



**SOUTH HADLEY ELECTRIC LIGHT DEPARTMENT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' VIRTUAL MEETING
MARCH 26, 2026, AT 6:00 P.M.**

Present for the Board: Chair John Hine, Vice Chair Paul Dobosh, Ron Coutu, Darren Hamilton, Tom Terry

Present for SHELD: General Manager Sean Fitzgerald, Director of Operations Adam St. Martin, Administrative Services Specialist Kim Mendoza, Financial Manager Michael Conchieri

The virtual meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM by Chair John Hine.

Minutes Approval:

2/26/2026 Open Session:

On a motion by Mr. Terry, seconded by Mr. Coutu it was

VOTED: To approve the open session minutes of February 26, 2026, by roll call vote: Mr. Hamilton-aye, Mr. Terry-aye, Mr. Coutu-aye, Mr. Dobosh-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

3/12/2026 Know Your Town Forum

A motion was made by Mr. Dobosh, seconded by Mr. Hamilton, to approve the minutes. Mr. Coutu motioned that the minutes be amended to reflect a question that a ratepayer asked about the non-binding vote and Mr. Hine's response. Mr. Coutu then stated, in his position as a Commissioner, that he will vote for or against the new building, reflecting the wishes of the voters next month. Mr. Hine asked for a "second" on the motion to amend the minutes, there was none.

It was VOTED: To approve the Know Your Town Forum minutes of March 12, 2026, as written, by a 4 to 1 roll call vote: Mr. Dobosh-aye, Mr. Coutu-no, Mr. Terry-aye, Mr. Hamilton-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

Public Comment:

Ashley Crowley of Hunter Terrace commented on the non-binding ballot vote and questioned the timing of a new SHELD building at a time when the Town is having financial issues. She commented on specifics of the new building design. She asked the Board to take the results of the ballot question seriously and look for other options. She also had 3 questions: Q1. Were reserves put aside over the last 10 years to pay for the building? *Financial Manager Conchieri explained that SHELD is limited to make 8% a year on power and cannot overcharge customers to save for a future project.* Q2. Are ratepayer's perspectives taken into consideration in major capital decisions? *General Manager Fitzgerald responded that Ratepayers have had opportunities to attend many posted open SHELD meetings, including two Strategic Planning sessions and multiple open public building forums, where the new building was discussed over the last few years.* Q3. What is the volume of customers who come to the office? *General Manager Fitzgerald explained that it depends on the time of month due to having 2 billing cycles. The two billing weeks can see 20-50 /day. The other weeks have less traffic. An average may be 10-15/day over the month.*

Manager's Report:

Outages: There were no outages in the past month.

Fiberspring Update: Construction will be kicking off at Rivercrest Condos by coordinating with their irrigation contractor. The Hadley Village contractor will work on a quote for them to construct the pathway to get fiber to the units. Stonybrook will be getting quotes from contractors for pathway to bring fiber to them. Underground construction will resume.

Longmeadow has a planned Town vote in May to proceed with their fiber project. There is a timeline issue for pole attachment applications for make-ready work because another vendor submitted requests prior to our requests. Eversource will not address our requests until they complete the other vendor's requests first. We need to be able to determine make-ready costs for the project. We could possibly work on another part of the project while we wait.

November 2025 Financials:

Mr. Conchieri referenced PowerPoint slides as he gave a brief overview of the financials for the month ending November 30, 2025.

Kilowatt hour sales of 102,445,000 for 2025 were up by 1.87% from 2024 or 1,885,000 kilowatt hours. Year-to-date operating revenues of \$16,695,000 were up from 2024 by 5.66% or about \$894,000, consisting of an increase of \$296,000 in volume and an increase of \$598,000 in selling price.

The 2025-kilowatt hour purchases of 103,444,000 were up by .98% from 2024, or 1,007,000. The 2025 cost of power sold of \$10,684,000 was up by about 12.46% from 2024, or \$1,184,000, consisting of an increase of \$94,000 in kilowatt hour purchase volume, and an increase of \$1,090,000 in purchase price.

The increase in revenue was **less** than the cost of power; therefore, the net revenue of \$9,831,000 was down from 2024 by 1.43% or \$143,000. The actual net revenue was down from the budgeted amount by \$78,000. All other 2025 operating expenses of \$8,936,000 on a combined basis, were down from 2024 by about \$470,000 and up from the budgeted amount by \$235,000.

