

ELECTRIC SUBCOMMITTEE  
Meeting of Wednesday, April 10, 2019  
Ipswich Utilities Department | 272 High Street

A meeting of the Electric Subcommittee was held on Wednesday, April 10, 2019 at 7:00pm at the Ipswich Utilities Office.

With a quorum present, Mr. Rauscher called the meeting to order at 7:05pm.

Subcommittee Members present: Jon Blair; William Craft; James Engel; Edward Rauscher; Michael Schaaf

Also present: Tony Marino, Anne Reynolds

Not present: Ray Leczynski; Dylan Lewellyn, Jeff Civitarese, and Whitney Hatch

Abbreviations Used: MMWEC, Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company; ELD, Electric Light Department; REC, Renewable Energy Certificates; FY20, Fiscal Year 2020

Public Information: Agenda

**Citizen Queries**

None.

**Green Communities Endorsement**

Mr. Blair discussed the proposed memo that was written from the subcommittee to the Electric Light Commissioners endorsing the Green Communities initiative. He stated that Ipswich joining Green Communities was aligned with the general objectives of the ELD; however, there are several concerns that should be acknowledged and addressed while supporting the decision. Specifically, the Commissioners should consider implementing a mechanism of accountability to ensure the Town does not lose sight of the costs to the ratepayers. Also, the benefits of having a municipal ELD should be considered in conjunction with conservation (i.e. strategic electrification). Additionally, the Commissioners should ensure that a thorough plan for maximizing value of the Green Communities program should be developed prior to initiating the program and the associated charge for membership; such plan should include specific investments and projects to target with grants, as well as associated funding to fulfill said projects. Finally, the Commissioners should actively petition representatives to include participants in the management of the Green Communities program. The Town Manager stated that the program would be effective and that he wanted to ensure that the Town's PILOT payment was not reduced as a function of joining Green Communities.

**VOTE RECOMMENDATION**

*Vote: Mr. Engel moved to approve the memo, and Mr. Schaaf seconded. The motion carried unanimously with Whitney Hatch absent (4-0-1).*

**Staffing Changes**

Mr. Blair reported that Ray Leczynski would no longer serve as the Utilities Business Manager due to his desire to take a step back from day-to-day supervision. Therefore, a comprehensive reorganization effort was implemented to strengthen the organization and fill the gaps in the Business Office. Dylan Lewellyn would serve as the Customer Services Manager and oversee billing, collections, and sustainability functions. Jeff Civitarese would serve as the Business Systems Manager and oversee internal business operations, business-to-business initiatives, and systems integration. A new full-time clerical position would be hired to replace the part-time clerk vacancy; this position would be a frontline customer service clerk. Several upgrades to existing clerical positions would be implemented to build continuity of operations into the staff; upgrades include establishing an accounting assistant and a head clerk. Ultimately, these changes will strengthen the ELD and allow for the organization to continue moving forward in a positive direction without significant disruption. There are remaining gaps in the succession plans for the Metering Division and for the General Manager position that should be addressed in the coming years.

### **FY20 Budget Recommendation**

The budget was discussed with several small adjustments recommended for the narrative. No financials were amended.

### **VOTE RECOMMENDATION**

*Vote: Mr. Engel moved to recommend the FY20 budget for approval, and Mr. Schaaf seconded. The motion carried unanimously (4-0-1).*

### **Other Business**

Mr. Blair spoke about the lessons learned from the Argilla Road PPA. Namely, the transformer was appropriately sized for the existing load, but needed to be upgraded to receive the added solar capacity supply. A discussion ensued regarding the need to consider the increased infrastructure costs and the increased transformer core losses associated with the oversized transformer. Overall, the PPA, which was approached as an experimental test case, was deemed a success for bringing these unanticipated issues to light.

Mr. Blair discussed MMWEC's summer generator rental program as a demonstration of the financial benefits gained by the Commission's recent decision to delist the Ipswich Power Plant and transition it to a peak shaving unit, "behind-the-meter". The subcommittee concurred with his decision to decline subscribing to the summer rental program.

A memo prepared by Whitney Hatch was introduced to the subcommittee for future discussion. The memo proposed a strategy for self-directing a less carbon-intensive, renewable-conscious power portfolio that pursued REC-producing assets. The subcommittee agreed that the concept should be examined at the May meeting. The long range agenda was updated to consider a rate study and cost-of-service study in the fall.

*Vote: Mr. Engel moved to adjourn, and Mr. Schaaf seconded. The motion carried unanimously (4-0-1).*

*The Electric Subcommittee adjourned at 9:45pm*

*Respectfully submitted by Jon Blair  
05.03.19*