

Middleton Electric Light Commission

Meeting Minutes

March 19, 2025

The following individuals were in attendance:

Frank Twiss, Chairman

Jim Kelley

Tim Houten

Jim Carbone

Michael Cloutier, Manager

Chairman Twiss called the meeting to order at 5:13PM.

***Approval of Agenda:***

**Motion:**

**Tim Houten motioned to approve the agenda as written. Jim Kelley seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.**

***Approval of the Minutes:***

**Motion:**

**Tim Houten motioned to approve the minutes of February 19, 2025, as written. Jim Kelley seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.**

***Financials:***

Income statement and balance sheet for year end 2024 not yet completed.

The power supply sheets show the cost for January 2025 is higher than we are used to. This is due to the cold weather and the more expensive spot market power. As a result of the cold weather, customers use more of the high-cost power. February should be about the same. The spot pricing is down in March, and we have a solid portfolio. Therefore, the rates do not need to be adjusted.

We bought 2 million KWH from ISO on the open market at a high cost. On average, it was between \$0.10 and \$0.20 per KWH for the entire month and sometimes even higher. Right now, it is \$0.028 to \$0.034 which is where it normally is. Mr. Cloutier is looking at Stonybrook, an old gas plant that we are part owner. This plant purchase was originally signed in 1975-1976. Nick Lawler, of Littleton is looking for a buyer of their share of the intermediate plant. There are a couple of issues with it as far as being responsive. The way the markets are nowadays, if you are not running when you are called to run, there is a pay for performance penalty. The penalty now is about \$3K per megawatt hour and it is scheduled to almost triple to almost \$10K per megawatt hour. The plant did get hit with the penalty a couple of times last summer. We are hardly getting any energy out of them now. Because it is an old plant, it could need repairs, and it could get expensive. Mr. Cloutier is of the opinion that we may want to sell our interest in the plant, and he is monitoring the response that Littleton is receiving.

GML will be making a call for capital of about \$200K to purchase some power plants. A vote of the Commissioners approval will need to be taken. We do not have the P&S, but we should have it within a month.

MELD may be looking for more nuclear ownership. Seabrook is owned by NextEra and every now and then they will open up a piece for sale. Three Mile Island is scheduled to reopen, and nuclear power seems to be making a comeback. Wind and solar are not always dependable, but we did get a decent amount of energy out of our solar field in January.

***Public Statement Letter:***

The new administration is making an additional push on regulations that should not apply to MLPs. The statute was written for electric and gas companies, not MLPs. We are not an electric distribution company and should not be governed by the statute to make MELD and other MLPs to be under the administrative authority of the state. MEAM hired a company to write a memo about why we should not be under this statute. The company has had some conversations with their attorneys who basically work under Energy and Environmental Affairs. We are trying to keep it out of court and work with them. The statute would require MELD and other MLP's:

To report energy information for all buildings over 20K square feet. If not in compliance, we would be charged fines of \$100 per day.

To mandate MELD and other MLP's to convert a certain percentage of household heating systems to heat pumps. This would add costs totaling about \$31M over 25 years to MELD's ratepayers.

To require truck distributors to sell a gradually increasing percentage of electric medium and large heavy duty utility bucket trucks. This would hinder MELD's and MLP's ability to have reliable trucks for emergency restoration efforts. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has adopted the California standard. Practical examples have shown that such current technology does not perform well in New England.

To mandate MELD and MLP's to offer MASS SAVE level incentive programs, even though individual utilities have their own sponsored programs which are generally more effective in delivering results. This would add over \$5M annually in additional costs to MELD ratepayers.

To reform permitting and siting language under the clean energy bill for renewable energy projects. As MELD is the sole electricity supplier for Middleton customers, what it pays for power supply can only be negotiated by MELD to fit within its power portfolio.

**Motion:**

**Tim Houten made a motion for the MELD Commissioners to sign the Public Statement Letter to the state agencies DOER, DEP, and EEA. Jim Carbone seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.**

**Letter signed by Commissioners.**

***Manager's Report:***

We have not had any outages since the last meeting. One customer had a limb come down on Essex Street.

Building renovation project moving forward, they are preparing the bid documents. Generator update, we are waiting for the first invoice of 20%, and

we are waiting for the submittal from CAT which contains all the specifications regarding the generator. These details are necessary to design the natural gas service. We need this as they are getting ready to put binder down. National Grid does not want to do anything until they have definitive details.

Chuck Clinch's retirement party is scheduled for Supino's on April 21<sup>st</sup> at 5PM.

Next meeting: April 23, 2025

Tim Houten motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:55PM. Jim Kelley seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

James Carbone  
Clerk