

**Minutes**

**Town of Belmont**

2020 JAN 14 AM 9:36

**Belmont Municipal Light Board**

**Select Board Meeting Room, Town Hall**

**Monday, December 16, 2019**

**6:00pm**

**I-CALL TO ORDER**

A meeting of the Light Board was called to order at 6:05pm by Chair Roy Epstein. Vice Chair Adam Dash and Board Member Tom Caputo were present. Belmont Light General Manager Chris Roy was present.

**II-REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF TRANSFERS: ANNUAL PILOT TO TOWN OF BELMONT**

This was to approve the FY19 PILOT, which would then become a part of the Town's FY20 budget. The amount of the request was for \$650k, which had been the standard payment for the last number of years. Roy noted there had been ongoing discussions related to a potential increase to the PILOT amount for FY20 (Town's FY21 budget) – he was deferring to Town Administrator Garvin to communicate the results of these discussions.

*Motion: To transfer \$650,000 from operations to the Town of Belmont as PILOT for Belmont Light's Fiscal Year 2019. (Vote passed 3-0)*

[It was not yet the posted time to hold the rate hearing, therefore Chair Epstein took up a later agenda item.]

**III-DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE VOTE OF SUPPORT FOR 2020 LIGHT UP NAVAJO PROJECT**

This was a charitable endeavor in collaboration with the American Public Power Association to help provide electricity to families of the Navajo Nation in Arizona - these families constituted a large proportion of the remaining unelectrified households in America.

Roy explained that, as this was not a traditional mutual aid arrangement, he was seeking to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding with the participating employees such that they would they would be paid straight time to participate. In addition to travel expenses, this would constitute Belmont Light's contribution to the endeavor. The employees would be covered by insurance as if they were working here in Belmont. At present, two employees had expressed interest in participating.

*Motion: To support Belmont Light's efforts to aide in the 2020 Light Up Navajo project by providing for the services of up to 2 individual line workers for up to two weeks. (Vote passed 3-0)*

**IV-SUSPEND REGULAR SESSION AND OPEN RATE HEARING**

*Motion: To suspend regular session and open a rate hearing. (Vote passed 3-0; Roll-call vote: Roy Epstein, Adam Dash, Tom Caputo)*

Roy was proposing to eliminate the separate low income rate class in favor of a rider approach. This approach would offer the same economic discount for low income customers as was currently provided, but via a credit applied to the standard residential rate class. The purpose of the change was forward looking to potential implementation of time of use rates, as it was difficult to separately design low income time of use rates.

Dash asked about potential impact on low income rates. Roy explained the change would do away with the exemption from the high usage tier rate; this impacted ~10 accounts, 1-2 times per year, resulting in around a \$1-\$2 impact on each bill. Epstein noted the change would also impact those with a medical exemption.

The Board was generally supportive of the rider approach, but questioned the timing of the change, given plans to look at a full redesign of rates, including time of use – why not make these changes all at once? There were notification requirements to customers about the change to low income rates which may cause unnecessary confusion, especially if further changes were made later on.

[Open public comment; there was none; close public comment.]

#### V-CLOSE RATE HEARING AND RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

*Motion: To close the rate hearing and return to regular session. (Vote passed 3-0; Roll-call vote: Roy Epstein, Adam Dash, Tom Caputo)*

#### VI-DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON CONVERTING LOW INCOME RATE TO RIDER

*Motion: To table discussion on the low income rider to a later date. (Vote passed 3-0)*

#### VII-DISCUSSION ON ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGERS

Roy noted an uptick in questions from the public about Belmont Light's approach to EVs, and therefore was initiating a policy discussion on the matter, including how best to maximize incentive dollars to support a charging infrastructure in Town.

Caputo advocated for Belmont Light to play a role in increasing the prevalence of chargers in Town, even if the only way to do so was to install fee-based stations, i.e. Belmont Light could install the stations without having to fully cover the cost.

Epstein noted that one problem with free public charging stations is that there is no incentive to move the car after it is charged, diminishing utilization – makes sense to impose some sort of time-based charge.

[Open public comment]

- *Daryl King (Precinct 1):* King advocated for more EV charging stations to promote electrification and decarbonisation. He had prepared a mock-up proposal showing EV charging stations installed at the new Middle and High School, as well as at the other schools and public buildings such as the Library and Beech Street Center. The idea was that Town/School employees mostly drive to work and could charge during the day, following which the stations would be available for public use in the evening.

[Close public comment.]

Chair Epstein agreed that a continued policy discussion on the matter was needed going forward.

VIII-GENERAL MANAGER UPDATE

[Deferred due to time.]

IX-PUBLIC COMMENTS

[Deferred due to time.]

X-FUTURE MEETING DATES

January 13; February 20, March 16, April 27, May 18, and June 15.

XI-APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

*Motion: To approve the Belmont Municipal Light Board regular session minutes of November 18, 2019.  
(Vote passed 3-0)*

XII-ADJOURNMENT

*Motion: To adjourn at 7:03pm. (Vote passed 3-0)*