

**MINUTES  
TOWN OF BELMONT  
MUNICIPAL LIGHT BOARD  
OPEN MEETING  
Hybrid Meeting via Zoom &  
BMLD Conference Room  
August 14, 2025**

**RECEIVED  
TOWN CLERK  
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: September 17, 2025  
TIME: 2:25 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 Osmanovic, and Executive Assistant Erin Lenzing.
- **Documents/exhibits used:** Draft minutes as outlined below; updated draft of Power Supply Policy dated 8/5/25; 2025 NEPPA resolutions #1-5; open house flyer; and incinerator site presentation slides dated 8/14/25.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- Regular Session for July 10, 2025
- Executive Session for May 8, 2025

*Mr. Beavers moved to approve the minutes from the July 10th, 2025 Regular Session and the May 8th, 2025 Executive Session of the Municipal Light Board. Mr. Klionsky seconded, and the motion passed 4-0 by roll call vote. Mr. Klionsky, Mr. Beavers, Ms. Harrison, and Mr. Machado all voted aye.*

**PUBLIC COMMENT** – There was none.

**POWER SUPPLY POLICY DISCUSSION & VOTE**

This was a continuation of the Board's prior review and revision of the Power Supply Policy, which was last discussed at the July 10, 2025 meeting. Mr. Spinale presented an updated draft of the policy with the changes that were discussed in that last meeting. Mr. Machado called for any additional comments; there were none.

*Mr. Beavers moved to adopt the Power Supply Policy as amended effective August 14th, 2025. Mr. Klionsky seconded, and the motion passed 4-0 by roll call vote. Mr. Klionsky, Mr. Beavers, Ms. Harrison, and Mr. Machado all voted aye.*

As the meeting was running ahead of schedule, the Board agreed to switch the order of items to accommodate a presenter's schedule and allow public participation in Item 5 (Incinerator Site).

**GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT**

Mr. Spinale updated the Board on the following:

- **NEPPA resolutions:** He outlined that the Northeast Public Power Association (NEPPA) had five resolutions for members like BMLD to review and sign on to if in agreement. Topics covered were electric market reform, load growth (especially due to data centers), natural gas, nuclear power, and transmission cost allocation. Signing would be non-binding and simply a show of support. Board members expressed concern about the potential impact of certain resolutions, particularly those on nuclear power and the natural gas policy. They wanted to better understand the complaints and policy proposals before making any formal decision. While there was no immediate urgency to sign on, the Board agreed it was important to be aware of NEPPA's position on these matters.

- **BMLD Open House:** Is being held October 8th at the Belmont Light office. The public and the Board are invited to attend. Events will include touch-a-truck, dress like a lineman, and more.
- **Ice rink solar:** The Town Administrator, Patrice Garvin, plans to bring a Memo of Understanding (MOU) to the Select Board on September 8th. This would formalize the agreement where BMLD provides \$250K in upfront funding for the solar array in return for the Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) generated plus any overproduction. Because the use of the building is not fully known, the amount of overproduction is uncertain, and rink is not slated for the pilot municipal TOU rate. Battery storage had been discussed, but there wasn't room on the site. Legal had been consulted on the MOU, which is expected to be a blueprint for other Town-owned solar sites, like the High School. The transferred RECs will be valued quarterly based on market rates, with a slight discount to BMLD, as the Town avoids fees that would apply if selling them commercially.
- **MEAM legislative letters:** The Municipal Electric Association of Massachusetts (MEAM) sent their legislative letters from 40 members, including the one BMLD had written, to the Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, Department of Energy Resources, and the Department of Environmental Protection as a package in July.
- **PURMA training:** The Public Utilities Risk Management Association (PURMA) is offering training for public officials on August 27th. The Board is invited to register if interested.
- **Leonard Street transformer:** The project to replace the pad-mounted transformer is still ongoing and expected to be done by end of September 2025.

## UPDATE & DISCUSSION ON INCINERATOR SITE

Mr. Spinale and Mr. Osmancevic recapped the project, which aligns with the 2019 Select Board motion reserving the site for solar array, battery storage, and Belmont Light use after capping. At the June 17, 2024 meeting BMLD proposed also building a new operations center there to address space shortages for storage and staff at the current 40 Prince St location. At the December 12, 2024 meeting, the Board supported further exploration of a cap design that includes a building and a more detailed facility plan, on a non-binding basis. This agenda item was to present and discuss those results.

Discussion initially focused on existing storage issues, including a lack of space for critical materials and an inefficient layout shared with the Department of Public Works (DPW). The proposed building would offer expanded, secure storage, enabling bulk purchasing to reduce cost volatility.

Mr. Osmancevic then presented on the actions taken since 2024, namely:

- **Updated capping estimate:** Bruce Haskell of Langdon Environmental LLC, a consultant working with the Town on the cap, gave an overview of the capping process to date, the site's layout and grade, and answered clarifying questions from the Board about the site and cap. Based on his findings, adding a building would increase capping costs by an estimated \$300-500K, on top of the current ~\$5.3M estimate. The Town has ~\$2.7M in reserve, leaving a shortfall even without a building. There was brief discussion about possibly negotiating with the Town on this point in the future. Later in the meeting Mr. Haskell also spoke on the capping timeline, which he thought would be 2-3 years.
- **Facility plan:** More detailed plans for the layout and location of a building and garage had been commissioned. The result changed the layout slightly from previous iterations to maximize space.
- **Construction estimates:** The most recent cost estimates were a new building for ~\$32M, a new garage for ~\$7M, ground- and roof-mounted solar for ~\$1M-\$4.2M; battery energy storage system (BESS) at ~10M (depending on the ownership model); and ~\$4M for electric infrastructure upgrades. Expected costs for the building and garage were higher than initially thought; this was attributed to it being a public project. There was some discussion about if BMLD moves to the new site, the current building and garage would become available for another Town department, potentially avoiding up to \$12 million in new construction costs, although this estimate is approximate and speculative. This reuse could also free up valuable land and provide broader financial benefits to the town residents, including possible tax mitigation.
- **Updated solar and BESS analysis:** Based on industry projections the combined savings of the BESS and solar array would likely be ~\$25M over 20+ years and would probably no longer qualify for the direct pay incentive as that credit is slated to expire. There was discussion about potential increases in

solar costs, the fixed nature of the ~\$4M in infrastructure upgrades, and battery lifetime. Mr. Spinale pointed out that because one of the parcels making up the site was unrestricted, a vendor could own, build, and maintain the BESS under a shared savings agreement, allowing Belmont Light to avoid the ~\$10 million upfront cost and operational burden, while still benefiting from energy savings. Later in the meeting there was also a brief conversation about the main purpose of the BESS (peak shaving) and the increased estimate of the solar array output due to panels becoming more efficient.

- **Possible rate impacts:** Ranged from \$1.81-\$8.56 a month for an average-use customer (550 kWh/month) depending on the scenario and if costs came as expected. This analysis included both the new operational center and the BESS/solar components. Rate impacts for just the operational center and just the BESS/solar were also reviewed.

In closing, the Board expressed overall support for the project and for moving forward with a cap that allowed for a building and garage. There was consensus that proactive communication with stakeholders, including Town officials and residents, is crucial and that additional discussions with the Town on capping costs would be needed.

## ADJOURNMENT

Before adjourning there was a brief discussion on rescheduling future meetings.

*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. Mr. Klionsky, Mr. Beavers, Ms. Harrison, and Mr. Machado all voted aye. The meeting was adjourned at 9:36am.*

Respectfully submitted by,

Erin Lenzing, Executive Assistant