residential home energy audits during the month. The total rebates for the month were \$3,894.99 (Cool homes \$2,100, WiFi thermostats \$264.99 and HEI rebates \$1,500)
- As of March, arrears totaled \$55,417.81, this is down \$11,830.44 from the February ending balance. We did one round of shut offs in March and have resumed our normal shut off procedures beginning in April. Since the end of January, we have lowered the arrears by \$26,682.00. Barry noted that HMLD is working on updating the policies and procedures and that HMLD has implemented
- When we were preparing the 2023 Capital Budget we made the decision to defer the cost of a new Meter Board to 2024 as we did not expect the new AMI Meters to come in till the end of 2023. We have started to receive test meters that need to be programmed and tested, which require the use of a Meter Board. The meter board will test the accuracy of the new meters and will hold all test results in the database. The cost of the meter board and computer from Radian Power and Energy Measurements Solutions is \$55,345.00. This meter board is the industry standard and the new ANSI standards require a true 3phase test board. We will not be spending the total amount allocated to Itron for the AMI meter project in 2023 so there are available funds to cover the cost of the meter board this year. Since it was not in the original budget, we are asking if you approve purchasing the meter board in 2023.
 - *Motion by D. Golden to allow HMLD to use funds from the current capital budget to purchase the meter board. Second by R. Farrell. Unanimously approved.*

Manager's Miscellaneous

B. Tupper presented.

- **Terms and Conditions Update** – HMLD has been working to update the current Terms and Conditions and presented the updated document to the Board. The Terms and Conditions are presented to the board, then the Light Commissioners and then submitted to the DPU. Most of this is housekeeping and clarification.
- **Article 2 – Initiating Electric Service**
 - **Section A** – prohibits residents within HMLDs electric service territory from purchasing retail service from another provider. It also prohibits resale arrangements involving onsite generation, lease and non-sales-based arrangement would be permitted. This is a standard in our PV piece, we do not want our customer selling electricity.
 - **Section B** – places an affirmative obligation on the customer to file an application for service in order to create an accurate record. We have a verbal contract at this time, there is no clear application process. Requiring a written application establishing the customers identity.
 - Discussion about making this an online fillable form to be electronically signed and how we do identify verification.
 - **Section C** – this provision is consistent with G.L. c. 164 S 58A which allows municipal light plants to collect a security deposit from any customer in an amount not to exceed three (3) months of usage. This is what we do for a rental customer because if they default, we cannot recoup that money through a lien.
 - **Section D** – this provision will protect HMLD in situations where access is not readily available from the public way or where service has been provided on a private property without permanent right as may be required by HMLD.
 - **Section E** – gives HMLD the flexibility to refuse to provide service if it is too difficult to do so, e.g., because the installation would be too expensive under the circumstance or because of environmental obstacles or even safety conditions. This provision would place the burden on the customer to remove the hardship in order to obtain service.
 - **Section F** – gives HMLD the express right to refuse to provide service to applicants with an outstanding balance in order to ensure payment and to protect HMLD against refusal-to-serve complaints.
- **Article 3 – Installation of Service and Service Connections**
 - **Section A** – general provisions regarding the Customers duty to install and maintain its equipment and wiring and gives HMLD the express right to refuse to provide service if the installation is not inspected or does not comply with any applicable requirements.
 - D. Golden asked if we should specify who does the digsafes.
 - **Section B** – gives HMLD the flexibility to require a System Impact Study and to impose particular service requirements or specifications and even to require a customer to execute a construction agreement for major installations or those with unique characteristics.
 - **Section C** – HMLD may deviate from its standard specifications for unique situations when justified.
 - **Section D** – gives HMLD the right to require the installation of particular equipment.
 - **Section F** – this provision sets forth the ownership rights to equipment and facilities.
 - **Section G** – imposes an obligation on the customer to maintain its facilities in good condition and to perform any needed replacements, repairs, or upgrades at its expense.
- **Article 4 – Additional Service Requirements**
 - **Section A** – address load issues and is intended to give HMLD discretion to determine the character of service or to refuse to provide service to customers with unusual loads.
 - **Section B** – HMLD is only required to provide the type of service that is offered.
 - **Section C** – general provision which incorporates specifically any “availability” terms of the applicable rate schedule.

