

Hingham Municipal Light Plant
Regular Meeting held on February 15, 2012

A regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Hingham Municipal Light Plant (HMLP) was called to order by Chairman John Stoddard at 6:30 pm on February 15, 2012.

The full Board, Walter Foskett, John Ryan, and John Stoddard was present as well as the Interim General Manager Paul Heanue.

Executive Session:

Commissioner Foskett made a motion to move into Executive Session, JR seconded the motion, unanimous vote to go into Executive Session.

Commissioner Foskett made a motion to end Executive Session and return to the regular meeting, the motion was seconded by JS, unanimous to return to the regular meeting

Regular Meeting

The first order of business was to approve the minutes from the January 17, 2012 Board meeting. Commissioner Ryan made a motion to approve the minutes and Commissioner Foskett seconded it, unanimous vote to accept.

General Manager Selection:

Commissioner Foskett said that in June of 2011 Paul Heanue was made interim General Manager. He is very happy with Mr. Heanue's work since then, and would like to see him appointed as General Manager. JS agreed that he would like to see Mr. Heanue appointed to the post, likewise Commissioner Foskett. Commissioner Foskett then made a motion to have Mr. Heanue appointed as General Manager on a permanent basis, with a salary review in the next meeting, Commissioner Ryan seconded the motion and it was voted unanimously.

The General Manager stated that when we met last the MBTA easement case was almost closed and an agreement had been reached. Diedre Lawrence put together the paperwork for the agreement, and sent it to them, but there has been no response from them, but they have assured the General Manager that everything is still on track, they just need some more time. However there are interest payments to take into consideration.

The General Manager handed out for review a document “Tariff, Terms and Conditions for Renewable Distributed Generation Facility Service” regarding Net Metering. At the October meeting, we voted and approved on this proposed language for Net Metering. DL reviewed it and edited it slightly, and here is a copy of the final draft. This needs to be voted on again, and we will then submit it to the DPU. On the second page it clearly states that the credit will be only on the Energy Component. There then followed a discussion as to how the credit will be applied to the bill. Commissioner Ryan made a motion to approve the document, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Foskett, unanimous vote to accept as written.

The next of order of business is the leasing of solar panels. The General Manager stated that he has been contacted by a number of companies asking if we would allow our customers to lease panels from them. The problem with these requests is the way the lease is written the customer would be buying electricity directly from the leasing company. The issue with this is that if we allow it we will lose our exclusivity rights to sell in Hingham. Solar companies and any other supplier would then be able to undercut our rates and take our larger customers from us. This could cause severe financial problems for us and an increase in rates. The General Manager stated that he has received a copy of the agreement that the Town of Belmont made. He and DL reviewed it, and DL feels that the town has left themselves wide open to the problems previously discussed. Discrimination between rate classes is not allowed, so there is no way to reserve non-exclusivity for smaller customers only.

Right now there is a new middle school being built in Hingham, and the energy action committee feels it would be a good idea to have solar panels put on the school, however there is no town budget to cover the cost of this. The committee wants to look at leasing the panels but this would raise the problem losing of exclusivity and the other issues previously discussed. Notre Dame Academy are in discussions with a solar panel leasing company at present and this company feels that they could generate up to 30% of their electric needs with these panels in place.

John Bewick of the Energy Action Committee then spoke. He has just started an assessment of Solar Energy for the energy committee. He has also spoken with Belmont who feels that they are fully protected by the regulations that they have put in place. He would like to speak with DL regarding this.

The General Manager stated that the next order of business is to discuss the preliminary 2011 financials. A copy was given to each board member for their perusal.

The General Manger distributed warrants to be signed.

The General Manager stated the next order of business is correspondence. We got a letter from Energy New England, who manages our energy portfolio. Commissioner Foskett is a representative on the board for Hingham. He attended a 2-day meeting in January and was very happy with the outcome of the meeting. They discussed CMAC, MWEC and ENE, and asked that Ray Saleeby and Tom Whitney be reappointed. Commissioner

Ryan then made a motion to reappoint Ray Celibi and Tom Whitney to the board of Energy New England. JS seconded, unanimous to reappoint Saleeby and Whitney.

Also to be discussed under correspondence was street lights. The Town Administrator said the Town will not pay for lights on private ways. The General Manager sent him correspondence on how many lights that entails and he is waiting to hear back on how to proceed. Do they still want those lights to be shut off? He expects that there will be a lot of complaints from residents regarding this if in fact the lights get turned off.

The last order of business to be discussed is that the General Manager would like to vote that John Stoddard be the alternate to him for the (Masachusetts Utility Self Insurance Trust Fund) Commissioner Ryan made a motion that John Stoddard be appointed, Commissioner Foskett seconded and it was voted unanimously.

Commissioner Foskett then made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded and it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 7:45pm.

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- Net Metering was the first item to be discussed. The “Tariff, Terms and Conditions for Renewable Distributed Generation Facility Service” which describes how net metering would be applied, were then discussed.

- The Energy Action Committee wants HMLP to allow a company to lease solar panels and sell the electricity to a customer. By doing this we will lose our exclusivity to sell electricity to Hingham customers. We would be in danger of losing some of our large customers. They want solar panels on the new middle school and since there is no money in the school’s construction budget for them they see leasing as a way to overcome this problem. The estimate for the panels is \$350,000. The General Manager feels that if we offer to buy these panels and lease them to the school we may be able to contain this situation.

The Town of Belmont adopted a policy similar to what the Energy Action Committee wants to put in place. Commissioner Foskett suggested that we let Belmont be a test case for net metering.

- Next to be discussed was health insurance for the Town which is being changed. Employees do not have a choice as to whether they want to change or not. The change will save around 25% on the premium, and savings will be shared with employees over a two year period.

- Next to be discussed was the General Managers review. Commissioner Foskett would like to take a vote to appoint Paul Heanue as General Manager when we come out of Executive Session.

- Commissioner Foskett brought up a discussion that he had had with the Hingham Town Manager about buying the water board. The current owners are Aquarion. If the town buys this people in the community will expect the rates to come down.

- Commissioner Ryan brought up the possibility of changing the company cars to Hybrids, however everyone agreed that they may be a problem in Winter weather.

Commissioner Foskett made a motion to end Executive Session and return to the regular meeting, the motion was seconded by JS, unanimous to return to the regular meeting.