

**MINUTES  
TOWN OF BELMONT  
MUNICIPAL LIGHT BOARD  
OPEN MEETING  
Hybrid Meeting via Zoom &  
BMLD Conference Room  
July 10, 2025**

**RECEIVED  
TOWN CLERK  
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: August 20, 2025  
TIME: 2:29 PM

**CALL TO ORDER.** Chair Andrew Machado called the Municipal Light Board meeting to order at 7:30am.

- **Present for the Municipal Light Board (MLB, Board)** were Chair Machado, Vice Chair David Beavers, and Members Jessica Harrison and Steve Klionsky. Member Michael Macrae was absent.
- **Present for Belmont Municipal Light Department (BMLD)** were General Manager Craig Spinale, Assistant GM Sam Osmancevic, Finance Manager Maria Makar-Limanov, Energy Resource Manager Kevin Bleau, and Executive Assistant Erin Lenzing.
- **Documents/exhibits used:** Draft minutes as outlined below; updated draft of Power Supply Policy dated 7/10/25; and draft of Arrears Management Program Application with proposed changes.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- Regular Session for June 12, 2025

*Mr. Beavers moved to approve the minutes from the June 12th, 2025 meeting of the Municipal Light Board. Mr. Klionsky seconded, and the motion passed 4-0 by roll call vote. Ms. Harrison, Mr. Klionsky, Mr. Beavers, and Mr. Machado all voted aye.*

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – There was none.

**POWER SUPPLY POLICY**

This agenda item continued the Board's prior review and revision of the Power Supply Policy, which was last discussed at the 6/12/25 meeting. Mr. Spinale and Mr. Klionsky presented a consolidated draft that incorporated earlier feedback, which the Board then discussed at length.

Mr. Beavers recommended adding transmission to the last sentence of Section I, which outlines the overall goal. Mr. Klionsky suggested tweaking wording about the state's regulations to "Commonwealth's applicable regulations". Ms. Harrison raised questions about the framing of the goal, especially since the target table in Section II no longer read 100% non-emitting, as it had in 2024. This prompted discussion on why the policy was under review; how to reflect BMLD's independent goals and local drivers like the Town's Climate Action Plan; and allowing flexibility in choosing between purchasing renewable energy credits (RECs) or investing in alternative initiatives such as energy storage.

There was consensus that the policy must allow flexibility, but there was also discussion about the need for transparency in spending decisions. The group supported revising language to clarify that BMLD may "meet or exceed" both the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Standard (GGES) and Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS), reflecting its intent to go beyond minimum compliance where feasible. The relevant paragraph in Section II was moved ahead of the target table to make this point more prominent, and there was discussion of how best to include Class II resources without locking BMLD into specific targets. Mr. Beavers also raised that a subsequent paragraph in Section II after the target table about load reducers was no longer applicable as written; the decision was to delete it.

The conversation also returned to the \$0.01/kWh allocation for an electrification fund, and if the wording "monies" should be used instead of a specific number. Mr. Beavers noted that specifying the amount would be useful for budget planning and recommended retaining it. There was discussion about tracking the collection and spending of this fund, and if a separate revolving account would be needed. Members agreed to update the

language to state that the fund would be “reported on annually”, likely through Belmont Light’s financial reporting, rather than directed to a separate account. This approach allows the Board to track spending without imposing unnecessary administrative constraints.

Additional edits were made to align with Legal’s earlier recommendations, including updating “power and supply risks” to “price and supply risks” for clarity. Mr. Klionsky confirmed that the phrasing “whenever possible” had been removed from a paragraph in Section II to signal BMLD’s commitment to renewable energy sources. The group briefly discussed whether to reintroduce language about keeping changes “consistent with a modest rate impact,” but ultimately felt the policy’s existing emphasis on achieving the lowest possible cost was sufficient. To close the discussion, Mr. Spinale agreed to incorporate all agreed-upon changes and return the revised policy for final Board review and a potential vote at the next meeting.

