



February 23, 2022  
STERLING MUNICIPAL LIGHT DEPARTMENT  
REGULAR SESSION  
MEETING MINUTES



DATE: February 23, 2022

LOCATION: SMLD, Zoom & Rear Board Room  
50 Main Street, Sterling, MA

BOARD MEMBERS: Joe Curtin (Curtin), Chairman  
Brian Pierce (Pierce), Vice Chair  
Eric Darlington (Darlington), Clerk

SMLD STAFF: Darren Borge (Borge), Manager  
Sean Hamilton (Hamilton), Consultant

MINUTES: Patty Page

1. 5:00 pm. Meeting called to order; Curtin stated that the meeting is subject to audio recording. Roll Call Attendance: Darlington present, Curtin Present, Pierce present.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Board members in attendance pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America

1A. Safety Announcement - Equipment in office

2. Approval of Agenda – **Darlington made a motion to approve agenda as written**, Pierce seconded, no discussion, all in favor, Darlington aye, Curtin aye, Pierce aye.
3. Manager's report given by Darren Borge
  - a) Attended webinar for 'Federal Funding 101' (2/15/22) through New England Public Power Association (NEPPA)
  - b) Fiber Ready Map on website (demo) – New Interactive Map available
  - c) New Bucket Truck to be delivered sometime early to mid-March.
  - d) MMWEC Congressional Meetings Virtual – Feb 25- March 2. I (Borge) will be participating
  - e) Signed NEC Extended Warranty Contract for years 6-10 starts April 1, 2022. Payment of \$78,000/yr. 4/1/22-3/31/23 will be on next warrant
  - f) SMLD will host Open House this year. Date: Thursday June 23, 2022
4. Unfinished Business
  - a. Fiber Project/American Rescue Plan- Update and Schedule for sections completed and ready for customer connections. 50 active subscribers (53 as of today). Received delivery of cabinets for Expanding Sterling's INET Project. First run of 432 fiber cable from Pratts Junction Road to North Row Road/Heywood Road area. Hardware installation construction to start in the next couple of weeks. 288 fiber pulled in from Muddy Pond cabinet to Mortimer Road and installed.

- b. Main Street URD Project Update: Installed Post-Top LED demo light at the Library for the downtown revitalization project. There's another EDC meeting with the Downtown Initiatives Committee, DPW and Selectboard members on 2/25/2022. (Was postponed to 3/7/22)
- c. Leominster RMV EV Charger: No change.
- d. Town of Sterling EV Charger Update: Library and Town Hall EV chargers are installed and operational. Multiple attempts have been made to meet with the owner of 50 Leominster Road to set up a walkthrough. No response from him yet. 170 separate EV charging sessions between the Library, Town Hall, and two stations at Northgate Meadows. \$141.70 in KWh sales for the chargers. Look to work with Lanpher's Market as a possible alternative to 50 Leominster Rd Plaza.
- e. Fiber Marketing: SMLD has several sources of marketing with the website, Facebook, bills, SMLD newsletter and the meetinghouse news to get the information out there. Will be in the Meetinghouse News in March and then become a monthly feature. Working with Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (MRPC) for a more interactive map. Continue to use door-knockers, will speak in person if there is someone home. Pierce wanted to discuss further about making cold calls – Borge stated if SMLD has customer's email and updated contact information, they will reach out that way as well.
- f. Rate Study Update: BH Leymaster, Inc. did a scope of work and cost estimate for 5-year forecasted rate study. Currently not in the 2022/2023 budget. After some discussion, **Pierce made a motion to approve \$5,000 for BH Leymaster, Inc 5-Year Forecasted Study**. Darlington seconded, no discussion, all in favor. Darlington aye, Curtin aye, Pierce aye.
- g. LED FL Conversion: Continue to replace as calls come in for "Street Light Out" Service Orders. Have installed 3 new LED FL in 2022. 77 private floodlights remaining in Conversion Project.
- h. SMLD Policy Review: Reached out to Kathleen Mills of HR Off Site Resources. Website and email no longer active. Borge reached out to the Central Mass Municipal Managers to see who they used,. Borge is reviewing and will also continue to look for a consultant.
- i. Pratts Junction Road Warehouse Update/Future Land Needs: Variance is not an option at Pratts Junction. Look into a Request for Proposal for a possible land swap.

##### 5. New Business

- a. MMWEC Power Portfolio Presentation: Mr. Matthew Ide was at the meeting to present the portfolio. Also joining via Zoom was Justin Connell. MMWEC will forecast on 18-month intervals with a broader look into the future (2-4 years from now). For more detailed explanation, please see the attached power proposal.
- b. Northgate Hot Water Heater Rebate: Northgate will be installing all electric hot water heaters with Wi-Fi control functionality. Hot water heaters may be eligible for the Connected Homes program based on tenant signing up for program and incentives (see attached worksheet). Need to verify that units qualify for rebate, potential to provide a \$500 rebate per unit. Curtin asked for the details and specifications of the proposed hot water heaters before voting.

- 6. APPROVAL OF PAST MINUTES: Table the minutes from 11/8/2021, 11/22/2021 and 1/24/2022 until the next meeting as all members did not have a chance to review.

**Pierce made a motion to approve the regular 9/20/2021 minutes**, Darlington seconded, no discussion, all in favor. Darlington aye, Curtin aye, Pierce aye.

**Pierce made a motion to approve the executive session minutes of 9/20/2021, not to be released.** Darlington seconded, no discussion, all in favor. Darlington aye, Curtin aye, Pierce aye.



**Darlington made a motion to approve the regular 10/18/2021 minutes, Pierce seconded, no discussion, all in favor. Darlington aye, Curtin aye, Pierce aye.**

**Darlington made a motion to approve the regular 12/13/2021 minutes as amended, Pierce seconded, no discussion, all in favor. Darlington aye, Curtin aye, Pierce aye.**

**Darlington made a motion to approve the executive session minutes of 12/13/2021, not to be released. Pierce seconded, no discussion, all in favor. Darlington aye, Curtin aye, Pierce aye.**

7. Customer Comments: There has been positive feedback on Facebook regarding the fiber deployment.
8. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND SCHEDULE NEXT BOARD MEETING: Next meeting March 16, 2022 @ 5 pm.
9. Executive Session: At 7:01 pm **Darlington made a motion to go into Executive Session (1) under M.G.L. Chapter 30A: Section 21(a), Clause 10 (to Discuss Trade Secrets or Confidential, Competitively-Sensitive or other Proprietary Information Provided in the Course of Activities Conducted by a Governmental Body as an Energy Supplier – (9.1) E.H. Perkins/Battery Project (9.2) New Customer Inquiry, and (9.3) SMLD/PMLD Power Supply Discussion and (9.4) Special Project 2022A, only to return to regular session to adjourn,** Pierce seconded, no discussion, Roll Call Vote, Curtin aye, Pierce aye, Darlington aye, all in favor.

7:22 pm meeting adjourned.

ATTEST:

  
Eric Darlington, Clerk

DATE:

3/16/22

BOARD APPROVAL FOR RELEASE:

3/16/22