

Chairman Thomas Reynolds called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. in the BELD Board Room. Those present at the meeting included Chairman Reynolds, Vice Chairman Anthony Agnitti, General Manager William G. Bottiggi and Joe Bracken, all of BELD, and Elizabeth Eromin and Karen Mosman of Relay for Life. Secretary James Regan was not in attendance.

**I. Minutes of Prior Meetings**

**i. February 9, 2021 Open Meeting**

Voted: on motion of Mr. Agnitti, to accept the minutes of February 9, 2021 Open Meeting as written. Mr. Reynolds stepped down and seconded. So voted.

**II. Items for Action**

**i. Relay for Life Request**

Chairman Reynolds recognized the new Relay for Life co-chairs Ms. Mosman and Ms. Eromin. They have taken over for Ms. Clawson who is undergoing treatment currently and they gave an update on her. Chairman Reynolds asked that they pass on that our thoughts and prayers are with her. There was discussion on the co-chairs background with Relay for Life.

Ms. Mosman explained that they are not doing a full in person event due to coronavirus. The American Cancer Society (ACS) decided that for the first six months of 2021 there were too many variables for the traditional Relay. They are going to do a car themed event this year – some virtual and some live. The car events have been successful – as either a drive through or drive in event. – it gives the social distance but still an in-person experience. Ms. Clawson came up with their theme: Cruising for a Cure.

They are working with the Town of Braintree on the events. They want to make sure that participants get the educational information that you would get at a Relay event and to celebrate the sponsors and the teams but also do a full luminaria so people get a chance to honor and remember those going through treatment and those that have been lost. Ms. Eromin explained some of the virtual events that will be happening – starting with a St. Patrick’s Day online celebration – you can purchase a ticket and watch the event. There will be Wellness Wednesdays online – every other Wednesday – that you can also purchase a ticket for. Ms. Mosman added that they are working with Lombardo’s in Randolph on doing a drive-in movie night and having proceeds go to Relay for Life. Although this is a challenge it has provided some new opportunities. There was further discussion.

There will be the same advertising opportunities as usual for BELD: verbally at live events and on all social media, T-shirts will have our logo, etc. ACS is helping out with more educational pieces that can be shared on social media. Mr. Bottiggi said that our marketing person could also get involved with passing the word. Ms. Mosman and Ms. Eromin work on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram –Mr. Ritchie works on all of BELD’s social media accounts and will help them.

Bottiggi said we could put a truck in the rolling rally. Ms. Mosman told that Board that their goal is to have the town know the route so that people can come out to support the team. There was discussion. Mr. Bottiggi said maybe we could do the same thing as we do with parades and pass out BELD items. Ms. Eromin told that Board that they are still doing the Tea for Survivors – virtually -

so they are working on goodie bags – Mr. Bottiggi said he would pass this on to Mr. Ritchie and maybe he could come up with something to put in the bags. They are looking for things to put in and not worry about allergies.

Voted: on motion of Mr. Agnitti, to continue to advertise with the Relay for Life of Greater Braintree as a gold sponsor (\$1500). Mr. Reynolds stepped down and seconded. So voted.

**ii. Contract Approval**

Mr. Bottiggi passed out pages and explained what the changes in the contract will be. There was clarification of a few articles- and some slight changes. There was discussion on how negotiations went. Changes occurred in regard to vacations, overtime, FR clothing, sick bank, education and employment continuation, safety incentive, drug and alcohol testing. We tightened up a lot of things. He continued we agreed to 3% increase for each year of the contract but remember we have pared down on the staff – we have eighty seven employees now, down from one hundred eight. That saves us between \$3.5 and 4 million per year. There was further discussion.

Voted: on motion of Mr. Agnitti, to accept the union contract as presented by Mr. Bottiggi. Mr. Reynolds stepped down and seconded. So voted.

**III. Items for Discussion**

**i. Coronavirus Update**

Mr. Bottiggi reported that some conferences are starting to talk about having them in person. There is the annual NEPPA conference in August in Portland ME – but the annual APPA conference is going to be virtual. We will have to wait and see how things go. There was discussion.

