

Light Board Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Minutes of Meeting held on February 6, 2019
Belmont Light Conference Room
7:30 am

2019 JUL 31 AM 9:20

Attending LBAC members: Chair Steve Klionsky, Roy Epstein, Ralph Jones, David Beavers, Travis Franck, Bob Forrester

Belmont Light (BL) attending: General Manager Christopher Roy, Aidan Leary

I. CALL TO ORDER

- Convened at 7:34 am

II. PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION OF STRATEGIC PLANNING APPROACH / IMPACT OF ENERGY COMMITTEE "ROADMAP"

- Roy explained his team had been working internally to compile Belmont Light policies, draft a vision statement and goals, and propose actions to support those goals. The plan was to get feedback from the Light Board by the end of the month, which could then be followed by public input sessions, depending on the nature/extent of the feedback. The aggressive timeline was to attempt to have something for Spring Town Meeting.
- Beavers suggested that one of the goals include resiliency with respect to climate events.
- Roy was in the process of filing a grant for a consultant (Ventana Systems). They had a model that would allocate an optimal strategy for achieving the goals outlined in the Strategic Plan.
 - Franck had worked with Ventana and liked how the model took a holistic approach, incorporating feedback effects between different sectors.
 - Funding source of the grant was APPA; the maximum potential amount was \$125k. Roy saw this as covering roughly half the Strategic Planning project, including the consultant.
- *Next steps:* The next Light Board meeting on February 25th would be joint with LBAC to provide initial feedback on the draft strategic plan.

III. DISCUSSION OF WE ARE STILL IN COMMITMENTS / MUNI GREENHOUSE GAS LEGISLATION

"We are still in"

- Roy said an official Belmont Light profile had been created for the "We are still in" program. He shared a spreadsheet showing progress on each of the commitments, classifying them as "done", "pledged", or "needs discussion". Pledged items were those that had been discussed, but not formalized in policy. Franck said the Energy Committee

would take up some of the “needs discussion” items which were more relevant to the Energy Committee than Belmont Light.

- There was discussion about the goal of 100% renewables by 2020 - Roy clarified that this would require a REC based approach. Meanwhile, Belmont Light would continue its gradual shift towards obtaining renewable power supply contracts. Further cost analysis was needed to determine how best to achieve the goal using a mix of Class 1 and 2 RECs.

GHG Legislation

- The legislation reflected an agreement among Massachusetts municipal light plants to set minimal renewable energy targets. For Belmont, these targets were already exceeded by the more aggressive targets outlined in the Power Supply Policy. The legislation was written in such a way that it would not affect the local authority of municipal light plants.
- Epstein asked about the compliance payment; Roy said the payment would never be binding since it was set to be higher than the cost of buying RECs to meet the annual goal.
- Roy noted the legislation was filed, but there was still a possibility for amendments.

IV. DISCUSSION OF SOLAR AND/OR STORAGE, ANAEROBIC DIGESTER ON THE INCINERATOR SITE

- Kliensky pointed out questionable assumptions from the consultant’s report on the digester, including a buyback rate from Belmont Light of 11 cents/kwh. Epstein said another major issue was the financing assumption of a 4% interest rate. The digester project did not seem economically viable.
- The Committee revisited the rationale for why the solar farm option had been discarded by the Board of Selectmen in favor of storage. One of the initial criteria was whether a given project would provide funds towards capping of the site - Epstein noted that none of the remaining viable options provided capping funds. In light of this, the Board of Selectmen should be encouraged to separate the capping issue from its assessment of the remaining options.
 - Roy clarified that a solar farm could be viable for the site, but only after the cap was already in place. It was not feasible to use an energy project to generate capping funds.
- Epstein suggested Roy should attempt to quantify potential benefits offered by peak shaving via storage – savings could be transmitted back to the Town in the form of increased PILOT.
- *Action item:* Roy would draft a letter to Tom Caputo as Chair of the Light Board reviewing the viability of a solar farm as a potential for the incinerator site once the cap had been addressed.

V. DISCUSSION OF PPA VS. OWNERSHIP MODELS FOR FUTURE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

- Beavers said there were a range of different financing models used for projects – any RFP should leave this aspect open, to see what developers propose.
- Roy said that both model are feasible and that the decision depends in part on how much to reach into capital funding, balancing a given project against other needs.

- There was a discussion about the timeframe for when savings would be realized from a potential storage project.
 - Roy explained that savings come from both peak shaving and reduced capacity/transmission costs. There was a roughly one year lag to realize savings from peak shaving.
- Epstein suggested it would be useful to have a simple model breaking down the costs/savings for the project on a year-by-year basis, and breaking down the savings by peak shaving, capacity/transmission, etc.

VI. DISCUSSION OF CAPACITY AND TRANSMISSION CHARGES

- Klionsky asked whether it was possible to quantify potential savings in capacity and transmission charges from a battery – these costs amounted to around \$6m in 2018.
- Beavers proposed bringing in someone in the battery storage business to talk to them and gain more information. Klionsky thought it should be able to assess with publically available information.

VII. STATUS OF LED STREETLIGHT CHANGE-OVER

[Item deferred due to time considerations.]

VIII. REVIEW OF COST SUMMARY FOR EXISTING FREE PUBLIC EV CHARGING

[Item deferred due to time considerations.]

IX. FUTURE MEETINGS

- February, 25, 2019 – joint with Light Board.
- March 6, 2019 @ 7:30am.

X. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- December 5, 2018 minutes were approved unanimously.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

- Adjourned at 9:21am.