

Minutes
Town of Belmont
Belmont Municipal Light Board
Monday, November 23, 2020
5:30 P.M.

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TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA

DATE: April 6, 2021
TIME: 2:35 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Municipal Light Board was called to order at 5:30 p.m. by Chair Adam Dash. Vice Chair Tom Caputo and Member Roy Epstein were present. Belmont Light General Manager Craig Spinale was present.

II. GENERAL MANAGER GOAL SETTING

Dash introduced the topic as the goals for calendar year 2021 for Spinale and said that it would be for discussion purposes only. Spinale reviewed his proposed goals, which included: 1) measure and track Belmont Light's progress toward the key performance indicators (KPIs) of the Strategic Plan; 2) implement a work order management system; 3) maintain focus on the power supply to achieve an 83% renewable resource rate; 4) investigate opportunities for the incinerator site; and 5) obtain a Certificate of Public Power Management from the American Public Power Association (APPA).

Dash added that he would like to see oversight of the time-of-use (TOU) process and support for the governance discussion added to Spinale's goals. Epstein asked about certain limitations and economic feasibility of battery storage at the incinerator site, to which Spinale said he would be discussing those limitations with the Department of Community Development and others in town. Epstein also asked about personnel issues and it was suggested that Spinale pull together a succession plan for retirements and departures. Caputo suggested that, along with just implementing a work order management system, Spinale also make it a goal to ensure the proper use of the new system.

**III. REVIEW DRAFT AND VOTE ON STRATEGIC PLAN FOR YEARS
2021-2026**

Dash said that there had been changes made to the most recent draft of Belmont Light's Strategic Plan but that he hoped the Board could approve the version before them in order to get it out to the public. Spinale reviewed the four major changes made by the Belmont Light team: 1) minor housekeeping changes, including changing the dates to reflect a 2021-2026 document, instead of 2020-2025; 2) revisioning the SWOT analysis, especially in the Weaknesses and Threats sections; 3) updated the table in Goal 5 – Maintaining Business Resilience; and 4) an additional Goal 6 – Keeping Rates Affordable and Demonstrating Value.

Epstein reviewed numerous changes that he suggested to wording throughout the document. The Board discussed those proposed changes.

Caputo moved to accept the Strategic Plan as amended. Epstein seconded the motion and the motion was approved with a vote of all in favor (3-0).

IV. GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

a. Cabot Turner's Falls/FirstLight Hydro Project

Spinale said that, at a previous meeting, a renewable energy project, FirstLight Hydro, was discussed and approved by the Board in Executive Session. Spinale stated that he had signed a power purchase agreement (PPA) with the terms discussed with the Board.

b. Morgan Stanley Grid Purchase

Spinale said he had discussed Belmont Light's portfolio hedge with the Board at the same meeting. After that meeting, Belmont Light's power supply wholesaler, Energy New England (ENE), contacted Spinale with concerns about the hedge heading into the winter months. ENE urged that Belmont Light get to its hedge level as prescribed in the Power Supply Policy. Spinale signed a purchase contract for grid power with Morgan Stanley as a result. In total, the FirstLight and Morgan Stanley contracts added approximately 10% to Belmont Light's energy hedge for 2021.

c. Energy Programming

Spinale said that Belmont Light is offering two new programs to customers.

i. MyEnergyX self-serve home energy assessments

Spinale describe the program as a do-it-yourself online energy assessment in which a customer answers questions about their home and energy use and the program gives feedback as to where they might save energy and money through Belmont Light rebates.

ii. CleanComfort heat pump program

Spinale said Belmont Light, along with a number of other municipal light plants (MLPs) in Massachusetts, has connected with Abode Energy Management on a program. Abode will act as a resource for customers to vet heat pump installations for proper sizing and comfort levels.

V. DISCUSSION ON GOVERNANCE

Dash said that, for the December meeting, he wanted to get a draft matrix going for the governance discussion, as well as potential dates to hold a public forum on the topic. He asked Spinale to suggest dates for a governance forum in December or January to the Board members. Dash also proposed categories to be included in the decision matrix. Epstein said it would be

useful to have a summary document outlining the processes for going to an independent elected or appointed board. The Board also discussed the process for a hybrid board. There was also discussion of asking legal counsel to clarify each of the processes for different types of boards.

VI. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES DATED OCTOBER 5, 2020

There had been a question at the previous meeting as to whether the name of a renewable energy project could be included in the regular session minutes. Legal counsel had reviewed the issue and determined that it was permissible to do so.

Caputo moved to approve the regular session and executive session minutes dated October 5, 2020. Epstein seconded the motion and the motion passed with a vote of all in favor (3-0).

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Caputo moved to adjourn at 6:43 p.m. Epstein seconded the motion and the motion passed with a roll-call vote of all in favor (3-0: Tom Caputo aye, Roy Epstein aye, Adam Dash aye)