**ii. Potter II**

Mr. Bottiggi informed the Board that Mr. Bracken, Mr. Nelson and Mr. Hitchings from BELD and our consultant Mr. Schmidt are working with the company Allied Power Group on accessing what is of value in Potter II. Their proposal is that they will take the good items, ship them back to Houston, refurbish what needs to be and sell it and we split the profit 50% - 50%. It is their risk if they cannot sell the products. Allied Power Group will be here on March 25 and we are hoping they will come back in April. We will have O'Connor open up the gas turbine, rig it out and ship it out of here. It will need to be refurbished. There was discussion. Mr. Bracken added that there is a plant in TX that we just sent our shaft-driven lube oil pump to - during their recent cold snap theirs failed and they couldn't start up. They made an emergency call through Allied and asked us to get the shaft-driven lube oil pump out now. We brought one guy in from O'Connor, had Mr. Schmidt here and our employees and they pulled it out. They took the cover over it off which was 2500 pounds and disassembled the pump which was 700 pounds. Our employees made a crate, sprayed down the equipment so it wouldn't rust, wrapped it up and sent it to them. The plant in TX cut a PO to Allied for \$50,000 and we are keeping track of our expenses. Our employees are disassembling as much as possible now so we will be ready when the time comes for them to look at the larger pieces of equipment. There was further discussion. Mr. Schmidt has been consulting with BELD since the 90s on various things – he has taken our machines apart a number of times. He has given us a spreadsheet of all of the components that he believes have value and how much.

**iii. Tree Removal Rebate**

Mr. Bottiggi explained what he thinks may be a good idea. We regularly trim trees that may affect our electrical distribution system, even if on a customer's property. He described an incident that happened a couple of weeks ago: it was a very cold day and a huge pine tree came down. Normally, they wouldn't impact our system but when this one came down it – it snapped off about three or four feet off of the ground because it had rotted inside – it took down four poles, all the infrastructure and almost hit the house across the street. Mr. Bottiggi thought it might be good to have a rebate for \$500 per tree because it would take around \$3000 to take that tree down. The tree would have to have a direct impact on our system and the program would be run by Mr. Murphy, BELD's Electric Operations Manager. Mr. Bottiggi continued: this would be money well-spent and it might spur some customers into taking action to take down their trees. Mr. Reynolds commented that he would like Mr. Bottiggi to check with the Town – specifically if there is a tree warden or the Planning Board. There was discussion – this would perhaps fall under Mr. Arsenault, Director of Public Works. Mr. Reynolds wants us to make sure we don't take down trees that are protected or on a scenic way. However, if the town determines the tree is a safety hazard the tree can be taken down without a hearing. There was discussion. The concern is that you can't tell that the tree isn't healthy. That is what happens with trees. Bright Ideas next month will be about trees. Mr. Bottiggi will discuss with Mr. Arsenault.

**iv. Allen Street**

Mr. Bottiggi met with Mr. Gamble who is the architect of the plan for the old BELD site – Allen Street. He would like to have some type of Braintree Electric Light Department memory plaque or something at the site. They may also name it with something pertaining to BELD. There was discussion on what the property will look like now and what their plans are.

**IV. Personnel Update**

Mr. Bottiggi reported that we may have people retiring and no replacement internally for the positions. He would like to look into the new state Covid guidelines for retirees. That way we could ask an employee if they would like to work a little longer after retirement until we find replacements. There was discussion. Governor Baker waived the earnings and the hours thresholds so you can work as many hours as you want and there is no limit to how much you can earn during the state of emergency. Until he lifts the state of emergency or until the end of 2021 this will stay in effect. After that we are not sure how it will be handled.

Mr. Bottiggi explained some succession planning that is happening and shifting responsibilities within departments. There will be a few retirements coming up in the next few years that need to be planned for.

**V. Old Business (As Determined/Needed)**

None.

**VI. New Business (As Determined/Needed)**

Mr. Bottiggi reported that there are two new requests for donations, one part of a mailing list and the other dropped off - from the Meeting House Montessori School Parent Partnership Committee for

their online action and the East Braintree Little League for signs on their field. There was a discussion about the value to BELD to make use of these advertising opportunities.

Voted: on motion of Mr. Agnitti, to continue advertising with EBLL and get two signs – one for each field and not advertise in the Meeting House Montessori School Parent Partnership Committee’s fundraising campaign. Mr. Reynolds stepped down and seconded. So voted.

**VII. Public Participation (As Determined/Needed)**

None.

**VIII. Tabled Items**

None.

**IX. Next Regular Meeting – Upcoming Meetings**

- i. Tuesday, April 13, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.**

**X. Executive Session (As Determined/Needed)**

Not needed.

**XI. Adjournment**

Voted: on motion of Mr. Agnitti, to adjourn the meeting at 6:04 p.m. Mr. Reynolds stepped down and seconded. So voted.

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Anthony L. Agnitti  
Vice Chairman