



**SOUTH HADLEY ELECTRIC LIGHT DEPARTMENT  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' VIRTUAL MEETING  
MARCH 23, 2023, AT 6:00 P.M.**

Present for the Board: Chairman John Hine, Vice Chair Denise Presley, Paul Dobosh, Kurt Schenker (arrived 6:01)

Present for SHELD: General Manager Sean Fitzgerald, Administrative Assistant Kim Mendoza

Guest: Susan Perry, Mater Plan Implementation Committee

The virtual meeting was called to order at 6:00P.M. by Chairman Hine.

**Minutes Approval:**

02/23/2023 Open Session:

On a motion by Mr. Dobosh and seconded by Ms. Presley, it was unanimously.

VOTED: To approve meeting minutes of February 23, 2023, by a roll call vote: Mr. Dobosh-aye, Ms. Presley-aye, Mr. Schenker-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

02/23/2023 Executive Session:

Mr. Hine mentioned that Mr. Dubreuil's name was mistakenly listed as attending the meeting on the minutes and asked it to be removed.

On a motion by Ms. Presley and seconded by Mr. Dobosh, it was unanimously.

VOTED: To approve but not release the amended minutes of the executive session of the February 23, 2023 meeting, by a roll call vote: Ms. Presley-aye, Mr. Schenker-aye, Mr. Dobosh-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

**Public Comment:**

There were none.

**MPIC Update:**

Ms. Susan Perry attended the meeting for her bi-annual update to the Master Plan. Before she began, she asked about the possibility of electric vehicle charging stations being installed at the Library. Mr. Fitzgerald said that SHELD would help by assisting, evaluating the feasibility, and offering a rebate, but it is the Library's decision, and they would need to cover the expenses for the charger and installation.

Ms. Perry asked about SHELD's update to the Master Plan and asked to hear some of SHELD's successes over the past year. Mr. Fitzgerald had updated the plan's tasks and status and forwarded it to the Board for their review before submitting it. He listed some of SHELD's accomplishments: 80% of Town fiber construction is completed and by next year construction would be complete except for some multi dwelling units, SHELD implemented several new green programs, an internship program is being developed for high school students, new

advanced meters continued to be installed, SHELD's power is 90% carbon free and is meeting the State's NetZero goals. Also, SHELD is increasing communication with ratepayers by mailing out the latest annual report and 2023 customer surveys.

Ms. Perry asked if there were problems or barriers that MPIC could help SHELD accomplish its tasks. Mr. Hine said there were several items that cannot be funded by the electric utility, because they don't support supplying electricity. Projects such as supplying townwide Wi-Fi, computer training for seniors, or supplying electric vehicle charging stations at the library cannot be initiated by SHELD.

### **Manager's Report:**

#### **Outages:**

There were several outages last month. The most challenging occurred on March 14th-15th when heavy snow caused tree and pole damage. Amherst Road had 82 customers out for 2.5 hours and Old Mountain Road had 14 customers out for four hours with two nonresidential and unoccupied services up on the mountain requiring several pole replacements after the State cleared the roads to allow access so we could make repairs. SHELD crews worked through Saturday to replace the poles and restore power up the mountain.

#### **Fiber Outages:**

The heavy wet snow on March 14<sup>th</sup> also caused 30 outages from downed drops in South Hadley. Leverett had about 12 outages. Shutesbury had over 600 homes without power resulting in over 400 ONT's being offline until power was restored on 3/15. One hundred and four locations did not come back online because of downed drops, electric surges, and problems with customer premise equipment, so crews worked diligently over a 48hr period to get all customers back online.

#### **Customer Appreciation Letter:**

We received an unsolicited thank you note from a customer who was appreciative of our crews working in the freezing temperatures in the February 3<sup>rd</sup> storm. Mr. Fitzgerald thanked Mr. Courchesne for taking the time to send a letter complimenting the crews for keeping the lights on while working in bad weather conditions.

