



March 16, 2022  
STERLING MUNICIPAL LIGHT DEPARTMENT  
REGULAR SESSION  
MEETING MINUTES



DATE: March 16, 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

MINUTES: Patty Page

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

Safety Announcement - Equipment in office

Approval of Agenda – **Pierce made a motion to approve agenda as written**, Darlington seconded, no discussion, all in favor, Darlington aye, Curtin aye, Pierce aye.

#### Manager's report given by Darren Borge

1. Rate Study Update – 5 year rate study forecast in progress.
2. SMLD Policy Review – Sent current SMLD policy to Legal for review.
3. Working on Request for Proposal (RFP) for land acquisition for future SMLD Property.
4. New Town Administrator – William Caldwell has been hired and will be starting on 4/25/2022.
5. Battery Storage/Community Solar & Storage = \$2.45 Million in avoided cost to date (Getting (2) aluminum 12" x 24" signs made to attach to the solar panel in front of 50 Main Street. Each of these would be for each milestone for when we reach \$2.5 Million for battery storage in avoided cost and 50,000,000 kWh of solar generation in Sterling.)

#### Unfinished Business

- a. USDA ReConnect FY2022 Grant Update: SMLD/LAMB has submitted the ReConnect grant on 3/9/2022. The total grant amount is \$4,595,837. The Federal grant funding amount is \$3,446,878. SMLD's 25% cost match would be \$1,148,959. Key items included are: 37 miles of aerial fiber cable; 9 miles of underground fiber cable; squirt boom truck; fiber slice van; fiber cable blower trailer; all fiber to home/business equipment/ONTs/routers & modems. Received three separate letters of support from Congressman McGovern, Senator Cronin and Senator Gobi, and Representative Ferguson and Representative Kilcoyne.

- b. New Bucket Truck Update: The new bucket truck that was a 2021 capital budget item has been painted and in final testing. Estimated delivery date within the next week or two.
- c. 2021 APPA Safety Award: The SMLD received 1<sup>st</sup> place from the 2021 American Public Power Association (APPA) Award from Group B, which is 15,000 to 29,900 workers exposure hours.
- d. Downtown URD Meeting and Update: Construction is scheduled to begin Monday April 25, 2022. SMLD will work Phase 1 section from 50 Main Street to 44 Main Street (Tuttle and Traina). Phase 2 will be from Princeton Road to the Library entrance. This will most likely allow us to be working from the First Church to the week May 30, 2022 (Village Green Preschool's last day is May 27<sup>th</sup>). Additionally, Borge met with the Economic Development Committee, Downtown Revitalization Committee, DPW Superintendent Ryan Mouradian and a member of the Select Board. There is a final design and lighting layout plan being worked on. Received good feedback on new lighting demo in front of the library. Curtin wants to make sure the plan is firmly in place before working on the light pole bases.

#### New Business

- a. 2022 Capital Budget Revisit: Curtin stated that we need to be fiscally conservative right now. Take all requests on a case-by-case basis and "hold tight for now." Been investing an extra \$11,000 monthly into OPEB (retirement) but should hold for now. The SMLD did budget in 2022 for \$132,000 in account 926 (Employee Pension and Benefits) for the additional funding. Keep an eye on overtime. SMLD did provide mutual aid in Princeton for 6 hours (3 linemen), will bill for labor & hours.

APPROVAL OF PAST MINUTES: (11/8/2021, 11/29/2021, 1/24/2022, 2/10/2022 & 2/23/2022)

**Pierce made a motion to approve the regular 11/8/2021 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 11/8/2021, not to be released. Darlington seconded, no discussion, all in favor. Darlington aye, Curtin aye, Pierce aye.

**Pierce made a motion to approve the regular 11/29/2021 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 11/29/2021, not to be released. Darlington seconded, no discussion, all in favor. Darlington aye, Curtin aye, Pierce aye.

**Pierce made a motion to approve the regular 1/24/2022 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 1/24/2022, not to be released. Darlington seconded, no discussion, all in favor. Darlington aye, Curtin aye, Pierce aye.

**Pierce made a motion to approve the regular 2/10/2022 minutes**, Darlington seconded, no discussion, all in favor. Darlington aye, Curtin aye, Pierce aye.

**Pierce made a motion to approve the regular 2/23/2022 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 2/23/2022, not to be released. Darlington seconded, no discussion, all in favor. Darlington aye, Curtin aye, Pierce aye.

Customer Comments: There have been many positive comments on the Facebook page. Now 63 customer and fiber splicing for Boutelle and Beaman.

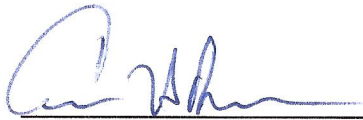
FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS AND SCHEDULE NEXT BOARD MEETING: Next meeting April 13, 2022 @ 6 pm.

Please see attached for the Monthly Summary update!

**At 5:39 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) 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.**

5:59 pm meeting adjourned.

ATTEST:



Eric Darlington, Clerk

DATE:

4/13/22

BOARD APPROVAL FOR RELEASE:

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