

**SOUTH HADLEY ELECTRIC LIGHT DEPARTMENT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS EXECUTIVE SESSION VIRTUAL MEETING
DECEMBER 20, 2022, AT 6:00 P.M.**

Present for Board: Chair John Hine, Vice Chair Denise Presley, Paul Dobosh, Gregory Dubreuil
Absent: Kurt Schenker. General Manager Fitzgerald was not in attendance.

The virtual meeting open session was called to order by Chair John Hine at 6:03 P.M. following an open session motion, by Mr. Dobosh and seconded by Ms. Presley, to move into Executive Session to discuss contract negotiations for nonunion staff and not return to open session. Roll call vote: Dobosh-aye, Presley-aye, Dubreuil-aye, Hine-aye.

Mr. Hine stated that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the salary increase and bonus for General Manager, Sean Fitzgerald. Mr. Hine stated that he felt Mr. Fitzgerald should be rewarded for the work he did relating to the progress of fiber installation in South Hadley and in securing fiber contracts with communities outside of South Hadley. He noted that the 2023 budget demonstrates that the fiber side of the business is generating a positive cash flow and [REDACTED].

Each commissioner provided input regarding the amendment to Mr. Fitzgerald's contract as drafted, which provides for an 8.5% salary increase and \$25,000 bonus to be paid from fiber revenues [REDACTED]. Mr. Hine confirmed that this is a one-time bonus.

Mr. Dobosh expressed support for paying Mr. Fitzgerald's bonus from fiber revenues [REDACTED] since the work Mr. Fitzgerald did was above and beyond what Mr. Fitzgerald was expected to do in his role and is a benefit to the Town. Mr. Dubreuil expressed concern about the salary based on current economic conditions, but that he supported the concept of rewarding Mr. Fitzgerald from the fiber revenues [REDACTED]. Mr. Dubreuil expressed disappointment in Mr. Fitzgerald's negative reaction to the Board upon his return to the last Executive Session. Ms. Presley stated that the economic situation we are in is not Mr. Fitzgerald's fault. She said he has done a tremendous job bringing in revenue South Hadley would not otherwise have. She acknowledged the disappointment in Mr. Fitzgerald's negative reaction to the Board's position at the last meeting but attributed it to his wanting the Board to ratify its desire to be in telecom.

The Board discussed whether other employees had been rewarded for the success of the fiber business and the work that went into it. Mr. Hine noted that there has been a 3% cost-of-living salary increase for all employees and an additional 5.5% increase based on performance.

Mr. Dubreuil stated that he did not believe other communities that expanded beyond their borders paying bonuses, which Ms. Presley and Mr. Hine corrected, stating that the salary comparison for other communities showed "other compensation" which is likely in some part a bonus.

The Board discussed [REDACTED]

Mr. Hine said electric revenue can only be used to support electric operations but there are no restrictions on the fiber side. [REDACTED]

Mr. Hine requested an informal sense to determine if there is adequate support for the increase and bonus which he would then review with Mr. Fitzgerald and proceed to a formal vote in open session at the next meeting. There was discussion related to updating the proposed amendment to reflect the bonus be paid from [REDACTED]

Mr. Dobosh motioned, and Ms. Presley seconded, to approve an 8.5% increase on the salary of the General Manager plus a one-time bonus of \$25,000, that is not applied to the base salary: Presley-aye, Dobosh-aye, Dubreuil-no, Hine-aye.

Adjourn

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

VOTED: To adjourn the executive session and not return to open session. By a roll call vote; Dobosh-aye, Dubreuil-no, Presley-aye, Hine-aye.

The Executive Session ended at 6:41 PM.



Paul Dobosh, Clerk

Approved: 10/26/23