

Minutes
Town of Belmont
Belmont Municipal Light Board
Select Board Meeting Room, Town Hall
Monday, February 10, 2020
6:00pm

RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA

DATE: April 28, 2020
TIME: 9:08 AM

I-CALL TO ORDER

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

As a point of order, Epstein explained that public comment was welcome - time-permitting - at the end of the meeting, in the interest of getting through the business of the Board. Other public comment would be invited at the Chair's discretion.

II-GENERAL MANAGER'S UPDATE

A] Update on voltage conversion activities:

- Also known as Project C, this involved efforts to migrate from a 4kV system to a newer and more efficient 15kV, following completion of the Blair Pond substation. Guiding task for the project was to free up load from Substation 1 (the former Electric Light building). Roy estimated the project was roughly 25%-30% complete at this time; there was no fixed date on when Substation 1 could be retired.
- Work in 2019 included: Waverly Square area – upgrade of cable and transformers, introduction of backup supply and capacity for electrification; Belmont Center – 5000 feet of cable replacement, replacement of oil switches, other infrastructure work on customer premises; substantial work at Belmont Hill School, leveraged this work to upgrade other infrastructure in the area including 4000 feet of cable.
- Planned work for 2020: wrap up Belmont Center cutovers; cable replacement on Concord Ave.; duct banks on Belmont Hill; incorporating duct bank along future Community Path; work on Lower Common; overhead work on Hamilton Rd.
- Questions/comments:
 - o Epstein asked whether retirement of the Hittinger Substation was related in any way to the High School building project; Roy said they were independent.
 - o Dash recalled that several years ago the Board was informed that Substations 2 and 3 would need to be decommissioned prior to Substation 1 – changing the order would involve significant increase to costs. Roy confirmed this was still the case, clarifying that while Substation 1 was the ultimate priority it was likely that Substations 2 and 3 would be retired prior to Substation 1 (Substation 1 is most complicated because it links the others).

B] Update on LED lighting conversion: In the process of converting all street lights to LED. Completed approximately 1500 replacements to date, leaving around 1000 remaining into 2021. The replacement lights are in the 3000 Kelvin lighting temperature. Rough estimate is that energy savings are equivalent to reducing from 100W to 50W, potentially more with dimming feature implemented.

- Have used the replacement work to also capture GPS coordinates of pole locations to update Belmont Light's GIS system.
- Next steps this year include getting the streetlight control system implemented – this will allow for dimming, keep track of consumption, serve as data point for outages.

C] Update on energy initiatives: Initiatives have been evolving from basic efficiency programming towards driving behavior to help meet Belmont Light's business and strategic electrification goals.

- Update on existing initiatives: Heat Smart program, promotion of clean heating/cooling via air source heat pumps: 111 site visits with 42 contracts signed (goal was for 50 installs). Peak reductions rewards program: 31 customers signed up to help pilot, saw ~30kW reduction. Solar rebates: 23 customers applied in 2019 amounting to ~\$90k approved. Home energy assessments for energy efficiency: 72 conducted in 2019. Commercial assessments and lighting rebates.
- Planned initiatives for 2020: Promotion of Smart Thermostats, increased efficiency for hot water heaters. Expansion of Virtual Peaker pilot program.

D] Update on power supply activity and pursuit of climate targets: On track for REC procurements – price has been tracking on high end of forecasts but still within range.

E] Update on 5G discussion: Recently held a productive meeting with Extenet: narrowed down to two possible pole options to bring to the Historic District Commission (HDC) with respect to the application at Moore Street – new application from Extenet would be submitted based on what is ultimately approved by HDC; Channing Rd. pole was proposed to be moved across the street to better fit in with the neighborhood, and would replace an existing wooden pole with a streetlight; still outstanding was the question of whether the small cell facility would be installed via a ground mount (Town would need to approve an easement) or pole mount (require pole attachment agreement with Belmont Light). The pole attachment agreement was close to finalizing between the respective legal teams.

For a possible ground mount solution, Roy noted this might raise ADA issues; Epstein suggested this should be brought to the Disability Access Commission.

Roy raised a possible future concern regarding ownership and use of the fiber connection to the small cell wireless installation; Dash recommended to seek Counsel's opinion in advance of future applications.

III-SUMMARY OF LBAC INITIATIVES

David Beavers (Light Board Advisory Committee) joined the meeting.

A] Discussion of EV charging rates: LBAC would take up formulation of a policy for expansion of EV chargers throughout Town. This would include consideration of whether and how much to charge in fees for use of the charging stations, and how such a fee would be implemented (e.g., kWh vs time-based). Epstein would prepare a memo based on analysis from the Clafin Street chargers, including his suggestions for a pricing strategy. Caputo reiterated a desire to see more EV charging infrastructure available in Town.

B] Evaluation of approach to Time of Use (TOU) rates: Beavers had put together a suggested framework for vetting different approaches to TOU rates; the big picture goals he had identified closely mirrored those put forward by the Board. LBAC could use the framework to run different scenarios for TOU rates

and measure how closely they come to meeting the outlined goals. Roy was recommending that this was his preferred approach for tackling TOU rates.

IV-APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Motion: To approve the Belmont Municipal Light Board regular session minutes of January 13, 2020. (Vote passed 3-0)

V-PUBLIC COMMENTS

[None.]

VI-FUTURE MEETING DATES

- March 16, 2020.

VII-ADJOURNMENT

Motion: To adjourn at 6:59pm. (Vote passed 3-0)