



Peabody Municipal Light Plant

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PEABODY MUNICIPAL LIGHTING COMMISSION MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING MINUTES MARCH 25, 2021

A regular meeting of the Peabody Municipal Lighting Commission was called to order on Thursday, March 25, 2021 at the Peabody Municipal Light Plant, 201 Warren Street Ext., Peabody, Massachusetts at 6:30 p.m.

Present for the meeting were Commissioners William Aylward, Charles Bonfanti, Thomas D'Amato, Thomas Paras (via Zoom) and Robert Wheatley; Manager Charles Orphanos (via Zoom), Assistant Manager Bryan Howcroft, Attorney Philip Durkin and Recording Secretary Barbara Previte.

Chairman D'Amato asked if there were any additions to the agenda and Assistant Manager Howcroft stated that he would like to add under General Business GT2 Spare Engine.

Chairman D'Amato requested that we take a moment of silence for the COVID 19 victims.

- Agenda Item A: Approval of Agenda:

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER AYLWARD, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER WHEATLEY AND UNANIMOUSLY VOTED (5-0):

MOVE TO APPROVE THE AGENDA, AS AMENDED

- Agenda Item B: Announcement:

Chairman D'Amato acknowledged that this is an open meeting and informed the public that the meeting is being recorded by hand and voice recorder.

- Agenda Item C: Approval of Minutes:

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER AYLWARD, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER WHEATLEY AND UNANIMOUSLY VOTED (5-0):

21-17 MOVE TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 25, 2021.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER AYLWARD, SECONDED BY WHEATLEY AND UNANIMOUSLY VOTED BY ROLL CALL (5-0):

21-18 MOVE TO APPROVE AND NOT RELEASE THE EXECUTIVE SESSION MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 25, 2021.



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- Agenda Item D: Appointments:
- **REMARKS OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC:**
There being none, the meeting continued.
- Agenda Item E: Correspondence
There being none, the meeting continued.
- Agenda Item F: Manager's Reports:

STATUS REPORTS:

GT2 (SPARE ENGINE) – Assistant Manager Howcroft stated that the engine is fully reassembled and another acceptance test ran on March 18, 2021. The unit ran for approximately 40 minutes and when speed was increased it started vibrations so it was shut down again. Once shut down, the problem was identified as instrumentation within the test cell and corrected. Another test occurred later in the day and the engine was great with the vibration remaining low throughout the run. A cold start occurred on Friday, March 19 to see if the results were duplicated. The test was successful and Air New Zealand have met their obligations and will be shipping the spare engine to us once the second progress payment is received. Anticipation time for the engine to arrive will be May 2021.

SEASONAL EMPLOYEE PROGRAM — Assistant Manager Howcroft stated that he would like to discuss the seasonal employee program. He said that we are still dealing with the effects of COVID and while hopefully things will be getting better and returning to normal soon, we are not there yet. We still have employees working from home in the interest of keeping employees safe and we have been successful in doing so thus far. During this week's Division Managers meeting, the group discussed the summer seasonal employee program and the consensus amongst the Division Managers is that, in the interest of safety, it would not be worthwhile to have the summer program this year. Assistant Manager Howcroft stated that money is in the budget for a seasonal program in case the situation improves, but given the state of events right now the feeling of staff is that we should not proceed with the program at this time. Assistant Manager Howcroft stated that because it's a Commission-led program, we wanted to bring the topic up at a meeting.

Chairman D'Amato asked if there were any questions. Commissioner Aylward asked the Assistant Manager when will we be opening up the building. Assistant Manager Howcroft stated that it is our intention to wait until everyone is vaccinated. We will stay closed to the public. Commissioner Paras suggested that we set up a post-pandemic plan on opening the building. The plan would be how to get back full-time to the building. Discussion ensued that there are pros and cons to being able to work at home.



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Agenda Item G: Committee Reports:

- **POLICY COMMITTEE – SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY** – Commissioner Aylward

Assistant Manager Howcroft deferred to Commissioner Aylward. Commissioner Aylward reported that he reviewed the policy that was in our agenda package. Assistant Manager Howcroft informed the Commission that Attorney Durkin had a couple of comments after the package went out and the revised policy was distributed to the Commission.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER AYLWARD, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BONFANTI AND UNANIMOUSLY VOTED (5-0):

21-19 MOVE TO ACCEPT THE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY AS PRESENTED TO THE COMMISSION AND DISTRIBUTE TO STAFF.

