



**SOUTH HADLEY ELECTRIC LIGHT DEPARTMENT
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS' VIRTUAL MEETING
FEBRUARY 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

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

Minutes Approval:

1/22/2026 Open Session:

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

VOTED: To approve the open session minutes of January 22, 2026, by roll call vote: Mr. Terry-aye, Mr. Dobosh-aye, Mr. Hamilton-aye, Mr. Coutu-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

1/22/2026 Executive Session:

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

VOTED: To approve the executive session meeting minutes of January 22, 2026, but release with redactions of the parts pertaining to property, by roll call vote: Mr. Dobosh-aye, Mr. Coutu-aye, Mr. Hamilton-aye, Mr. Terry-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

Public Comment:

There were none.

Manager's Report:

Outages: One minor 5-minute interruption for 9 customers on Cove Island Rd for a primary tap transformer change with a pole change. There were no outages during the snowstorms which is a testament to our tree trimming.

Fiberspring Update: We have 2949 South Hadley customers. The January summary of fiber call statistics this past month was displayed. There were only 3 truck rolls. Slide #1 had all telecom calls broken down by town: South Hadley, Shutesbury, and Leverett and showed the volume of calls, the types of calls received, the number of escalations.

MDU Update: We are working with Hadley Village's electrician. Rivercrest Condominiums will begin construction in the spring. We presented an estimate and plan to the Stonybrook Village Condos board.

MMWEC Designated Voting Reps:

Mr. Fitzgerald said MMWEC annually requires Boards to vote for voting representation for the utility. He suggested that after himself, then next person be Mr. St. Martin, then Mr. Conchieri, then Mr. Hine.

On a motion by Mr. Dobosh, seconded by Mr. Hamilton it was VOTED: To accept the General Manager's recommendations and approve the certificate with the alternates as presented, by roll call vote: Mr. Coutu-aye, Mr. Hamilton-aye, Mr. Dobosh-aye, Mr. Terry-aye, Mr. Hine-aye.

Mr. Fitzgerald also mentioned that he has been recommended to be a board member at MMWEC, as the Peabody representative stepped down.

Department 2026 Goals:

Mr. Fitzgerald said that the Board received the 2026 Department Goals earlier in the day and he was looking for input from them. The Board agreed it was a very comprehensive list that they didn't have time to fully review. The "blue chip" items such as the new building, battery storage, the new enterprise billing system, the XGPON pricing, and improvements to both websites are the larger projects that will require a lot of time, effort, and have the most impact. Mr. Hine said the Board will revisit next month

General Manager Job Description Update:

The Board did not have sufficient time to review the updated General Manager job description and will revisit next month.

New Building Update:

SHELD had a pre-application meeting with Police, Fire District 1, Building Inspector, Water District 1, Conservation Agent, Planning Agent, Department of Public Works, and Department of Health to solicit feedback on permitting to ensure SHELD, and our consultants, had all the necessary information required to support the submission of plans for the new building.

The plan includes information on the building/site layout, parking compliance, drainage and stormwater management, signage and lighting, utility layouts, limits of clearing/construction and vegetative screening/plantings and is on track for submission to the Planning Commission on March 2.

There will be three Planning Board meetings between April and May for the process to be completed. Once we receive approval from the Planning Board, the Light Board will need to vote to approve financing, and the property purchase will need to be completed.

Mr. John Howard asked to speak and suggested that the building infrastructure be constructed to include solar and EV charging stations. Mr. Fitzgerald said that future electrification needs are being addressed and built into the plans. Solar is not currently in the plan but can be added in the future, the roof design will handle it.

On March 12, Mr. Fitzgerald and Mr. Hine and Mr. Dobosh will attend Know Your Town and present updated information on the building project. Mr. Hine asked about using Fiberspring money to pay towards the fiber costs. Mr. Fitzgerald said that Fiberspring funds can be used to cover fiber costs in the new building. Mr. Conchieri will have estimates for March 12. Mr. Fitzgerald will also update the

previous new building forum presentation to include the information on the results of the Gaylord St property investigation, as suggested by Mr. Coutu.

Old Business:

Mr. Hine said he should have included, on the agenda, a discussion on Ken LeBlanc’s request last month for extending rebates for new housing construction. He asked the Board for their thoughts. After being reminded that all ratepayers pay towards rebates, and that there are several multi-dwelling units planned to be built in town, the cost to SHELD and therefore to ratepayers, could be very high. SHELD’s rebate program is to encourage people to upgrade their existing fossil fuel systems. The Board decided not to change the current policy.

New Business:

After last month’s mention of data centers being built all over the country, Mr. Hamilton asked what other risks could affect South Hadley and how could they protect ratepayers. Mr. Hine mentioned the Mount Holyoke Geo-thermal project. It will use considerably more electricity. Mr. St. Martin said there will be an alternative feed built down Park St to keep the circuit from overloading.

Adjourn:

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

The open session ended at 6:50 P.M.

Signed by:



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Darren Hamilton, Light Board Clerk

Approved: March 26, 2026

EXHIBIT A

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

1. Draft Open Session Minutes of January 22, 2026
2. Draft Executive Session Minutes of January 22, 2026
3. 2026 Department Goals
4. Updated General Manager Job Description