November 2025 ended with a net YTD gain of about \$1,655,000, compared to the 2024 gain of \$1,221,000 and was less than the budgeted amount of a \$1,871,000 gain.

Mr. Coutu asked for an explanation of the MLDM Reserve Trust Fund. Mr. Conchieri said it's reserve fund for fluctuations in power contracts from the deregulation of the industry in 1999. We don't want to spend those funds because if our nuclear assets should go down, we will need backup funds to buy more power. Plus, much of our plant (poles, wires, transformers etc.) cannot be insured and if there were a major storm we could use that money to rebuild the plant.

Department 2026 Goals:

Mr. Fitzgerald included 5-year reliability stats, requested by Mr. Coutu, with his updated 2026 department goal list. Mr. Coutu wanted the reliability goal to be measurable so it was discussed and decided to change that goal to “meets or exceeds the Regional standard.”

On a motion by Mr. Hamilton seconded by Mr. Dobosh, it was VOTED: To approve the 2026 goals with the regional reliability change, by roll call vote: Mr. Coutu-aye, Mr. Dobosh-aye, Mr. Hamilton-aye, Mr. Terry-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

General Manager Job Description Update:

The Board reviewed the updated General Manager job description that included the telecom responsibilities. Mr. Fitzgerald replied to Mr. Coutu’s additional questions and comments to the original updated version including that the bullets 4. and 10. be combined.

On a motion by Mr. Terry seconded by Mr. Hamilton, it was VOTED: To approve the General Manager job description with the change of combining bullets # 4 & 10, by roll call vote: Mr. Hamilton-aye, Mr. Dobosh-aye, Mr. Terry-aye, Mr. Coutu-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

Battery Storage Property Purchase/Pinshed Parcel:

Mr. Fitzgerald said we have found a parcel to site the 3 MW battery storage project that has an estimated \$5 million in savings over 20 years. The property is adjacent to Pinshed Substation and owned by NSTAR (Eversource). There are two parcels: one is 62,000 sq ft for \$250,000, the second is a small triangle for additional frontage for \$1900. Funds will be taken from the depreciation account. We have an agreement with Lightshift for the BESS project.

Mr. Hine read the certificate for the vote that allows the General Manager to proceed with purchasing the property for the BESS project.

Mr. Hamilton motioned, and Mr. Dobosh seconded the motion, to approve the language in the certificate to allow the General Manager to proceed with purchasing the property. Mr. Coutu mentioned that the price of the property was not included in the certificate.

Mr. Coutu motioned, seconded by Mr. Dobosh, and it was VOTED: To amend the main motion to include the purchase & sale prices, in section one, for the two pieces of property referenced in the certificate, by roll call vote: Mr. Dobosh-aye, Mr. Terry-aye, Mr. Hamilton-aye, Mr. Coutu-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

The main motion was then VOTED on: To approve the language in the certificate, as amended, to allow the General Manager to proceed with purchasing the property, by roll call vote: Mr. Terry-aye, Mr. Coutu-aye, Mr. Hamilton-aye, Mr. Dobosh-aye, Mr. Hine-aye. Mr. St. Martin outlined the next steps and timeframe for the battery storage project.

Old Business:

Mr. Dobosh asked if there was a plan in place to move SHELD vehicles or materials from 85 Main St in case of a weather emergency. Mr. Fitzgerald said we do have space we lease at 510 New Ludlow Rd to move some things. Mr. Fitzgerald will speak to the property owner about emergency space.

New Business:

Meeting Platform: The Board discussed and agreed to go back to hybrid meetings at the Library beginning in April.

Adjourn:

On a motion by Mr. Terry seconded by Mr. Hamilton, it was unanimously VOTED: To adjourn the meeting, by roll call vote: Mr. Dobosh-aye, Mr. Coutu-aye, Mr. Terry-aye, Mr. Hamilton-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

The open session ended at 6:59 P.M.

Signed by:

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Darren Hamilton, Light Board Clerk

Approved: April 30, 2026

EXHIBIT A

List of Documents reviewed on March 26, 2026, at the Municipal Light Board Meeting

1. Draft Open Session Minutes of February 26, 2026
2. Draft Minutes for Know Your Town Forum March 12, 2026
3. 2026 Department Goals
4. Updated General Manager Job Description
5. Certificate of Vote for BESS Property