

**ASHBURNHAM MUNICIPAL LIGHT PLANT  
REGULAR SESSION  
Meeting Minutes**

Date: December 04, 2014  
Location: 24 Williams Road, Ashburnham, MA Conference Room  
Board Members: Richard Ahlin (Ahlin) Chairman  
Mark Carlisle (Carlisle) Secretary  
Kevin Lashua (Lashua)  
AMLP Staff: Michael Rivers (Rivers) General Manager  
Attendees: Jeremy Holmes, Jane Dancause, Amy Fischer, Bruce Brackett, Matthew Wilson, Anne Olivari, Jeff Schrecke, Jordan Gendron, Rosemary Eldridge Meissner, Gary LeBlanc, Mike Parenteau, Sibby St Cyr, Michele St Cyr, Joe Olivari, John Barrett, Rener Wang, Joe Francis, Sarah Davis, Tina Wilson, Lorie Donahue, Sarah Culgin, Dick Cannavino, ? Eddy.

The meeting was scheduled for 6:00 pm. At 6:10 pm, there was no quorum, as Ahlin and Lashua were not yet present and could not be reached by phone. Carlisle announced that while waiting for a possible quorum, he and Manager Rivers would open a public discussion regarding the proposed revisions to the Net Metering Policy, although no action could be taken on the subject as there wasn't a quorum of members.

Rivers then explained the circumstances as to why a modification of the existing Net Metering Policy was needed;

- The existing policy approved in 2009 allowed solar generation up to 1% of the AMLP peak load. At the traditional peak of 6.9 mW, that would allow 69 kw of solar.
- We are currently at \_\_-mW of solar, including the systems which are planned to be constructed.
- Ashburnham currently has the highest percentage of solar generation of any known utility in the U.S., and we are in uncharted waters with regard to power system impact.
- There is strong consideration by ISO New England and the power transmission companies to "reconstitute" the electrical load that the solar generation in town represents, which would add tens if not hundreds of thousands of dollars per year to the AMLP expenses.
- We are one of only a few municipal light plants in Mass that give full retail value to net metered solar customers.
- We have customers in our system that consistently generate more power than they use, which means they pay nothing towards the overhead of running and maintaining the local AMLP distribution system.
- Currently all AMLP solar customer meters must be read in person rather than remotely, and the bills must be manually calculated which represents a significant expense over all other residential customers.

At 7:45 PM, Ahlin arrived in the meeting room and called the regular meeting to order with himself and Carlisle present to make a quorum.

A discussion was held with the board, Manager, and staff present to discuss the present sick time policy and its costs. Rivers explained that there was no consistent understanding of how many sick days each employee accrued per year. Some employees stated they believed it was 15 days, some 120 days, some 180 days, and some believed they got unlimited days.

Rivers presented an analysis (attached) that showed that in 2012, direct cost of sick time used by all employees was \$42,484.29 for an average cost of \$5,181 per FTE employee, not including the cost of the long term disability policy paid by the AMLP.

The average AMLP direct cost of sick time per employee net hour (work hours available after deducting vacation, holidays, and personal days) was \$ 3.43 per hour. If you add the cost of the disability policy, the cost goes to approximately \$ 3.98 per hour. One industry standard survey shows the average cost for all employers nationwide is \$.19 per hour and the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) pegs it at \$.23 per hour. AMLP's sick time costs are twenty (20) times the national average for all employees.

With 8.2 full time equivalent employees, on any given average work day, 1.53 of them were absent from work.

The Board agreed that the policy needed to be re-written more clearly, and both Ahlin and Lashua said it was never their intention when the policy was changed in 2009 to give more than the 15 days that had been in place previously.

It was agreed that the Manager would work further on updating the policy, hopefully including a better long term disability plan and possibly adding a short term disability option.

Old Business-The Manager discussed the unexpected repairs to the 2005 Bucket truck that was scheduled for replacement in 2015-2016.

Rivers talked about the town receiving the Green Community designation, and that the town received a \$150k grant to improve the energy efficiency of town buildings.

Rivers said that we were in process of completing an OSHA required Arc Flash Study that needed to be done but wasn't in the budget.

The Manager and the Board discussed the Manager's training. When the Manager was hired it was agreed that he would attend Lineman Apprentice school. Both the Board and the Manager believe this to be unnecessary and too much of a distraction of time and effort during a year

when there are so many projects to be completed. Rivers offered several training and certification programs that would be more productive, including a Manager certification program from NEPPA or APPA, which the board agreed would be better to complete the requirement in the Manager's contract. Rivers will still be attending substation training this year.

It was agreed to schedule the next meeting for Dec 17 at 6:00 pm.

At 9:55 pm Carlisle made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Ahlin. Ahlin aye, Carlisle aye, Lashua aye. Meeting adjourned

Respectfully submitted,

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Carlisle  
Secretary