

Light Commission October 29, 2024 meeting minutes

To: Light Commission: Commissioners
Light Department: J. Kowalik, General Manager
From: Jean-Jacques Yarmoff, Secretary
Date: January 7, 2025
Re: Light Commission Public Meeting, October 29, 2024

A quorum being present, Chair Wolf brought the meeting to order at 4:06 pm. The meeting was held in person and with remote internet access, both available to public participation. A recording of the meeting is made available to the public at the following [link](#) (sound track starts at 10 mn 20 sec).

Participated in meeting:

Commissioners: Commissioners Hull, Wolf and Yarmoff participated in person.
Commissioner Smith participated by phone until he arrived at 4:50, time from which he participated in person.
Commissioner Frechette was excused.
Light Department: General Manager, J. Kowalik; Finance Manager, M. Barrett.

Marblehead Land Acknowledgment declaration was read by Commissioner Wolf.

Request to participate in a Town Charter meeting

The Light Commission and the General Manager have been invited to participate in a meeting with the Town Charter Commission. This meeting will take place on November 14. It will be an opportunity to share with other town departments the activities of the Light Department, which is run independently from the Select Board and the Town Manager's purview, as per the MGL Chapter 164.

Outstanding items from previous meetings

EV Charger, JuiceBox. The company that made the JuiceBox EV Chargers, Enel X Way, has suspended its operations in North America and is no longer supporting the app and the chargers can't be controlled as they were before. There are 27 of the 123 participants in the MMLD program that have these EV chargers, all will complete their participation in the 3-year compulsory program by May 2025. The future for these chargers depends on the results of the company auction which will happen later this year. MMWEC is communicating with the impacted customers, and as possible will work with them to use the telematics programming of the car to have their continued participation in the program.

General Manager Updates

Q3 Goal review. The General Manager sent to the board a status update / achievements regarding the yearly goals. This document can also be found in the shared files on Dropbox.

Offshore Wind Opportunity update. While this will also be discussed in Executive Session, the General Manager wanted to make the following public statements about the Avangrid wind farm being developed: out of the 791 MW of the project, MMWEC has partnered with Avangrid to take up to 50MW of the project. Pricing is not known yet. It will be disclosed confidentially for Municipal Light Plant to evaluate their participation.

Ludlow Solar Farm, Master Sgt Cotton Solar PV Project: This large solar array built by MMWEC has started producing earlier in the year. Results are presented for the first 7 months of operations on page 5, as are the current estimates for LCOE. The project is performing as designed, and is expected to produce nearly 14,000 MWh over the course of a year. LCOE is being calculated and will be positively impacted (will be lower!) if a \$2.5M IRA tax credit is received, as expected. The LCOE will be reported when available, it will be a useful point of comparison for possible future Off-Shore Wind contracts.

Village 13 Update. The General Manager gave an update on the schedule of the project. On the slide page 6, the dates in black are actual, in red is the current plan. The switchgear delivery time has slipped to the end of 2024 at the earliest, while the civil engineering work for the base of the switchgear has also been delayed. Whether the construction can take place during the winter will depend on the weather. What is concerning is that the bidding process has been delayed, the production of the bidding documents has slipped. The result of these delays is that the new substation will not be operational this summer, but probably in the fall at the earliest, if one believes this timeline which is based on shaky assumptions. This means we will have to go through the hot summer months with the existing equipment.

At this stage, there are two important moving parts in the project:

- One is the Civil Engineering work: because the bidding documents are not ready, the bidding is going to be late and the civil engineering work is going to be delayed.
- A second moving part is the availability of the switch gear, which is in the hands of the manufacturer. It is now possible, however, that the civil engineering work will become the rate limiting aspect of the project. This would mean the switchgear has to be warehoused, possibly at the manufacturer.

The board requested an updated Gantt Chart for this project.

Rate Review Working group update.

MMLD's IT Manager, Chris Dunbar, has been leading the process of setting up a new AWS database and extracting the data from NexGrid. We are confident that we are getting good data reads from the meters, that the data are transferred to the Northern data customer information system which translates that to bills and addresses. But we do not want to interfere with that production system which is working well. Hence the new database, a development environment that has similar data and will allow us to conduct analyses to look at historical data and model different scenarios. See slides p 6-7. We now need to decide the questions we want to see answered. The ToU subcommittee will further discuss these issues off-line, at its meeting in two weeks. Chris is working with various consultants and vendors to make progress on this subject. It should be noted that this database will help us get answers useful for other work besides Variable Rates decisions, including better understanding of the Clean Heat Standards impact for MMLD.

Open Positions Recruiting. The search for the Engineering Project Manager position has been reopened, with different parameters to draw a wider net. MMLD has closed the window for the Energy Efficiency Marketing Program Manager position after receiving 115 resumes. The town's HR director has helped screen through the resumes and a first pass screening yielded about 30 candidates. Next steps are scheduling interviews. The goal is to fill the position before the end of the year.

Executive Session

During the Light Commission Meeting of October 29, 2024, Chair Lisa Wolf proposed to vote on a motion to meet in Executive Session to discuss confidential, competitively-sensitive or other proprietary

information when such disclosure will adversely affect our ability to conduct business, and to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property if open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body, with the intent not to return to open session.

Motion was moved by Commissioner Yarmoff and seconded by Commissioner Smith.
Votes: Yes; Mike Hull: Yes; Adam Smith, Yes; Lisa Wolf: Yes; Jean-Jacques Yarmoff: Yes.

Executive Session started at 5:27 pm.

The Executive Session concluded at 6:26 pm at which point a motion to adjourn was proposed, seconded and, after a roll call of the commissioners voting unanimously in favor, adopted.

