

Minutes

Town of Belmont

2019 NOV 26 PM 2:45

Belmont Municipal Light Board

Joint with the Light Board Advisory Committee

Selectmen's Meeting Room, Town Hall

Monday, July 8, 2019

6:00pm

I-CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Light Board was called to order at 6:01pm by Chair Tom Caputo. Vice Chair Adam Dash and Board Member Roy Epstein were present. Belmont Light General Manager Chris Roy was present.

The Light Board Advisory Committee did not have a quorum, however the following members were present: Steve Klionsky, Bob Forrester, and David Beavers.

II-DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON UPDATES TO THE POWER SUPPLY POLICY

Roy explained that the proposed changes to the Power Supply Policy (PSP) were intended to reflect the recent Article 8 vote at Town Meeting (Climate Road Map resolution). The changes had been reviewed/approved at the most recent LBAC meeting, and were as follows: switch columns 2 and 3 in the table on page 2 for improved clarity; update the column 'Belmont Light % power supply non-emitting' to match the Climate Road map targets out to 2022 (100%), and then 'TBD' afterwards. The purpose of the adding 'TBD' was to give flexibility for Belmont Light to respond if REC markets were to change substantially in the future. Roy said Belmont Light was on track to meeting the non-emitting targets out to 2022 without any rate impact to customers.

Dash asked about the blue-lined changes on page 3, regarding use of a load reducer category to accommodate New York Power Authority (NYPA) contracts. Roy explained that the NYPA contracts, being hydro power, were considered to be non-emitting (i.e. green) sources but did not have associated RECs. The strategy for dealing with such contracts was now explicitly specified in the PSP - essentially they were omitted from the calculation of the percentage non-emitting.

Dash wanted to be clear that this was not 'greenwashing' the accounting for the renewable energy supply claimed by Belmont Light. Klionsky said that LBAC had not had a chance to review these blue-lined changes, but he was supportive of them; Beavers noted that the calculation followed Clean Energy Standard (CES) accounting, did not come out of nowhere. Roy said he included the explicit calculation in the document so that the public is aware.

[Public comment.]

- *Michael Macrae* said that the load reducing category for hydro made sense from an internal Belmont Light perspective, although it would not necessarily match other regulatory standards (e.g. ISO).

A thought experiment would be if Belmont Light were to add a PV system to its distribution – how should this best be accounted for, as it would be a load reducer as well as having RECs?

Epstein proposed two other minor changes: on Section V, 'arrangement' is not previously defined, should be changed to 'power supply opportunity' to be consistent with prior language; on Section VI, clarify that the reference to 50k Mwh should be per year, not per contract.

Motion: To adopt the amendments to the Belmont Light Power Supply Policy as shown in the red-lined and blue-lined changes, as well as amendments to Section V and VI proposed by Roy Epstein. (Vote passed 3-0)

III-DISCUSSION ON UPDATED GRANT OF LOCATION REGULATIONS

Roy was proposing to separate the Grant of Location (GOL) regulations, approved by the Select Board on May 13, 2019, into two distinct policies – one that applied to electric/commercial utilities and one that focused narrowly on small cell antenna deployment. He had taken the liberty of drafting a new version of the small cell antenna GOL regulations (building off the May 13th version), as well as an entirely new document meant to apply to traditional utilities infrastructure, i.e. poles and wires, etc.

His concern was that the May 13th regulations, as currently written, would apply to even minor pole attachments made by Belmont Light. In addition, there were already existing regulations with associated procedures governing electric/commercial utilities under M.G.L. Chapter 166, Section 22.

Caputo thought there was no urgency to approve the additions/changes to the regulations, given that Belmont Light Counsel had not yet reviewed the document. He proposed to take up the matter at the next Light Board meeting in a week (July 15); in the meantime the Board could provide specific feedback individually to Roy on the documents.

IV-LBAC APPOINTMENTS

There were five members with expiring appointments this year, four of whom were seeking reappointment: David Beavers, Travis Franck, Bob Forrester, and Shirley Wang.

For the final slot, Epstein proposed the appointment of Michael Macrae, whose expertise as the power purchaser for Harvard was a needed complement to the skills currently on the Committee. Klionsky agreed; he also noted Jon Abe as highly qualified and hoped Abe would participate in energy issues in Town through other avenues.

Dash proposed to stagger the terms of the appointments so that they don't all expire at once.

Motion: To appoint Travis Franck, David Beavers, and Bob Forrester to the Light Board Advisory Committee for terms ending in 2022; to appoint Xiaoguang (Shirley) Wang and Michael Macrae to the Light Board Advisory Committee for terms expiring in 2020. (Vote passed 3-0)

V-GENERAL MANAGE UPDATES

a) Legislative matters

Roy recapped two key bills currently under consideration by the State Legislature:

- House Bill 2863: A municipal light plant (MLP) version of the Clean Energy Standards – all 41 MLPs had signed onto renewable energy targets. Currently in front of the Joint Committee on Telecommunications, Utility and Energy, where it was receiving criticism for not having aggressive enough targets - indeed Belmont’s own targets under the Road Map were far more aggressive – and because penalties for non-compliance went into a self-funded account.
- House Bill 832: More aggressive clean energy targets plus a net zero requirement. Roy’s complaint with this bill was that certain filings were required with the State – Belmont Light was already meeting the requirements of the bill, but this would add extra regulatory burden.

Roy had been copied on a letter from a group of Belmont community members, addressed to State Representatives, expressing support for HB832 and opposition to HB2863. He was proposing to reformulate the letter, highlighting the good portions of each bill and offering a synthesis from Belmont Light’s perspective. The Board was supportive of Roy redrafting the letter, which could be further discussed and possibly approved at the meeting next week.

[Public comment.]

- *Phil Thayer*: Key point is we have 10 years to take significant action on climate change, do not have the luxury of waiting for all the MLPs to get on board. Hence why the letter advocates support for HB832 – don’t see a feasible compromise between the bills, but leave it up to the legislators to revise the better/more aggressive bill.

b) Terms and conditions

Roy had Belmont Light Counsel draft new customer Terms and Conditions – would be bringing to the Light Board for review in a month or two.

VI-APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: To approve the May 13, 2019 minutes. (Vote passed 3-0)

VII-FUTURE MEETING DATES

Not discussed.

VIII-ADJOURNMENT

Motion: To adjourn at 7:14pm. (Vote passed 3-0)