



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

Present for the Board: Chair John Hine, Vice Chair Paul Dobosh, 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, Finance Manager Michael Conchieri

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

Minutes Approval:

6/26/2025 Open Session:

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

VOTED: To approve the open session minutes of June 26, 2025.

Public Comment:

There were none.

Manager's Report:

Outages: There were only minor outages this month, mostly from animal contact or weather, each affecting a small number of customers for a minimal time.

Fiberspring Update: Longmeadow has voted to release an Interest Gathering website for the customers for their 27 fiberhoods in August. It will happen through SHELD's Fiberspring.org website, as SHELD already owns the program so there will be no additional cost.

Telecom call stats for the month of June were displayed for South Hadley, Shutesbury, and Leverett showing the volume of calls, the types of calls received, the number of escalations, and the number of truck rolls. Uptime between HG&E and Fiberspring was again at 100%. We are closing in on 3000 South Hadley customers.

April 2025 Financials:

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

Kilowatt hour sales of 39,341,000 for 2025 were up by 6.23% from 2024 or 2,307,000 kilowatt hours. Year-to-date operating revenues of \$6,782,000 were up from 2024 by 25% or about \$1,376,000, consisting of an increase of \$337,000 in volume and an increase of \$1,039,000 in selling price.

The 2025-kilowatt hour purchases of 38,254,000 were up by 4.3% from 2024, or 1,580,000. The 2024 cost of power sold of \$4,012,000 was up by about 18% from 2024, or 621,000, consisting

of an increase of \$146,000 in kilowatt hour purchase volume, and an increase of \$475,000 in purchase price.

The increase in revenue was more than the cost of power; therefore, the net revenue of \$4,150,000 was up from 2024 by \$862,000. The actual net revenue was up from the budgeted amount by \$348,000. All other 2025 operating expenses of \$3,179,000 on a combined basis, were down from 2024 by about \$149,000 and up from the budgeted amount by \$15,000.

April 2025 ended with a net YTD gain of about \$1,117,000, compared to the 2024 loss of \$43,000 and was more than the budgeted amount of a \$879,000 gain.

Mr. Conchieri explained that the figures for 2025 year to date and not just for the month of April. The adjusters are in place and have been lowered in the last 2 quarters. We haven't had to go out to the open market to purchase additional power at higher rates, which has been beneficial to SHEL'D's cost of power this year.

Battery Storage Update:

Mr. Fitzgerald stated we are getting closer to securing land for the BESS project and hopes to have land acquisition within the next 60 days. He said the June transmission peak was on June 24th and it was probably the capacity peak for the year. We roughly figured the savings for hitting the peak hour if the battery had been operational on that day. The total savings could have been \$180,026, with SHEL'D benefiting from a 45% savings, and the Developer receiving 55%, because they are putting up the capital for the project. The 3MW system will have a 20-year life span.

New Building:

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that the responses to the RFQ for Design Services were due today and we received 3 proposals. We will review the vendors and make a recommendation to the Board at the August meeting, after scoring, ranking and interviewing them.

We are finalizing agreements on the covenants set by the property parties to be able to finalize the purchase of the property. Once we have a 90% building design, we will need an approval vote from the Light Board to fund the construction. Then we can go before the Planning Board for approval.

Mr. Coutu is still concerned about the price tag of the current plan for the building. He asked if we had thought about a contingency plan – alternatives to building the whole building at once. The Town is currently talking about building a new school. He wanted to know if our building could be built in phases or could the offices be scaled back. Also, people who attend the forum are going to want to know how much their bills will increase with the cost of the building. Mr. Dobosh suggested that we talk about the impact of the rates for customers. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that we will do this at the forum meeting and that we had done a modeling of costs in the first forum.

Mr. Fitzgerald said that if the Board wants to change the scope of the building, we need to do it now because we are already in the process of hiring the architect and have been focused on the goal set by the board. We have been working towards meeting state regulations and already have conceptual drawings. Mr. St. Martin said some of the agreed upon contingencies revolve around the design of the building which has already been approved by the property owner. Also, there will still be many of the same steps that would need to be completed even if we only built the operations area. To change anything now would start some of the processes over again, adding expense.

Mr. Fitzgerald said there is a considerable cost for any or all SHELDT staff to stay at 85 Main Street. The building is in the flood plain, it is over 100 years old, is not ADA compliant, and needs considerable upgrading, like a new parking lot, a new roof, an elevator, and A/C system. He doesn't recommend changing the plan now but if the Board wants to stop or change the goal, we need to know now as we are spending a lot of money getting us to the point of being able to start construction next year. The Commission had set a goal that we have been working towards for a while.

Mr. Hine said many of these issues can be discussed at the open public forum scheduled for September 10th at the Senior Center. He would also like to include a discussion on the battery storage project.

Old Business:

There was none.

New Business:

Mr. Hine said the next MLB meeting is on August 28th. The date for the new building forum is September 10th.

Adjourn:

On a motion by Mr. Dobosh seconded by Mr. Coutu, it was unanimously VOTED: To adjourn the meeting.

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

Signed by:

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Darren Hamilton, Light Board Clerk

Approved: August 28, 2025

EXHIBIT A

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

1. Draft Open Session Minutes June 26, 2025
2. June 2025 Telecom Call Stats
3. Financial Statements April 30, 2025, and 2024
4. Revised Building Conceptual Estimate
5. RFQ for Designer Services