

# Rowley Municipal Lighting Plant



August 2, 2017 Commissioner's Meeting

7:00 PM – Town Hall Selectman's Room

Commissioners Present: G. Robert Merry, Robert Snow, Kenneth Keyes. Also in attendance was General Manager Daniel Folding, Office Manager Eric Grover

See attendance sheet for the public sign-in.

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G. Robert Merry opened the meeting at 7:00 PM

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## ***Citizen Query***

Mary White of 108 Central St. had some concerns about the new bill format. She isn't in favor of the new look because it was harder to read and understand. Manager Folding said we changed the format to better inform our customers of more useful information. If she would like to come down to the office and get a better explanation of the bill, please come down and we can help you out. She asked if she could get the old bill format back and it was said we don't have that capability any longer.

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## ***Review and Approve Meeting Minutes***

There were no minutes to review for this meeting.

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## ***Discussion on Employee Benefits***

Manager Folding asked if this meeting was going to start back from scratch where the July 12, 2017 ended. G. Robert Merry said it doesn't necessary have to start there. Robert Snow made an interjection regarding how he felt about how the raises should be held. He stated he thought the General Manager should have the say as he has more of an idea how the industry is run. At the last meeting, Folding suggested we give the front office staff a 1.5% raise and the line crew a 2.0% raise. Along with the increase, there is a proposed stipend to offset the employees other costs. The board had received a letter of memorandum from our attorney regarding the stipend and how it would work for our negotiations. Merry said he would like to include the following verbiage in the motion:

***“circumvention of Section 7A, the stipend or allowance should not be directly connected to the payment of health insurance premiums. In other words, the payment should be provided to all employees or a class of employees and should not be limited to only those employees that receive health insurance through RMLP. Moreover, RMLP should not place a condition on the use of the***

*payment for health insurance premiums. Such conditions would be unnecessary as any payment would have the effect of offsetting employee living expenses.*

*We note that a stipend or allowance for general expenses should not affect pension entitlements. Pensions are calculated on the basis of regular compensation. Pursuant to 870 CMR 15.03, the following payments generally are treated as "regular compensation":*

- *Annual Base salary;*
- *Annual stipend for additional services set forth in the collective bargaining agreement;*
- *Cost-of-living adjustments that become part of base pay; and*
- *Payment for length of service ["longevity"].*

If all this was noted in the motion, Merry wouldn't have a problem with it. Kenneth Keyes didn't have a problem with the stipend as long we were all free and clear of any issues. Merry wanted to make sure that all the verbiage was incorporated into the motion.

*Robert Snow made a motion to incorporate the wording [above in bold] for the stipend from Rubin & Rudman into the motion and to give back the authority to Dan Folding the proposals he gave us of the wage increases and stipend from the last meeting. Folding said the proposals were 2.0% for the linecrew and 1.5% for the front staff along with the stipend.*

At this time, employee Sean Labelle handed Folding a proposal from the employees of the RMLP. Folding passed out the information to the board and continued to speak about the amount of the stipend. Lebellet passed out additional paperwork for a comparison of what Folding had passed out from the last meeting, just with updated numbers. Folding said the stipend amount was discussed as \$2696.88 per year, per person, at the last meeting. This came out to a 19 percent increase.

*Merry said there was a motion made by Snow. [listed above] Keyes second the motion. All voted in favor at 7:12 PM.*

*Grover asked the question if this was retroactive back to July 1, 2017 and receive the affirmative from Manager Folding.*

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### ***Opportunity to Acquire Building***

Manager Folding stated the RMLP received notice of the property known as "Didax" on Main St. may be coming available to the town. He said this building would be perfect for us as it would be a solution to our overcrowding problems. Robert Snow said the town has the opportunity for this building, not just the RMLP alone so he would like to put forth a motion to contact the board of selectman about our interest in it. The building has large 15 foot doors in the rear and would be great. G. Robert Merry said there may be other town departments showing interest and maybe we should see where this goes. Snow said he came by the RMLP and walked the property of Summer St. with Eric. He noted the space was very much used. He also noted the documents in the warehouse are in a place that isn't environmentally safe whereas the new building would better suit those needs.

*Robert Snow made the motion to send the board of selectman a letter stating our interest in the Didax property on Main St. Keyes seconded the motion. All voted in favor at 7:23 PM.*

Folding will draft up a letter and get it out to the board.

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### **Manager Benefit's Discussion**

Manager Folding handed out a comparison of the different towns in the area and what each of their manager make. he board looked over the proposal. G. Robert Merry stated the board should give Folding the same percentage raise as what the rest of the employees received, 2.0%. Robert Snow said he would include the stipend with the proposal. Merry asked if he received the insurance and Folding said no, but his contract reads he receives the same benefits as the rest of the department. Both Merry and Snow said his evaluation was great. With some general discussion, Folding made a request for another weeks' vacation. Merry asked what he currently had and he said five and this would be a total of six weeks. Folding said he would take the 2% and the extra weeks' vacation. Kenneth Keyes said the only complaint he wanted to make was the employees have to talked to me, Keyes, and said you don't talk to them. He should let them know what is going on within the department. He finds it very disturbing to have them come to me, Keyes, and not to you. Folding said he always has his door open and any employee can come and talk to him. Merry said Folding is the manager and he runs it his way. Snow echoed these thoughts also.

*Robert Snow made the motion to give Folding a 2% raise and an extra weeks' vacation. Keyes seconded the motion. All voted in favor at 7:30PM.*

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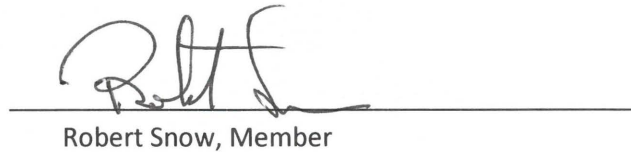
### **Adjournment**

*Robert Snow made the motion to adjourn. Kenneth Keyes seconded. All voted in favor in favor at 7:35 PM.*

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Minutes submitted by Eric R. Grover

  
G. Robert Merry, Chair

  
Robert Snow, Member

  
Kenneth Keyes, Clerk

