



**SOUTH HADLEY ELECTRIC LIGHT DEPARTMENT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' HYBRID MEETING
TRUSTEES ROOM AT THE LIBRARY
APRIL 24, 2025, AT 6:00 P.M.**

Present for the Board: Chair John Hine, Vice Chair Paul Dobosh (virtual), Ron Coutu, Darren Hamilton

Absent: Tom Terry

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

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

New Commissioner Introduction:

Mr. Hine introduced newly elected Commissioner Darren Hamilton.

Reorganization of the Board:

The Board decided to postpone the election of new officers since Mr. Terry was not able to attend tonight's meeting.

Audit Committee:

Mr. Hine explained that the role of the two-person audit committee is to meet with the auditors to review the audit results once the audit is complete, but before the auditors present to the Board at a meeting. Mr. Hine said he had spoken to Mr. Terry who would like to volunteer. Mr. Coutu said he would volunteer also.

On a motion by Mr. Dobosh, seconded by Mr. Hamilton, it was
VOTED: to appoint Mr. Terry and Mr. Coutu to the audit committee, by a roll call vote: Mr. Dobosh-aye, Mr. Coutu-aye, Mr. Hamilton-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

Minutes Approval:

3/27/2025 Open Session:

On a motion by Mr. Coutu, seconded by Mr. Dobosh, it was unanimously
VOTED: To approve the minutes of March 27, 2025, open session, by roll call vote: Mr. Coutu-aye, Mr. Hamilton-aye, Mr. Dobosh-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

3/27/2025 Executive Session:

On a motion by Mr. Dobosh, seconded by Mr. Coutu, it was unanimously
VOTED: To approve but not release the minutes of the executive session of March 27, 2025, by roll call vote: Mr. Hamilton-aye, Mr. Coutu-aye, Mr. Dobosh-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

Public Comment:

There were none.

Manager's Report:

Outages: There were two minor outages this month, a vehicle hit a pole impacting 8 customers for 12 minutes and a blown fuse from bird contact on Newton St impacting 6 customers for 1.25 hour. In the April 4th Town Reminder, there was an article stating SHELD received recognition from American Public Power Association for significantly exceeding the 5-year average of all US electric utilities for reliable electric service for a third consecutive year. Mr. Fitzgerald thanked Operations Manager Pete Jesionowski, the line crew, SHELD's engineer, and staff for keeping the power on in South Hadley.

Fiberspring Update: Mr. Fitzgerald reported that SHELD has executed a second three-year intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with the town of Shutesbury's MLP to provide Internet Provider Services (ISP) for all their customers. This is another major milestone achieved as the first renewal of our expansion ISP services. Mr. Fitzgerald thanked Shutesbury MLP GM Gayle Huntress, and the Shutesbury MLB, for their confidence and vote to renew with Fiberspring for another 3-year term. Shutesbury stated that they are pleased with the service we provide. Mr. Fitzgerald thanked the Fiberspring and SHELD staff who do incredible work to provide this service. Commissioner Coutu inquired about the Leverett IGA and Mr. Fitzgerald explained they are on a 5-year IGA.

AMI Update: On April 10, 2025, the newest version of the SHELD iPhone App was successfully released to the public. This release included an updated usage graph interface for greater clarity and responsiveness and stability fixes with notification advising users to wait before selecting a new chart, reducing the risk of repeated taps triggering instability.

We are actively monitoring app performance and user feedback to ensure continued reliability. Future updates will be made as needed to enhance the user experience and maintain app health.

Mr. Coutu had comments about some of the App features. Mr. Fitzgerald suggested he contact Dave Sullivan, SHELD IT manager, to discuss his concerns. Mr. Hine asked about customer usage data. Although Mr. Fitzgerald didn't have usage data in front of him, he did say we can provide data on usage. Also, there is another customer survey in the works, and we could add questions as to whether people are using the App to track their electric usage.

RFQ for Owners Project Manager (OPM):

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that SHELD has released a Request for Qualifications for Owners' Project Manager (OPM), for the official planning to begin construction of a new building. This is a critical step in the process to ensure SHELD meets requirements for new construction. He said the RFQ is on the SHELD website and encouraged the Board to review the information.

Mr. St. Martin stated that the RFQ is now open and closing on May 2nd for responses. SHELD needs to have a 90% design plan to go before the Town Planning Board for approval. The next step will be to push out an RFP for Architecture and Engineering. If all goes well, we hope to have a new building in 2027.

We are still finalizing the procurement of a suitable piece of property for a new building. Mr. Fitzgerald reminded everyone that we have outgrown our current location and are leasing space at another location. It would take millions to upgrade the 100+ year old building, but it would still be located in the 100-year floodplain. We had one open forum on a new building last year and will have more in the future.

Old Business:

Mr. Coutu had questions on the value of the battery storage project since it changed from originally being built on property SHELD already owns, as opposed to having to buy a piece of land as the plan stands now. Mr. Coutu expressed his concerns about the BESS vendors' dispatch ability. Mr. Fitzgerald assured him it will still be profitable with the land we are assessing, and that the BESS vendor was vetted by MMWEC. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that the BESS vendor will be building in 14 MLPs, and that the risk to SHELD was minimal since the vendor revenue is directly tied to their performance for dispatching during peaks.

New Business:

As there are five Thursdays in May, the next MLB meeting is May 22.

Adjourn:

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

The open session ended at 6:38 P.M.

Signed by:

Darren Hamilton

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Darren Hamilton, Light Board Clerk

Approved: May 22, 2025

EXHIBIT A

List of Documents reviewed on April 24, 2025, at the Municipal Light Board Meeting

1. Draft Open Session Minutes March 27, 2025
2. Draft Executive Session Minutes March 27, 2025