

Belmont Light Board Advisory Committee
Minutes
Meeting of August 10, 2017
Belmont Light Conference Room

2017 NOV 15 PM 2: 24

Present: Steve Klionsky, Ralph Jones, Bob Forrester, Sarah Jackson, Adam Dash (LB liaison)

I. Introduction of Interim GM, Craig Spinale: Craig gave us his background: with BL for 6 years, previously with National Grid (North Shore district); good relationships with other municipals (Concord, Wellesley, Braintree, Peabody); day to day person at BL who keeps the lights on (operations)

II. Status of Blair Pond substation/transmission line: Project A (construction) is complete; we are now one giant step closer to closing out Project B (re-serving the existing substations from the new substation, called "cut-overs"). After September 1 we will be getting all power from Blair Pond (getting us out of our agreement with Eversource), cutting BL's payment to Eversource from ~\$1 million down significantly to maybe ~\$150,000 (still being figured out). Bob Joseph, AECOM, Mike Flynn, Blackwood Consulting, Ed Feloni, CEG, are town's consultants and Walter Foskett is lawyer helping us in our support of Eversource's request to socialize the costs of the line across New England via gaining Pool Transmission Facility status. We have a draft agreement with Eversource; there have been two rounds of questions so far from ISO-New England with another round expected in mid-August. We have an agreement with Eversource now to recover some of our costs for this support. Separately, BL didn't like the work McCourt did on the transmission line as-built and is withholding payment for the portion on BL's property even though Eversource accepted the work.

(Project C is the long term goal. The old substations would be retired and the voltage on the system would be increased from 4 kv to 13.8 kv. This requires considerable additional infrastructure work on conduits and manholes. Also, all transformers would need to be replaced. This work has not yet gone out to bid.)

We'd like to have an idea of the cost implications of the various potential outcomes from the ISO PTF issue – maybe next meeting Walter could join us for full discussion? And what costs are currently reflected in rates related to the substation project and how would this change given completion of Project B?

III. Easement for DCR at Blair Pond – in addition to easement, DCR asked BL to install a footbridge to beautify the area, BL said go ahead and design it and we'll see, but cost was too high

IV. Connexo license agreement – software for smart meters, enough changes in language that legal is reviewing it

V. Copyright infringement issue – settlement has been reached for small amount (\$2,000)

VI. IRP by Black & Veatch – proposal for Black & Veatch to develop an IRP for BL as good utility practice, but BL didn't think the agreement matched the proposal so it's on hold for the moment – why IRP? Terminology may just be throwing us off – we'll ask Becca

(aside: how do we work with/pay Walter? Only GM can give Walter work; At some point might be worthwhile to check into legal services costs)

VII. Poles and wires agreement to work with third party companies who work with the likes of Comcast and Verizon to allow use of distribution component for cell attachments and other things...can BL refuse to allow such use? Some of these things may present safety issues for BL workers; how do we deal with the political pressure that might be associated with attaching these things because the town would make money off of it? Need a policy and a plan for public input

VIII. Discussion of BL "10 Points" memo issues:

1. Energy Procurement – is there a strategy? Are there upcoming opportunities to engage on contracting or resource selection? Can we have a presentation from ENE as a first step? It's been challenging to know what our mix is, how green, whether RECs are being retired or sold, etc. Potentially we could look at contracts in Executive Session so we can provide review and input – but public needs information on our energy mix (revive the portfolio page on website)
2. Cost of Service Study – BL has reached out for proposals (not sure if it was through an RFP or through informal outreach to firms) and have one so far, looking for more in early September – not all numbers from substation are etched in stone so that would be a challenge. LBAC sub-committee to meet with Craig and Maria to talk about what we're looking for in a cost of service study; we'd also like to see public outreach and involvement on this; Warrant committee may be looking to dig deeper on the BL budget
3. EE Programs – BL needs to do a comprehensive energy efficiency plan, per agreement from 2013 (talk with Roger Colton)
4. Comparison to other utilities – how do we compare on metrics like reliability, customer surveys, rates, etc.? Longer term item.
5. Energy storage – proposal in to DOER.
6. Electric Vehicles – we've appreciated the updates we've heard.
7. Financial accounting – Bob is willing to keep helping out; looking for monthly budget and acceleration of year end closing process.
8. Draft DEP regs – requiring munis to meet RPS standards – will we be asked to sign on to the next action, such as a lawsuit? We'd like BL to come to us before signing on to such things; just because we've always done something a certain way doesn't mean it's still the right way and the Light Board should have a say.

IX. Future meetings:

Next Light Board meeting – September 11 @ 5:30pm

LBAC – Monthly meetings at least for the near term; Thursdays?