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Documents presented during the October 29, 2024 Light Commission Meeting



Agenda

- 4:00 Call to Order, Land Acknowledgement, Minutes, and Public Comments
- 4:10 Outstanding items and requests from last meeting
 - Communications to NextZero Scheduled Charging Customers with Juicebox EV chargers
- 4:30 General Manager updates
- 5:30 Move to Executive Session. Not to return to Open Session
- Adjourn



Status of *JuiceBox* EV chargers in our NextZero Scheduled EV charging program

- MMLD total participating customers: 123
 - ChargePoint *Flex* chargers: 96
 - Enel X Way *JuiceBox* chargers: 27
 - 4 customers (2020-21) have completed their 3-year program participation term
 - 23 customers will complete their term within 6 months: 12/2024-5/2025
 - Oct 11, 2024 Enel X announces decision to shut down their US retail business that includes (not a bankruptcy announcement)
 - Enel X states JuiceBox charger h/w and s/w will work for "an extended period" while a new buyer for the business is sought; auction is 10/29



Status of *JuiceBox* EV chargers in our NextZero Scheduled EV charging program

- MMWEC and Virtual Peaker have determined that the Juicebox chargers can be interfaced & managed via direct EV telematics interface (to EVs that support telematics).
- MMWEC is directly contacting MMLD customers to determine if their EV will support telematics



General Manager updates

- Q3 Goal review
- Offshore wind opportunity update
- Sgt Cotton Solar PV array in Ludlow update
- Village 13 – major milestones update
- Rate Review Working Group update
- Open position recruiting update



Offshore Wind Opportunity

- Avangrid Renewables, LLC was selected by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to develop a 791-megawatt offshore wind project, as part of the multi-state New England Wind 1 solicitation.
- Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (“MMWEC”) partnered with Avangrid for MMWEC to take up to 50 MW of the project. Pricing information will be confidentially disclosed to MLDs so that we can evaluate participating.
- Until the Comm. of Mass and Avangrid publicly disclose pricing, MLDs must treat the pricing data as confidential.



Master Sgt Cotton Solar PV Project (2020A) First Year Operational Update

- March: 1,033 MWH
- April: 1,116 MWH
- May: 1,363 MWH
- June: 1,453 MWH
- July: 1,429 MWH
- August: 1,238 MWH
- September: 1,017 MWH
- Total 7 Month = 8,650 MWH Yearly Forecast 13,800 MWH



Master Sgt Cotton Array Operational Update

- No significant issues or damage in first year of operation
- One-year service inspection found six panels out of 23,000 needed replacing because of defects or damage
- (1) production meter currently awaiting replacement (local only; does not affect settlement)
- Fall maintenance completed late Sept./early Oct. 2024
- Array is slated to operate fully till next spring when inverter maintenance is planned



Master Sgt Cotton Array - Financial Update

- Power costs...
 - Operating at \$0.12/kWh 2024-26, includes set-asides for spare parts and operating reserves
 - Drop in 2027 to \$ 0.10/kWh after reserves are funded
 - Early Nov 2024 project filing for \$2.5 million in IRA investment credits
 - Ultimately settle at \$ 0.08 - \$0.09/kWh net, with IRA credits applied
 - *These costs assume retention/retirement of the RECs*



Village 13 updated major milestones

Village 13 Major Milestones - Oct 24, 2023	Oct 24, 2023 plan	Plan/Actual as of Oct 17 2024
- Construction Contract out to bid	March 2024	Nov 2024
- Site construction starts May 2024	May 2024	Dec 2024
- Transformers delivered to temp pads May/June 2024	May/June 2024	June 2024
- Switchgear delivered August/September 2024	Aug/Sept 2024	Dec 2024*
- 23 kV moved to the new 23 kV Switchgear in October 2024	Oct 2024	March/April 25
- Site work on hold till March 2025 due to winter (optional, depends on weather)	Dec 2024-March 2025	Dec 24 through September 2025
- 13 kV feeders cut over to new 13 kV Switchgear in May/June 2025	May/June 2025	Sept 2025

* subject to change



General Manager updates

- Q3 Goal review
- Offshore wind opportunity update
- Sgt Cotton Solar PV array in Ludlow update
- Village 13 – major milestones update
- Rate Review Working Group update
- Open position recruiting update



Rate Review Working Group

- Created a SQL Server Database on Amazon Web Service for reporting and data analytics.
- Developed a mechanism - MS Data Integration service - for transferring data into AWS SQL Server reporting database. Currently have workflows for:
 - Meter level Peak Monthly Demand
 - Rates
 - Meter Level hourly Demand by month - planned



Rate Review Working Group

- Developed draft scope of work with Kilo for development of a dashboard to understand potential rate schedules
 - **Market prices module** (NEMASSBOST node): present historical market energy and transmission costs across selected years, months, days, and holidays.
 - **Rate design module (TOU and demand charges)**: quantify the impact of various rate designs – such as TOU, demand charges, and TOU + demand charges – to Marblehead and individual residential consumers.
 - **Residential customer segmentation module**: grouping similar residential customers based on usage behavior to discover various customer segments within Marblehead's grid.



Rate Review Working Group

- Met with Nexgrid to understand what data is available via EcoOne
- Submitted formal request with Nextgrid for hourly meter data (historic and ongoing)
- Met with Jackie Lemmerhirt to discuss data structures, meter data management systems, possible approaches.
- Investigated options for upgrades to AMI: Met with Nova Power, PLM, Infrared and Siemens.



Open Position Recruiting

- Engineering Project Manager- search is reopened
- Energy Efficiency Marketing Program Manager
 - Application window closed in mid Oct
 - 115 resumes received
 - ~30 candidates first pass favorable- contacting this week to confirm interest and schedule interviews

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