- Section D – governs the customers facilities. It imposes obligations on the customer to maintain its facilities.
 - Section E – imposes an affirmative obligation on the customer to comply with all applicable laws and codes and gives HMLD the right to require proof and to suspend service if there is a question of compliance.
 - Section F – prohibits customer from reselling electricity in order to reject the integrity of HMLDs exclusive service territory.
- Article 5 – Installation, Access and Protection of HMLDs Equipment and Meters
 - Section A – address the basic meter process and discretion over the type and number of meters.
 - Section B – gives HMLD the right to take corrective action in the event there is an unauthorized use of electricity at the premises, e.g., due to theft or faulty meters, wiring or connections.
 - Section C – creates an obligation to provide the necessary space and facilities for the installation and protection of HMLDs equipment.
 - Section D – prohibits the customer from hindering access to the meter in any way, whether by refusing access to the property or by creating obstacles.
 - Section E – gives HMLD the general right to enter the premises for the purposes of performing its work.
 - Section F – to protect HMLD in the event of any tampering or interference with HMLDs meters or equipment, whether done intentionally or through inadvertence by the customer or its contractors.
 - Section G – customers may not tamper with or relocate the meter.
 - Section H – places liability on the customer for damages and gives HMLD the rights to suspense service in order to compel compliance.
- Article 6 – Additional Customer Responsibilities
 - Section A – places the duty on the customer to protect its appliances, such as computer equipment and televisions from damages due to voltage problems or reversals.
 - S. Carlson asked about voltage reduction and what percentage was required.
 - Section B -provision puts customers on notice that their rates may change and that they will be charged the new rate when it becomes effective, regardless of whether the customer is aware of the rate change.
 - Section C – HMLDs right to bill for installation and maintenance services as applicable and to require prepayment for such work.
 - Section D – sets forth the budget and payment plan requirements consistent with the DPU regulations.
 - Section E – establishes the due date for invoices consistent with DPU billing and termination regulations.
 - Section F – provision establishes the customer of record.
 - Section G – establishes liability for unmetered and/or unbilled charges and allows HMLD to recover for unbilled charges even where HMLD was at fault.
 - Section H – references the charges/fees that may apply in addition to the monthly charge for electric service, such as disconnection and reconnection fees, returned check charges, or other such non-recurring fees.
- Article 7 – Suspension or Termination of Service
 - Section A – explicitly allows HMLD to suspend service for routine and non-routine maintenance and emergencies.
 - Section B – allows HMLD to suspend or discontinue service if the customer fails to comply with any of the terms of service.
 - Section C – gives HMLD flexibility to suspend or discontinue service if it suspects that or fraud, or if HMLD believes there is a safety problem with the Customers installation or even access to HMLDs equipment located on the customers property.
 - Section D – allows HMLD to suspend or discontinue service due to weather or other conditions not caused by HMLD.

- Section E – allows HMLD to suspend or terminate service whenever permitted by the DPU, such as for non-payment under its billing and termination regulations.
 - Section F – allows HMLD to remove its equipment or appliances if service is discontinued.
- Section 8 – Limitations on Liability and Damages and Exclusions
 - Section A – protects HMLD whenever there is problem with service, such as a reversal of electricity or an interruption which causes damage to the customer's equipment or financial loss.
 - Section B – protects HMLD in the event that the customer experiences harm from the mere presence of HMLD's facilities or electricity.
 - Section C – protects HMLD from liability for injuries and damage due to circumstances outside of its control.
 - Section D – provides further protection from liability in the event that any disclaimers are held to be unenforceable.
- Appendix
 - A - Most of these items we already have, but this spells out the fees and will be submitted to DPU.
 - B – All new construction must be underground. This allows extenuating circumstances that HMLD can allow overhead.
- *Motion by S. Sendrowski to accept the updated Holden Municipal Light Department General Terms and Conditions for Retail Electric Service. Second by S. Carlson. Unanimously approved.*

Operations Update

B. Tupper presented.

April 2023 Operations Update

- March Winter Storm: Approx.. 1,000 customer outages. All were restored by 10PM. SELCO assisted with 2 crews.
- 7 outages in February
- 9 outages in March (not including storm)
- Solar projects currently 2 approved and under construction.
- Transformer order (25 pole mounts) placed on 10-12-22 is on schedule with estimated delivery for April/May 2023.
- The Forestry division has catching up on storm damage/clean-up since March storm. They also have done a few tree removals on Bullard for the circuit expansion project.
- Crews have been working hand in hand with VZ and Charter through the NJUNS system to identify and remove double poles throughout the town.
- Jefferson Mill project Phase 1 is complete (Transformer installation and conductor replacement).

2022-2023 Capital Budget Updates

- The Bullard street circuit expansion update:
 - The new A1 express circuit is complete and ready to energize when needed.
 - Crews are now working on to re-conductor the B1 circuit from Bullard substation to Shrewsbury St. The primary work is projected to be complete in the next 2 weeks.
- Chaffins substation update:
 - HMLD is working with MMWEC on next steps to install a Battery bank.
 - This project is still on track to be operational in May of 2024.
 - Steve S – Asked to do a tour of the substation. Discussed that next month there will be a tour of the new substation prior to the meeting.
 - Cameras are up and running at all substations and Adams road.
- AMI update
 - HMLD has begun receiving First Article Test Meters and Infrastructure components. We anticipate testing to begin by August of 2023.
 - Field survey was completed and finalized. Crew have been replacing poles to accommodate AMI infrastructure.

Personnel:

- HMLD remains fully staffed.

Other Business

- S. Carlson asked for an update about the Peabody Turbines at the next meeting.
- D. Golden asked if HMLD should have a policy regarding collecting the full cost of projects from customers prior to starting the work. Currently HMLD charges 50% up front and the remainder at the completion of the project. The Board decided not to create a new policy on this at this time.
- Barry brought to the Boards attention that we are going to have all our manholes inspected on Main street to see if we need new risers or covers.

Motion by *P. Liddy*, seconded by *S. Carlson* to adjourn the meeting at 7:52pm.