- **BUILDING COMMITTEE** – Commissioner Paras

Commissioner Paras stated the contractor has sealed the windows, replaced the control switch for the front door, and worked on a leak at the employee entrance whereby they applied adhesives. NE Builders are working with the architects to complete the punch list items.

Agenda Item H: Award of Bids:

- **23KV EQUIPMENT PACKAGE FOR WATERS RIVER SUBSTATION** – Brian Abcunas.

Assistant Manager Howcroft introduced Brian Abcunas, Associate Electrical Engineer, to present the information brief to the Commission. Brian Abcunas spoke about the evaluation of the proposals received for the 23KV Equipment Package for Waters River Substation. This bid is one component of the major upgrades at Waters River which had been planned to be done in 2020 and is now scheduled to be completed in 2021. The technical specifications were developed by PLM as part of their ongoing design services with PMLP. The bid packages were sent directly to substation packager firms in February as well as advertised in the Salem News, Dodge Reports and PMLP's website on February 10, 2021. Six bids were opened on March 9, 2021 as follows:

1.	Genergy, Guilderland, NY	\$223,478.69
2.	V & S Schuler, Canton, OH	\$238,782
3.	Dis-Tran Packaged Substations, Pineville, LA	\$239,081
4.	Substation Enterprises, Inc., Alabaster, AL	\$250,000
5.	WESCO Distribution, Manchester, NH	\$250,781
6.	Associated Substation Engineering, Bremen, GA	\$265,755



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Genergy was the lowest bidder and stated no exception to PMLP's terms and conditions. They did take exception to our technical specifications; however, they intend to provide PMLP with several alternative products. PMLP reviewed the alternate items and all have been approved. Genergy has been in business since 1998, and have provided similar equipment packages to other firms. References were checked and we received positive results. PMLP did not find a reason to bypass the lowest bidder. Brian Abcunas stated that PMLP and PLM did review the bids and found them all to be complete.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER AYLWARD, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER PARAS AND UNANIMOUSLY VOTED BY ROLL CALL (5-0):

- 21-20** MOVE TO ACCEPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF OUR ENGINEERING (STAFF) AND PLM TO AUTHORIZE THE MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT, SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS, WITH GENERGY FOR PROCUREMENT AND DELIVERY OF SUBSTATION EQUIPMENT AT WATERS RIVER SUBSTATION, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$223,478.69 WITH A CONTINGENCY BUDGET OF \$22,300.

The Commission thanked Brian Abcunas.

Agenda Item I, General Business:

- **GIS UTILITY NETWORK MODEL PRESENTATION** – Assistant Manager Howcroft deferred to Brian Abcunas, Associate Electrical Engineer, to give a background and progress that is being made on the GIS Utility Network. Brian explained that the commission voted to appropriate funds to hire Mpower to build a GIS model using ESRI software from existing PMLP data points. This was to create the foundation for the Grid Modernization Plan. The motion included purchasing Mpower's outage management system (OMS) and Integrator tool to make it all function. As we began to move forward with this project, our engineering team learned there was a new version of ESRI software called "Utility Network" which provides enhanced benefits and tools for integration of other systems and data. This newer version of ESRI has the tools to develop a custom outage management system, or easily integrate off the shelf OMS systems. Therefore, this eliminated the need to purchase Mpower's OMS and Integrator products. We then moved forward with ERSI software called "Utility Network" to use and build the base map which Billy Guerrero has worked on and will be presenting to you tonight. I kindly ask the Commission to move to the audience and Billy Guerrero, Junior Electrical Engineer, and I will be showing you the platform that has been created. This platform will integrate with every department / division in the Company. Presently, they are working with metering and Engineering with hopes of other Division applications being integrated into the process. The presentation showed transformer, poles, location, etc. Brian emphasized there is much more work. He explained the importance of updating the maps and how it plays a role in everyone's job at PMLP. Chairman D'Amato stated I



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can see your excitement, even behind your mask. Brian stated it is very exciting. Brian also stated that Billy Guerrero, has been working very hard on this project and ESRI consults with him. PMLP may be the first power company to be using this software in Massachusetts and Billy has been asked to present at an ESRI conference for the second year in a row. PMLP is at the forefront of using this technology and ESRI is very happy to be working with PMLP. The Commission thanked Brian and Billy.