#### **Fiber:**

Installation applications have been opened in the Hadley Street fiberhood, for aerial locations, with installs to begin April 10<sup>th</sup>. Underground construction in several areas is scheduled to resume in April too. We expect to finish town construction on schedule, by July 2024, except for some of the MDUs (multi dwelling units).

#### **Customer Surveys:**

Mr. Hine asked if SHELD was receiving responses from the customer survey and when the Board would possibly see the results. Mr. Fitzgerald said they were receiving many surveys via the mail, but they had to be hand entered into the computer to be able to access results. He hopes they will be ready to be presented at the April meeting.

### **Strategic Plan**

Mr. Fitzgerald sent the Board a copy of the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan with final edits and pictures. Mr. Dobosh wanted to make an addition to the last sentence on page 12. He wanted to add “as well as growing demand from increased electrification”.

On a motion by Mr. Schenker and seconded by Ms. Presley, it was unanimously.

VOTED: To approve the Strategic Plan as amended by Mr. Dobosh, by a roll call vote: Mr. Schenker-aye, Mr. Dobosh-aye, Ms. Presley-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

### **NYPA Designation of Voting Representative Vote:**

Mr. Fitzgerald explained the New York Power Authority Designation of Voting Representatives form. The designation certificate vote is required to ensure SHELDCAN maintain its designated voting rights for these power contracts covering the purchase and delivery of hydro power from the New York Power Authority Management. Mr. Fitzgerald requested the board’s approval to designate himself as the NYPA voting representative and Michael Conchieri as the alternate. It is similar to the MMWEC form last month. The Board reviewed the form.

On a motion by Mr. Dobosh and seconded by Ms. Presley, it was unanimously.

VOTED: To accept Sean Fitzgerald as the NYPA designation of voting representative and Michael Conchieri as the alternate voting representative, by a roll call vote: Mr. Dobosh-aye, Ms. Presley-aye, Mr. Schenker-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

### **Board Code of Conduct/Chapter 268A:**

Discussion was postponed.

### **Manager’s Goals:**

Mr. Fitzgerald had sent the Board his 2023 goals which will be used for his next performance evaluation. He said some of the goals are routine and need to be continually done to maintain the day-to-day operations and some goals were large and will carry over into multiple years and involve a lot of the staff.

On a motion by Mr. Dobosh and seconded by Mr. Schenker, it was unanimously.

VOTED: To approve the Manager’s Goals as presented, by a roll call vote: Mr. Schenker-aye, Ms. Presley-aye, Mr. Dobosh-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

### **Old Business:**

There was none.

### **New Business:**

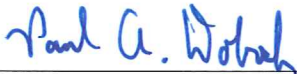
Mr. Hine said there was an open meeting complaint filed against the Board and they would have a special meeting Wednesday, March 29, 2023 at 6:00 PM to address the issue. The Board is required to discuss and respond. Legal counsel will attend.

Mr. Schenker asked about going back to in person meetings. Mr. Hine said he was open to it. The Selectboard is doing hybrid meetings (in person and on zoom at same time). A quorum of the board must be physically present, and they are using the new senior center location. Ms. Presley is concerned about security at in person meetings. Mr. Fitzgerald said we are still waiting on the State to see if there will be an extension for remote meetings. Mr. Hine will follow up with the Town regarding hybrid meetings.

**Adjourn:**

On a motion by Mr. Schenker and seconded by Mr. Dobosh, the meeting was unanimously VOTED: to adjourn, by a roll call vote: Mr. Schenker-aye, Mr. Dobosh-aye, Ms. Presley-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

The open session ended at 6:41 P.M.



---

Paul Dobosh, Light Board Secretary

Approved: April 27, 2023

EXHIBIT A

List of Documents reviewed at the March 23, 2023, Municipal Light Board Meeting

1. Draft Open Session Minutes February 23, 2023
2. Draft Executive Session Minutes February 23, 2023
3. MPIC Update
4. Strategic Plan Final
5. NYPA Designation of Voting Representative Vote
6. Manager's Goals