

Middleton Electric Light Commission

Meeting Minutes

April 23, 2025

The following individuals were in attendance:

Frank Twiss, Chairman

Chuck Clinch

Jim Kelley

Tim Houten

Jim Carbone

Michael Cloutier, Manager

Chairman Twiss called the meeting to order at 5:03PM.

Approval of Agenda:

Motion:

Jim Kelley motioned to approve the agenda as written. Tim Houten seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Approval of the Minutes:

Motion:

Tim Houten motioned to approve the minutes of March 19, 2025, as written. Jim Kelley seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

Financials:

January revealed a net income of \$393,871 and in February a net loss of (\$58,797) resulting in YTD net income of \$335,073. Our investment income for the first two months of 2025 is a healthy \$453,248. March rebounded nicely as the power prices were much lower, so March figures should look a lot better. The power supply figures show we sold 861K more KWH than in 2024. The cost in 2025 was on average \$0.02 higher per KWH. Our cash position is solid but

will be going down due to the purchase of the generator for the Town complex. The MELD building renovations will also require additional cash. We are well positioned financially to pay for these costs.

GML:

GML is making a call for capital to finance the purchase of two small hydroelectric plants in New Hampshire. Mr. Cloutier is requesting authorization to fulfill GML's call for capital for this purchase.

Motion:

Move to see if the Board will vote to authorize the Middleton Electric Light Department acting through its General Manager to expend in an amount not to exceed \$240,000 in connection with the purchase by the GML Cooperative of Sweetwater Hydroelectric, LLC and Rivermill Hydroelectric, Inc., which purchase will include all of the respective companies' assets including real estate interests, subject to the negotiation of an acceptable purchase and sale agreement by the GML Cooperative.

Tim Houten made the motion. Jim Kelley seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

Linemen's Law Exemption Home Rule Petition:

The crew has been working on single-phase 23Kv. There is a Massachusetts general law called the Massachusetts Linemen's Law, Chapter 149, Section 129c which does not allow you to work with rubber gloves on 3-phase energized conductors in excess of 15,000 volts or single-phase in excess of 8,000 volts. Mr. Cloutier is requesting a motion from the Board to authorize him to petition to get an exemption from this law.

Motion:

To authorize the Middleton Electric Light Department, acting through its General Manager to petition the Legislature to adopt an act relative to the Middleton Electric Light Department that would allow lineworkers employed by the Town of Middleton electric light department and other qualified persons, as determined by the department, to work on live wires, electrical equipment or other energized conductors up to 25,000 volts phase-to-phase or 14,400 volts phase-to-ground directly with rubber gloves, when de-energizing is not feasible and only when following the applicable provisions of the most recent American Public Power Association Safety Manual, concerning proper safe work practices,

personal protective equipment and clothing. And to take any action necessary in relation to it being enacted.

Jim Kelley made the motion. Chuck Clinch seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

DPU Annual Return:

Commissioners each signed the return.

Manager's Report:

We have had two outages since our last meeting. On March 29th a phase on the 23-2 circuit burned out on the right-of-way near the Central Street substation, and more than half the Town was affected. The second outage was a switch on Boston Street caused by a racoon. The recloser opened and closed and it was a short outage.

PLM is helping with the final design for the generator at the Town complex. When we ordered it in December it was supposed to be a 75–90-week lead-time but the salesman said unofficially it should be closer to 75 weeks. We are now trying to get submittals from the company so the gas service can be designed.

MELD received a Certificate of Reliability which honors MELD for significantly exceeding the five-year average for all US electric utilities for reliable electric service. Our average outage time was 15 minutes compared to the US outage time of 120 minutes. This is a testament to the dedication of the entire department from the line crew to the Commissioners. The award has been acknowledged on the MELD website. We are also reapplying for the RP3 Award from APPA which recognizes utilities that demonstrate high proficiency and reliability, safety workforce development and system improvement. We currently have the platinum designation and there is only one level higher.

We are exploring a vehicle to grid opportunity. Essex Tech is going to do some electric buses. They are going to have a charging system to charge the batteries. We are working on a contract with them to allow them to charge back onto our system during peak times and we will share the savings with them. If they save us \$1K we will give them \$500, thus saving us \$500. It is early in the process, but we are hoping it will get online.

GML has hired Robin Jowders as a part-time Business Development Manager.

NEPPA Conference will be held August 17th to the 20th in Burlington, VT. Let Mr. Cloutier know if you are attending and how many days.

We are finalizing the plans for the MELD renovation bid. Manole is doing a good job as the Owners Project Manager.

Chairman Twiss ended the meeting with a heartfelt recognition and thanks for Commissioner Chuck Clinch's 36 years of service on the MELD Commissioners Board. Chuck is stepping away from the Board and his knowledge and sense of humor will be truly missed.

Next meeting: May 21, 2025

Tim Houten motioned to adjourn the meeting at 5:48PM. Chuck Clinch seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

James Carbone
Clerk