- **GIS ANALYST / SUPPORT STAFF**

Assistant Manager Howcroft again deferred to Brian Abcunas, Associate Electric Engineer, to discuss the proposed GIS Analyst position. As you saw in the presentation, there is still much more data that needs to be added to this platform. In each of your agenda packages, there is a proposed job description for such a position. This position would collect data, perform timely updates to the GIS network for geodatabases using this platform, help train and support users, etc. Engineering would like the Commission to approve this position so we can continue moving forward. Brian Abcunas is seeking approval of this position. Discussion occurred with the Commission regarding what department / division should this position be located—Engineering and/or Information Technology. Further discussion occurred whereby Brian Abcunas stated he is the project leader for the company re-organizational plan and will be working with the consultant and our team for suggesting reorganization plans within PMLP.

Commissioner Wheatley asked if the salary was appropriate. Brian Abcunas stated that some research was done on this type of position and it is a good starting salary. Further discussion regarding Billy Guerrero's salary. Brian Abcunas stated that it will be addressed shortly or at a later time.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER AYLWARD, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BONFANTI AND UNANIMOUSLY VOTED BY ROLL CALL (5-0):

21-21 MOVE TO ACCEPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF OUR ENGINEERING (STAFF) TO CREATE THE GIS ANALYST POSITION FOR A SALARY OF \$69,940-\$86,898 WHO WILL INITIALLY WORK WITH THE ENGINEERING DIVISION.

- **2021 BUDGET APPROVAL**

Assistant Manager Howcroft stated that PMLP is looking for a vote to approve the budget. He stated that all the changes were made that were requested by the Commission as follows:

Administration Budget

- Under Salaries – line item # 57502 Temporary, was cut by \$10,000 (reducing hours for temporary employees)



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- Under Consulting Services – line item # 59102 Legal Services (Bonds. Etc), added \$50,000 (to hire an attorney for the Commission if needed)

General Budget

- Under Advertising – line item # 58502 Recruitment Ads, added \$5,000 for the Commissioners to cover fees related to advertising.
- Under Employee Benefits – line item # 58313 Sick Leave/Holiday Expense, was cut by \$35,000 (Orphanos potential Holiday buy back)
- Under Municipal Services – line item # 58605 Peabody, was cut by \$61,300 as the 2015A Pilot payment was removed and \$24,000 for a potential increase to the City's PILOT payment.

Assistant Manager Howcroft stated these were all referenced in a March 2, 2021 email to the Commission.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER AYLWARD, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER BONFANTI AND VOTED BY ROLL CALL WITH COMMISSIONERS AYLWARD, BONFANTI, PARAS, AND D'AMATO VOTING AFFIRMATIVELY AND COMMISSIONER WHEATLEY VOTING NEGATIVELY (4-1):

21-22 MOVE TO ACCEPT THE RECOMMENDATION OF STAFF TO APPROVE THE 2021 BUDGET AS AMENDED AS REFERENCED IN THE EMAIL DATED MARCH 2, 2021.

- **NATIONAL GRID CHECK (\$25,955.72)** – Assistant Manager Howcroft stated that this is the monthly transmission for January which will be deposited in the rate stabilization fund.
- **MMWEC (\$34,850.41)** – Assistant Manager Howcroft stated that this check is for Hydro Quebec flow rights and capacity credits which will be deposited in the rate stabilization fund.
- **REMARKS OF COMMISSION –**

Commission Aylward stated that he appreciated his visit to MMWEC this past week with Commissioners Bonfanti and D'Amato. He found it to be very informative. He also was blown away by the GIS presentation.

Commission Bonfanti concurred with Commissioner Aylward regarding the GIS presentation. He thanked Brian Abcunas and Billy Guerrero's presentation on the GIS system / platform.

Commissioner Paras asked about the "fill-in" pay and it needs to get on the agenda. He then thanked everyone. A very good meeting.



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Commissioner D'Amato stated that it was a great meeting and thanked Brian Abcunas and Billy Guerrero.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER AYLWARD, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER WHEATLEY AND UNANIMOUSLY VOTED (5-0):

21-23 MOVE TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION IN ACCORDANCE WITH CHAPTER 30A, SECTION 21(a) FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONDUCTING A COMPETITIVELY SENSITIVE INFORMATION AND NOT TO RETURN TO PUBLIC SESSION

Chairman D'Amato declared the Regular portion of the Meeting of March 25, 2021 adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

A TRUE RECORD

Attest: Charles W Bonfanti
Charles W. Bonfanti, Secretary
Peabody Municipal Lighting Commission