

**Minutes
Light Board Advisory Committee
Remote Meeting via Zoom
Wednesday, September 15, 2021
7:30 A.M.**

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: November 10, 2021
TIME: 2:58 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER.

Chair Travis Franck called a meeting of the Light Board Advisory Committee (LBAC) to order at 7:31am.

Present for LBAC was Chair Franck, Vice Chair Michael Macrae, Members Jonathan Abe, David Beavers, Robert Forrester, Steve Klionsky, and Alexandra van Geel.

Present for Belmont Light were General Manager Craig Spinale, Energy Resources Manager Becca Keane, Communications Coordinator Aidan Leary, and Energy Specialist Ben Thivierge.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Forrester pointed out that there is a comment attributed to Phil Thayer, but he is not identified in the document, so he should be introduced first. Mr. Franck said to add "resident" after Mr. Thayer's name.

Ms. van Geel asked that the capitalization of her name be used correctly throughout the minutes.

Mr. Franck identified some typos which will be corrected.

Mr. Klionsky moved to approve the minutes of the August 8, 2021 Light Board Advisory Committee meeting, as amended. Mr. Forrester seconded, and the motion passed unanimously by rollcall vote.

III. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Franck moved to enter Executive Session to discuss trade secrets or confidential, competitively sensitive or other proprietary information (Solar opportunity). Mr. Klionsky seconded, and the motion passed unanimously by rollcall vote.

Mr. Franck moved to leave Executive Session and resume the public session. Mr. Macrae seconded, and the motion passed unanimously by rollcall vote.

IV. DISCUSSION AND POTENTIAL VOTE ON SOLAR OPPORTUNITY

Mr. Franck moved to express to the Municipal Light Board that the Light Board Advisory Committee encourages a statement of interest for the opportunity presented during the Executive Session. Mr. Klionsky seconded, and the motion passed unanimously by rollcall vote.

V. TIME OF USE DISCUSSION

• Public Forum #2

Mr. Spinale reminded the group that the second public forum on Time of Use (TOU) is Thursday, September 23rd at 7:00pm. Belmont Light had been putting together a presentation that recapped the first public forum, and then provide details of the impact TOU will have on different classes of customers, including 'regular' ones. He asked if any LBAC members would be willing to participate in the presentation, and also asked if Mr. Beavers would help Belmont Light determine the organization of the presentation. Mr. Beavers agreed. Mr. Franck and Mr. Macrae both offered to present at the forum.

Ms. van Geel asked for information on what public outreach there had been to encourage attendance. Mr. Spinale outlined the outreach activities. Ms. van Geel encouraged them to send repeat reminders, which Mr. Leary said they plan to do.

- Feedback from customers

Mr. Thivierge said they had 51 people ask for IDs to use the calculator. Of 30 people from the previous “interested list”, only 6 people had requested IDs. Belmont Light had reached out to that group but had not heard back from them.

Mr. Thivierge said that of the 51, just under half do not have any DER, meaning they are the “regular” customers who Belmont Light was seeking to interact with. About one-third of respondent had an electric vehicle. Mr. Spinale said that Belmont Light wanted to give a demonstration to customers who might be hesitant to use the TOU calculators that Belmont Light had built.

Mr. Klionsky said he had used the calculator and found it very simple to use and transparent. He congratulated Belmont Light on it.

Mr. Franck asked if they had any responses from people who discovered they would not benefit. Mr. Thivierge said they have not yet reached out individually to get reactions. But he did hear from some people who realized TOU was not for them, but also from some who understood the potential impact behavior change could have on their bills.

Mr. Franck asked if it was better for Belmont Light and customers for someone to be on a TOU plan even if their bill didn’t change. Mr. Spinale said it would be better because it would lower Belmont Light’s peak energy costs, which would save Belmont Light money. While it’s hard to quantify, this savings could be passed on to rate payers, or for other things like the clean energy portfolio. Mr. Frank thinks this community-wide benefit should be highlighted at the public forum. Mr. Spinale said they had not focused on this too much because they are still at the point of helping customers understand what is in it for them.

Ms. van Geel expressed concern about the low level of interest that has been expressed and asked if they should reconsider the pilot if there is too small of a group to have a valuable data set. Mr. Spinale said the intent of the public forums is to build participation. After the pilot, Belmont Light must then send a recommendation to the Light Board. The goal is to have about 150 customers participate (about 1.5% of the customer base), which will provide meaningful data.

Mr. Macrae said he thinks TOU is an investment in long-term rate planning, and that the TOU rate is an important part of the Town’s decarbonization plan. Even if they have a relatively small number of participants, it would be worth having and suggests that the decision be held until after the pilot.

Ms. Keane pointed out that the targeted outreach has not started yet (identifying customers to have the most desirable profiles).

- TOU Calculators

Mr. Leary demonstrated the three calculators that are now available: historical use, use shifting, and solar customers.

Ms. van Geel said there needs to be much better labeling so it’s clear if people will or will not save money. She also said there should be clear statements of what the takeaway is for the customer. Mr. Macrae agreed, saying it should be painfully obvious what a customer’s outcome will be. Mr. Franck suggested a summary box at the top of the page. Mr. Thivierge explained that they are somewhat limited by the tools they are using but will try to make it cleaner and easier to understand.

Mr. Franck asked if taking a static image of a sample table and use that to illustrate what each area of the calculator results are would help. Mr. Spinale said they will work on simplifying the results of the calculators. Mr. Franck also suggested rounding the numbers for simplicity, and Mr. Thivierge agreed to do it.

- Chenery Solar

Mr. Spinale said the Town looked at the issue with the Chenery School roof and it will need to be repaired. But the solar project can move forward while that is being done. The panels will be installed, with one row being placed horizontally instead of vertically. This will leave enough space for the roof repair without threat to the panels. Once the roof is done, the other panels can be reinstalled.

VI. FUTURE MEETINGS

- October 13, 2021
- November 10, 2021
- December 15, 2021

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. van Geel moved to adjourn the meeting, Mr. Macrae seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:09am.

Respectfully submitted by,
Susan Peghiny