Middleton Electric Light Commission

Meeting Minutes

January 21, 2026

The following individuals were in attendance:

Tim Houten, Chairman
Frank Twiss
Jim Kelley
Jim Carbone
Kenny Rollins
Michael Cloutier, Manager
Doug LeColst, Fire Chief

Chairman Houten called the meeting to order at 5:05PM

***Approval of Agenda:***
**Motion:**
**Frank Twiss motioned to approve the agenda as written. Jim Kelley seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.**

***Approval of the Minutes:***
**Motion:**
**Ken Rollins motioned to approve the minutes of December 17, 2025, as written. Jim Kelley seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.**

***Chief Douglas LeColst:***
Chief LeColst wanted to recognize the linemen who responded to the fire that recently occurred at the jail. He stated that the linemen who responded to the fire were prompt, professional and did a fantastic job. The fire was in the largest unit at the jail. The panel was replaced and the unit is currently feeding off the chiller until a new transformer can be delivered. Chief LeColst said he wanted to pass along his thanks and gratitude to the MELD crew.

***Financials:***

Power supply is tracking the same as all year. It is $0.012 higher than 2024, which calculates to about a million dollars more. Natural gas prices continue to go up. We may need to go up in the PPAC and Energy Charge. It is better to go up earlier rather than catching up later. According to the 2025 residential rate comparisons for the state, Middleton is by far one of the lowest in kWh cost for our rate payers. Cash is coming down due to the MELD building renovation. We have not made a payment for the Town complex generator since last month. Also, because power supply is up, the cash has gone down. Even so, we should not have to take any money from the reserves at this point.

***Manager's Report:***

Since our last meeting the only large outage was the fire at the jail. Bernie is looking for a transformer, and it will probably take a few months before delivery. The replacement is not an emergency as the unit is being fed off the chiller transformer. The crew did a great job at getting the unit back up and running. The other outage was a tree limb that took down a residential service.

Last month it was revealed that there was a computer problem with the new meter billing system. A total of eleven commercial customers were affected. The total under charge was about $57K. Cheryl corrected all the affected bills and the customers were notified. Two have already paid and another called today.

Mr. Cloutier has been in touch with Justin to schedule a meeting regarding the generator issue at the Town complex. We will go over the plans that were sent to us. We have assured them that they will have full power. There will be a temporary 330KW generator until the permanent 500KW generator is installed.

The MELD renovation is going well. The men's bathroom is done and just needs to be painted. The site out back is graded, and it looks good. The final punch list should be ready at the beginning of February. There will be an exercise area for the men. The new garage building should be ready in April, and it will be well built.

GML is running smoothly. They have hired some additional part-time employees. One of which is Chuck Clinch, who is doing glove washing and testing. They are looking into getting another glove testing machine to keep up with the customer demand. On the maintenance side, they are looking for additional fire truck work.

In February, Mr. Cloutier and Tim Houten are going to attend the Congressional meetings in Washington, DC.

***Manger's Review:***

Mr. Cloutier stated that he is in a five-year agreement that states he can earn an additional 1%, 2% or 3% increase based on his performance, on top of the contractual 3% annual increase. He was given three goals: low electric rates, electric service reliability, and employee retention. MELD continues to be one of the lowest rates in the State as depicted in the Residential Rate Comparisons sheet that was passed out. The electric service has continued to remain reliable with minimal outages and quick response and repair. Mr. Cloutier has also rearranged the MELD staff, which has improved morale and productivity, heading the department in the right direction. He will also be looking for a new apprentice and will be working on some new job descriptions.

Chairman Houten called for a motion to approve either a 1%, 2% or 3% additional increase.

**Motion:**

**Jim Carbone made the motion to increase Mr. Cloutier's salary by an additional 3% due to his past performance. Jim Kelley seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.**

Next meeting: February 18, 2026

Ken Rollins motioned to adjourn the meeting at 6:00PM. Jim Kelley seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

James Carbone
Clerk