

Chairman Thomas Reynolds called the meeting to order at 5:01 p.m. in the BELD Board Room. Those present at the meeting included Chairman Reynolds, Vice Chairman Anthony Agnitti, Secretary James Regan, General Manager William G. Bottiggi, Ken Stone and Joe Bracken, all of BELD.

I. Minutes of Prior Meetings

i. June 9, 2020 Electric Open Meeting

Voted: on motion of Mr. Regan, to accept the minutes of June 9, 2020 Open Meeting as written. Mr. Agnitti seconded. So voted.

II. Items for Action

i. 4th of July Celebration Committee Request

Mr. Bottiggi explained that the 4th of July Celebration Committee sent a letter to BELD for possible help with the \$2,000.00 printing costs of the promotional items that were printed for the 2020 celebration that did not happen due to Covid-19. There was discussion. It was decided to make the \$2,000 bill as a down payment toward our 2021 advertising that we usually do with the Committee.

Voted: on motion of Mr. Agnitti, seconded by Mr. Regan, that we make a \$2,000 payment toward the 2021 advertising that we will usually spend on the 4th of July celebration to help defray the costs.

ii. High Speed Internet/Remote Learning

Chairman Reynolds explained that the schools reached out to him about financial hardships on parents because of the remote learning that many students will be doing this year.

Mr. Bottiggi explained that there are plans for people who have a financial hardship paying for their electricity that we work with already. We work with the Salvation Army and the Quincy Community Action who work as a vetting agent. Ms. Cohen has reached out to the Good Neighbor Energy Fund and they have a heating program that deals with this and we would like to run it the same way.

The way this will work is the schools will identify the families who do not have internet or cannot pay for internet and we will then direct that person to this vetting process where the organization will verify that they really do have a problem financially – this is based on the state’s guidelines. But it will allow us to help people who are struggling to pay their internet bill because their kids will need it for school. There was discussion. We will find out if Comcast and Verizon are willing to also do this type of thing. Mr. Reynolds asked about bandwidth – Mr. Bottiggi said he did not think there would be an issue but if we do have one we will deal with it.

Voted: on motion by Mr. Regan, for Braintree Electric Light Department to offer high speed internet service to qualified families with children participating in remote learning at a reduced rate for the 2020 – 2021 school year. The amount of the reduced rate will be determined through a qualification process managed by BELD’s Support Services Manager. Mr. Agnitti added this line to the motion: within the guidelines of our ability to provide the service and seconded. So voted.

III. Items for Discussion

i. Customer Service Survey Results Presentation

Mr. Bottiggi introduced Mr. Taylor Foss, from Great Blue Research and explained that we do a survey every three years and we did this while people were home due to coronavirus. However, it does not seem to have had an impact on the results. Mr. Foss reviewed the results via zoom. The presentation is attached.

ii. Coronavirus Update

Mr. Bottiggi reported that we are back to normal operations for the most part. There are a couple of IT people who are still working from home due to office spacing. This has been very seamless – we have had no one contract Covid-19 and that includes the people that we sent out of state to do Mutual Aid. It has had a negative impact on us financially – our sales are down but our energy costs went down as well.

iii. Potter II Capacity Supply Obligation/Investigation of Damage

Mr. Bottiggi explained there are two things going on – first we had the catastrophic failure of the gas turbine because the blade snapped loose and went through the machine. We have been dealing with the insurance company on this. We should know an initial offer soon. This can go one of three ways. First, we could just take the actual cash value – this would be the depreciated value of the plant. Second, we could a repair or replace settlement – we would fix the gas turbine and they would pay minus the deductible. Third, we could replace the gas turbine with some other technology but we need clarification on that. If we decided to do that they would give us the same amount less the deductible for the repair option. We need to decide exactly what type of technology would be best for us.

We have a capacity supply obligation which basically means we get paid to be available to run. Given this if we cannot run and there is a scarcity condition then the pay for performance penalty comes into effect. We have sold off our capacity supply obligation from October 1, 2020 through May 31, 2021. We get paid \$4.58 per kilowatt and we sold it for \$.40 so we keep 90% of the money. There is no risk with this. We will need to do this or cover the generation some other way through May of 2024 because that is what we are committed to with Potter.

There was discussion. Mr. Bottiggi has spoken with a battery supplier over the years and he said they could put 60 megawatts of batteries at the Potter site and Potter is 72 megawatts. We would have to tear down the warehouse and Potter to fit all of it. There are other things we can do if we decide to replace. Mr. Nelson and Mr. Bracken have mentioned a solution which would get more power out of the Watson units. There was discussion. Mr. Bottiggi said we are going to spend some time researching – we are not in a rush. The way it would work in order to add capacity is to go through the Forward Capacity Auction. This means a Show of Interest in February 2021 and give ISO-NE all the information they ask for and clarify everything with them by October 2021. The Forward Capacity Auction is in February 2022. If we clear that auction we would need everything to be completed for June 2025. There was further discussion – we always want this to have a positive impact on our customers: will it keep our rates lower or will this create more risk?

There is a financial assurance piece of this as well. Mr. Stone explained because we are trying to shed our capacity supply obligation that puts us in a different position with ISO-NE where we could incur penalties. He continued because of this we need to post collateral through ISO-NE with a company called Black Rock. They would need \$3 million. This will help us to not incur penalties of \$1,000 per day if we don't meet certain thresholds. There was further discussion.

iv. Fireking Diesel Generators

Mr. Bottiggi reported that Tangent is 99% done with this project. The generators can be run now for peak shaving. We have done a test and run a black start for Fireking. We will repeat that test on Friday 8/21/20 and then we will be done. If there is an outage on the town feeder Fireking will be off and then on again with the generators within a couple of minutes.

v. Internet Update

Mr. Bottiggi reported that we are doing installs again – two or three a day. It is going well. We are back up around 2400 customers. When we finished the transition to just Internet we had about 2385 customers and then we lost 60 to the coronavirus situation: we were not doing installs and people were moving. We are coming back from that now. We are currently at \$39 per month. There was discussion.

IV. Personnel Update

Mr. Bottiggi announced that Mr. Tedeschi is the next retiree at BELD. He will be leaving at the end of next week.

There was discussion on what types of job will be available and how much technology has changed some of the jobs at BELD. There was further discussion on interns and internships.

V. Old Business (As Determined/Needed)

i. NERC Audit

Mr. Stone reminded the Board about the NERC Audit: we go through an Operations and Planning Audit every six years. They cover all the generation, transmission and distribution systems – all the NERC standards that apply to BELD. We spent a large portion of 2019 preparing for this audit. We got the audit notification letter in February and we just finished the audit today. We had the exit call. We had zero violations with potential noncompliance and zero areas of concern. In response to a question from Mr. Agnitti, Mr. Stone replied that we have had no areas of noncompliance in all three audits: 2008, 2014, 2020. Mr. Bottiggi said they said that it was not easy to get that.

VI. New Business (As Determined/Needed)

None.

VII. Public Participation (As Determined/Needed)

VIII. Tabled Items

None.

IX. Next Regular Meeting – Upcoming Meetings

i. Tuesday, September 29, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

Mr. Bottiggi told the Board that this date could be pushed back. We had determined this date based on vacations and those trips have been cancelled. There was discussion and the Board determined that Tuesday, September 15, 2020 at 5:00 p.m. would be the date of the next meeting.

X. Executive Session (As Determined/Needed)

Not needed.

XI. Adjournment

Voted: on motion of Mr. Regan, seconded by Mr. Agnitti, to adjourn the meeting at 6:14 p.m. So voted.

James P. Regan
Secretary