

Rowley Municipal Lighting Plant



October 11, 2023, Commissioner's Meeting

6:00 PM – Remote Go to Meeting

Commissioners Present: Bryan DiPersia, Mark Cousins, Danby Whitmore. Also, in attendance was General Manager Matthew Brown, Office Manager Eric Grover. Brady Lee, VP Business Development from Great Blue Survey Company.

See attendance sheet for the public sign-in.

Mark Cousins opened the meeting at 6:05 PM.

Citizen Query

There wasn't anyone participating in citizen's query.

Great Blue Research Survey Presentation – Agenda Out Of Order

Brady Lee gave a Power Point presentation to the board explaining his company profile and services that Great Blue Research can provide to RMLP. [Attached in the minutes is the Power Point program] He explained it would take a couple months to get a good quality survey built for our needs. He explained the history and the conception of Great Blue as it's a full-service marketing firm that specializes in surveys with focus on utilities. Currently there are 15 MEAM members that have used Great Blue Research, and the APPA member utilities use Great Blue Research as well.

The first thing to be done is for the project team to define the parameters of the survey including survey questions and method of delivery to RMLP customers. Mr. Lee mentioned that there is a standard library of survey questions that have been frequently used by MEAM and APPA Members across multiple utilities which could be helpful in benchmarking. Generally, there are 25 to 30 core questions in the survey with room for additional questions specific to RMLP. Commissioner Mark Cousins asked if moving away from the telephone would get us more data and how could we reach the older demographics where some RMLP customers may not be computer savvy enough to complete an on-line survey. Brady said there are all sorts of ways now of reaching people in a more traditional way such as QR codes, email, mail, and the telephone. QR codes are the more up and coming ways to reach people now a days as they can scan the code and it comes right up on their electronic device. Danby asked what % of surveys were returned. Mr. Lee stated 3%, 5% if you are lucky. Danby thought that was a very small rate of return. If we got back 5% on 3,500 surveys, it would be 175 responses.

Commissioner Bryan DiPersia asked what the turnaround time was from start to end. Brady said most times it is 8-10 weeks, but the normal time now seems to be 10-12 weeks.

Manager Matt Brown will reach out to Brady with any follow up question the board may have and hopefully we can get something moving forward in the weeks to come. Mr. Lee stated that the MEAM cost saves about \$1,000 and he could give a figure to Matt.

Review and Accept Previous Minutes

After reading the minutes from the previous meeting session, January 25, 2023, provided, the corrections made by the board were edited prior to the meeting.

Danby Whitmore made the motion to accept the regular minutes for January 25, 2023, with the corrections made. Bryan DiPersia seconded the motion. Roll call vote was taken. Mark Cousins, "I", Bryan DiPersia, "I" and Danby Whitmore "I". Voted in at 6:44.

After reading the minutes from the previous meeting session, May 24, 2023, provided, the corrections made by the board were previously edited prior to the meeting.

Bryan DiPersia made the motion to accept the regular minutes for May 24, 2023, with the corrections made. Bryan DiPersia seconded the motion. Roll call vote was taken. Mark Cousins, "I", Bryan DiPersia, "I" and Danby Whitmore "I". Voted in at 6:45.

After reading the minutes from the previous meeting session, September 13, 2023, provided, the corrections made by the board were previously edited prior to the meeting.

Danby Whitmore made the motion to accept the regular minutes for September 13, 2023, with the corrections made. Bryan DiPersia seconded the motion. Roll call vote was taken. Mark Cousins, "I", Bryan DiPersia, "I" and Danby Whitmore "I". Voted in at 6:46.

Battery Storage Project Update

Manager Matt Brown said we have provided the information to Citizens with what they have requested on the license agreement. This is going to show care, custody, and control of the parcel that we have the substation on. As of Friday, the 6th, additional progress has been made, and we expect a final review and confirmation any week now. Scott Edwards is working on this, and we hope to get things moving soon. Certificates of property ownership are approved.

Managers Update

MLP Solar Update: There are three potential solar customers who have applied for service with 33 total systems now currently running.

Construction Projects: Currently we are working on a new 13KV wire conversion on the top of Mansion Drive near the old Seaview Nursing Home. This is like the Summer Street conversion with three step-down transformers on Jellison Road that feeds Kittery and Mansion Drive. The plan is to break up the project into three parts, with this part being the first. We have set 16 new poles, pulled in new primary wire, and will be updating transformers as the project progresses.

Substation Project: The two original transformers at the Daniels Road substation were installed back in the 80's. Combined there is 18 MVA between the two transformers and they are nearing the end of their useful life. Manager Brown has enlisted PLM to do an engineering study to see what size will be sufficient. It will most likely be one transformer 20 MVA like the current one on the 2394 line. This way the whole town can be running off one transformer when the other one is down for maintenance. We will upgrade the relays as part of this project with modern microprocessor-based relay type rather than the current electromechanical ones which are outside in the station in breaker cabinets. There will be more details to come once PLM finishes the engineering work for this project as far as estimates, conceptual and schedule of lead times of work. Additionally, RMLP has land under the 23 KV line on Newburyport Turnpike to potentially accommodate a new substation due to new load growth. Also talked about substation at Power House Lane. And that funds for the project are in rate stabilization and there is a one-year build time.

All Other Items Not Anticipated by The Chair

Manager Matt Brown just wanted to mention that the 2022 DPU report was filed with the state. Also, the 2022 audit we had done was completed and submitted to the board.

Commissioner Danby Whitmore said she is looking forward to the survey and seeing the results from the ratepayers.

Executive Session under GLC 30A, Section 21 a Strategy for Negotiations with Non-Union Personal

There was no reason to go into executive session for this meeting.

Adjournment

Danby Whitmore made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Bryan DiPersia seconded. All voted in favor at 7:07 PM with a roll call vote with everyone saying yes.

Minutes submitted by Eric R. Grover



Mark Cousins, Chair



Danby Whitmore, Clerk



Bryan DiPersia, Member

Oct 23