

ELECTRIC SUBCOMMITTEE
Meeting of Wednesday, January 9, 2019
Ipswich Utilities Department | 272 High Street

A meeting of the Electric Subcommittee was held on Wednesday, January 9, 2019 at 7:30pm at the Ipswich Utilities Department.

With a quorum present, the meeting was called to order at 7:04pm.

Subcommittee Members present: Jon Blair; Jeff Civitarese; William Craft; James Engel; Whitney Hatch; Ray Leczynski; Dylan Lewellyn; Edward Rauscher; Michael Schaaf

Also present: Eileen Page, Recording Secretary

Abbreviations Used: ELD, Electric Light Department; EV, Electric Vehicles; MMWEC, Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company; REC, Renewable Energy Certificate; FY20, Fiscal Year 2020; FEMA, Federal Emergency Management Agency; OSHA, Occupational Safety and Health Administration

Public Information: Agenda; FY20 Budget Considerations; 2019 Sustainability Update

Citizen Queries

None.

Sustainability Report: Sustainability Charter Progress Report

Dylan Lewellyn (Strategic Project Manager) provided a highlight of accomplishments made by the Charter in 2018. The ELD ran a social media campaign to encourage customers to reduce power usage during peak hours (4:00pm-8:00pm.) Electric Vehicle charging stations were installed in the downtown area, and several Town vehicles have been converted to EV including police, fire, DPW, School, and Utilities vehicles, and Building Inspector's car. The ELD is working closely with Lori Lafrance (Ipswich High School Science Teacher) to encourage student engagement in accomplishing the initiatives of the Sustainability Charter.

Looking ahead to 2019, a Munis upgrade is expected that will provide more flexibility in billing customers. The upgrade is expected to be in use within the next 3-6 months. The Charter will continue to seek out renewable energy projects, including allowing customers to make a "Green Power purchase" on their bill. Mr. Lewellyn would like to see the Heat Pump Campaign receive further marketing. Additionally, the installation of Intelligent Lighting Solutions will give the ELD more control over streetlights, such as dimming after high traffic hours, which will reduce energy consumption. The 2018 initiatives will also carry forward into 2019. Mr. Engel would like to see a focus on reducing carbon emissions when seeking out renewable energy sources.

Charlotte Kahn (39 Spring Street) expressed disappointment at the lack of numerical data presented in the meeting packet. She would like to see clear goals with measurable progress. Mr. Lewellyn is still gathering concrete data from MMWEC, and would like to have a holistic report available by March or April. Jon Blair (Electric Manager) stated that he and Mr. Lewellyn are still solidifying what Charter annual and semi-annual reports will look like.

Mr. Hatch would like to see customer anecdotes of their experience with the EV charging programs, and those who are involved with the Peak Power Pledge. Mr. Engel is interested in knowing why some people chose not to participate in the Peak Power Pledge.

Sustainability Report: Renewable Energy Policy Considerations

Mr. Lewellyn spoke on Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs). Currently, Ipswich holds RECs from the wind turbines on Town Farm Road, which represent about 9% of the ELD's annual portfolio. When it was suggested that students determine whether the Town has made any money off of Wind 1, a high school student analyzed the data and concluded that over the course of five years, the Town has made \$700,000 in profit. REC prices are currently in decline, and it is projected that this will continue. Depending on how far they fall, the Town may consider retiring them. Extensive discussion followed comparing outcomes if the RECs were to be retired or sold.

The Subcommittee discussed surveying customers to see who would be willing to pay a premium for green energy in their home. Mr. Lewellyn reiterated that with the new Munis upgrade, billing for a percentage of green energy in a home will be easily implemented. Mr. Engel encouraged members of the public present to look at their most recent bill, and consider whether they would be willing to pay an extra cost for green energy. Three of the five attendees stated that they have solar panels, and one lives in a small apartment.

FY20 Budget Outlook: Major Initiatives and Expenses

Mr. Blair and Ray Leczynski (Business Manager) have been preparing the FY20 budget for presentation to the Select Board and Finance Committee. Major Capital items include implementing Right of Way access to transmission lines, which may be funded through the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Plan. The ELD seeks to replace one Light fleet vehicle with an EV. The Department will also be developing their fiberoptic system as interest in commercial leases grow. This development will include \$30,000 to \$40,000 to open bandwidth in an effort to relieve congestion in busier areas of town. Intelligent Lighting will be installed, which will allow for easily adjusted streetlights, such as dimming the lights during low traffic times. Mr. Blair would also like to see this applied to the blue Snow Ban lights, allowing them to be turned on remotely with a scheduled automatic shutoff. Money will be set aside for general maintenance and improvements of Utilities facilities. \$10,000 to \$15,000 will be set aside to allow for compliance with OSHA regulations.

Power Plant Update

The ELD is working on a Commitment to Delist, and has been told that the process must begin by March 22nd in order to meet an end date of July 2021. The process will be discussed further at the Subcommittee's February meeting before being presented to the Commissions and Finance Committee.

Wind 2 Update

Mr. Blair is currently sorting through paperwork regarding bonds to restore the site. The private company that owns Wind 2 is currently suing Hyundai for providing a faulty turbine and installation. The ELD does not hold any liability, but if it is found that the company did not have a bond, the Town could be liable.

New Business

None.

Vote: Mr. Engel moved to adjourn, and Mr. Craft seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

The Electric Subcommittee adjourned at 9:29pm.

*Respectfully submitted by Eileen G. Page
01.13.19*