## **ARREARS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

Mr. Spinale gave an overview of the current Arrears Management Program (AMP) which allows medically protected customers with large outstanding balances to address their past-due amounts in exchange for keeping up with current bills. He then proposed two tweaks to the program:

1. That instead of writing off 20% of the past due amount yearly, BMLD write off 10% every six months. This would allow customers to reach an achievement faster without changing the program duration.
2. That upon a customer’s acceptance into the AMP, BMLD would write off any late fees or penalties that were part of the past due amount. This would be both a customer incentive and beneficial for BMLD’s yearly audit.

In response to a question from Ms. Harrison, Mr. Spinale explained that if customers don’t make their current payments, BMLD did have the option of adding back the penalties and fees. Mr. Machado suggested an amendment to the program’s wording to clarify that point. After some brief discussion about the plan in general and physician letters, it was decided to take a vote on the proposed changes.

*Mr. Beavers moved to approve the proposed Arrears Management Program as amended. Ms. Harrison seconded, and the motion passed 4-0 by roll call vote. Ms. Harrison, Mr. Klionsky, Mr. Beavers, and Mr. Machado all voted aye.*

## **CONVERSION WORK UPDATE**

Mr. Spinale gave an update on the ongoing project to convert the town’s grid from a 5kV system to a higher voltage (15KV) one. Since July 2024, roughly 1 megawatt (MW) of peak load had been converted at a cost of \$1.87M. Mr. Spinale acknowledged that the cost investment might seem disproportional to the converted load but explained that it was because much of the work done in the past year was to support continued efforts, such as rewiring a main throughfare so that the side streets could be converted in future.

He also highlighted the impact of load growth, explaining that since 2021, a total of 4 MW—which is ~30% of the town’s electrical system—had been converted. However, due to new load growth totaling around 2 MW, the net reduction from the original 5kV system stands at approximately 2 MW. There was a brief discussion about possible drivers the load growth, total capacity, and upcoming projects at McLean Hospital.

Areas that had been worked on were the intersection of Tyler and Fletcher Roads, Marsh Street and surrounding area, Baker Street and adjacent roads, Royal Road, Thomas Street, Waverley Street, and Trapelo Road between Beech and Slade. In response to questions from Mr. Klionsky and Ms. Harrison, Mr. Spinale spoke about the need to replace some 35’ poles with 40’-45’ ones as part of the conversion work, pole resiliency, and pole ownership which is split with Verizon geographically with Common St as the boundary.

The discussion also touched on the record-setting heat event at the end of June, during which Belmont’s electric load reached a peak of 38.5 MW, which was the highest ever recorded. Fortunately, due to a one-hour difference between Belmont’s peak (hour ending 18:00) and the independent system operator’s (ISOs) peak (hour ending 17:00), BMLD should see ~\$200K in savings on capacity and transmission costs.

## GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Spinale updated the Board on the following:

- **Follow up to April incident:** He outlined the findings of the Department of Labor Standards (DLS) in the wake of the arc flash incident in April. After the incident, DLS conducted their usual review, and overall was complimentary to BMLD about their safety procedures and best practices. There were no citations connected with the incident itself, but as DLS was in the building anyways, they did find two minor items they raised—a face shield that was dislodged from a helmet and a hairline crack in a ladder. BMLD addressed both issues and DLS immediately closed the case. There were no fines.
- **MEAM Annual Conference:** Is being held September 18–19 in Plymouth, MA. The Board is invited to attend. Those interested should notify BMLD staff to register.

## ADJOURNMENT

*Mr. Beavers moved to adjourn the meeting of the Municipal Light Board. Mr. Klionsky seconded, and the motion passed 4-0 by roll call vote. Ms. Harrison, Mr. Klionsky, Mr. Beavers, and Mr. Machado all voted aye. The meeting was adjourned at 9:21am.*

Respectfully submitted by,

Erin Lenzing, Executive Assistant