



**SOUTH HADLEY ELECTRIC LIGHT DEPARTMENT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' VIRTUAL MEETING
MARCH 28, 2024 AT 5:00 P.M.**

Present for the Board: Chair John Hine, Vice Chair Denise Presley, Paul Dobosh, Ron Coutu, Kurt Schenker (arrived 5:10)

Present for SHELD: General Manager Sean Fitzgerald, Financial Manager Michael Conchieri, Administrative Services Specialist Kim Mendoza, Customer Service & Marketing Manager Kelly Frazier

The virtual open meeting was called to order at 5:00P.M. by Chair Hine who stated: The Board would move to executive session pursuant to M.G.L.c. 164, § 47D for the purposes of discussing trade secrets, confidential, competitively sensitive, or other proprietary information pertaining to fiber projects AND under purpose 7 to comply with the provisions Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30A, Section 22(f) and (g) to review executive session meeting minutes, and to reconvene in open session at approximately 6:00 PM.

On a motion by Mr. Dobosh and seconded by Ms. Presley, it was VOTED: To move to executive session for the reasons stated by the Chair and return to open session at approximately 6:00 PM, by a roll call vote: Mr. Dobosh-aye, Mr. Coutu-aye, Ms. Presley-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

The Board returned to open session at 6:06 PM.

Minutes Approval:

2/29/2024 Open Session:

On a motion by Mr. Coutu and seconded by Mr. Dobosh, it was VOTED: To approve minutes of February 29, 2024, by a roll call vote: Mr. Schenker-aye, Mr. Coutu-aye, Ms. Presley-aye, Mr. Dobosh-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

2/29/2024 Executive Session:

On a motion by Mr. Coutu and seconded by Mr. Dobosh, it was VOTED: To approve, but not release, the executive session minutes of February 29, 2024, by a roll call vote: Ms. Presley-aye, Mr. Schenker-aye, Mr. Dobosh-aye, Mr. Coutu-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

Executive Session Minutes Review for Release:

Mr. Hine stated the Board reviewed multiple executive session minutes, previously approved but not released, and asked for a motion to release executive session minutes with redactions as discussed in the executive session earlier.

On a motion by Mr. Coutu and seconded by Mr. Schenker, it was VOTED: To authorize the Board to release executive session meeting minutes listed on the spreadsheet 2022-2023 Executive Session Minutes with Redactions Highlighted and to not release other executive session meeting minutes, or portions of said meeting minutes referenced therein, and further that said disclosure be announced during open session in accordance with MGL chapter 30A, sec 22, and all other applicable provisions, by a roll call vote: Mr. Coutu-aye, Ms. Presley-aye, Mr. Schenker-aye, Mr. Dobosh-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

Public Comment: There were none.

Manager's Report:

Outages: There were 8 outages, two were over 2 hours. The most significant outage was at Skinner State Park last weekend when wind and ice took down two poles, transformers, and primary wires powering State agency owned equipment on the mountain. SHELD crews worked all day Sunday to replace the poles, transformers, and wires. On February 28th wind took down a tree and broke two poles on Bach Lane which caused an outage for over 3 hours. At Hadley Village an outage was taken to remove a tree and replace a broken pole.

AMI Update: SHELD has installed 6,249 new meters (78% complete) and should complete the remaining installations this year.

Fiber Update: South Hadley fiber customers total 2415, exceeding the original 2400 customer goal.

Fiberspring 2400th Customer:

Ms. Frazier stated that the 2400th South Hadley Fiberspring customer was recently connected and explained the significance of that installation. Mr. Fitzgerald shared a photo that was taken. There are another 25 installations in the queue, and a promotional postcard will be mailed out to all South Hadley customers soon.

Fiberspring Multi Dwelling Unit (MDU) Discussion:

Mr. Fitzgerald said there had been ongoing internal discussions on the challenges that will be encountered connecting the MDUs (multi-dwelling units) in town. There are multiple types of property ownerships/governing bodies involved in the thirty MDU/Condo locations. A pilot location had been done as a test model. Mr. Fitzgerald's recommendation to the Board, on moving forward, is to look at each location individually, speak to their boards/owners and base the decisions on construction costs, pathway accessibility, and community interest in each location. SHELD's process will be to assess the costs and interest, then present the information to the SHELD Board. After evaluating each project, and deciding if it's economically viable, the SHELD Board will give permission for projects to proceed.

Mr. Hine stated that as a municipal, there is an obligation to service every resident, but it needs to be done in a way that makes financial sense. Mr. Hine suggested the MDU residents talk to their board/property owners, and each other, to raise interest and reach out to SHELD to discuss construction.

Secretary of State Dismissal of Complaint:

Mr. Hine read a statement regarding an appeal filed by Walter Hamilton regarding a public records request he sent to SHELD to obtain line item financials on the Telecom business. SHELD complied with the request after redacting confidential information. Mr. Hamilton filed an appeal with the State looking for the redacted information. SHELD presented information to the State, who reviewed it. The Secretary of State found that SHELD met the burden of proof in response to the appeal allowing municipalities to keep certain information confidential, and the State closed the appeal.

Mr. Hamilton’s letters to the editors gave misleading information. SHELD is compliant with the law. SHELD’s financials are audited every year, and a report is given to the five-member elected Board. There is an open seat on the board if Mr. Hamilton, or anyone else, is interested.

Annual Town Report:

Mr. Hine received a request from the Town Administrator to submit a letter to be included in the town Annual Report. He worked with Mr. Fitzgerald to draft the letter then sent it to the Board members for review and approval.

On a motion by Mr. Coutu and seconded by Mr. Schenker, it was
VOTED: To approve the report, as written, to be included in the Town Annual Report, by a roll call vote: Mr. Schenker-aye, Ms. Presley-aye, Mr. Coutu-aye, Mr. Dobosh-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

Old Business:

No old business.

New Business:

Mr. Hine thanked Ms. Presley for her service as a board member, as this was her last meeting. Ms. Presley stated it was a pleasure to work with SHELD management and a privilege to serve.

Adjourn:

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

The open session ended at 6:29 P.M.

DocuSigned by:

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Ron Coutu, Light Board Clerk

Approved: April 25, 2024

EXHIBIT A

List of Documents reviewed at the March 28, 2024, Municipal Light Board Meeting

1. Draft Open Session Minutes February 29, 2024
2. Draft Executive Session Minutes February 29, 2024
3. List of Executive Session Minutes Reviewed for Release with Redactions
4. Annual Report Letter