

Chairman Thomas Reynolds called the meeting to order at 5:09 p.m. in the BELD Board Room. Those present at the meeting included Chairman Reynolds, Secretary James Regan, General Manager William G. Bottiggi, all of BELD. Vice Chairman Anthony Agnitti arrived at 5:10 p.m.

I. Minutes of Prior Meetings

i. January 11, 2022 Open Meeting

Voted: on motion of Mr. Regan, to accept the minutes of January 11, 2022 Open Meeting as written. Mr. Reynolds stepped down and seconded. So voted.

II. Items for Action

i. Sunset Lake Concert Series Request

Mr. Bottiggi explained that Mayor Kokoros had sent a letter requesting sponsorship of the Summer Concert Series. The concerts will be mostly at Sunset Lake but the last one will be at Smith Beach. They will also have their usual cookout on July 12. There was discussion – they offered to have our customer service personnel there to promote BELD.

Voted: on motion of Mr. Regan, seconded by Mr. Agnitti, to continue our involvement with the Summer Concert Series. So voted.

III. Items for Discussion

i. Watson Gas Turbine Upgrade Status

Mr. Bottiggi reported that Watson unit 1 is in Montreal because of the high vibration incident. He gave an update on what the team is thinking caused the incident. There was no catastrophic damage done to the turbine and we can put an insurance claim in once we determine what it will cost to fix. Most of it will be covered by the upgrade work we are doing. We have a \$700,000 deductible on the gas turbine so there is a chance we won't get up to the \$700,000 mark. In response to some of the Commissioners questions Mr. Bottiggi explained: we have a leased engine and it has been in since December so our reliability won't be affected. We are in a program that costs us \$1 million per year to have the availability of leasing an engine. We have put this into our pricing structure.

ii. Watson – New Hampshire Electric Coop Proposal / Watson Valuation

Mr. Bottiggi explained that New Hampshire Electric Coop's VP of power resources and access, Mr. Callnan, has contacted BELD and they do not want to participate in the Watson project any longer. NHEC has 11¼% of the entitlement of output of Watson and they have been paying their share of the interest and the principal. We have had many zoom meetings with him and his team analyzing this - Energy New England (ENE) has been involved and we have told him that the bonds are paid off in 6 years. Mr. Bottiggi continued about 2 weeks ago they proposed paying us the remaining principal - \$4.5 million – and will then give up their entitlement of Watson. They have 11.8 megawatts of capacity and they are a 200 megawatt system – so it is only around 5% of their system. Our unit looks like it is high priced right now because capacity prices have come down so much but the cost structure hasn't changed at all. When they were getting \$15 a kilowatt month it looked like

a good deal. Now that they are only getting 3 it doesn't look so good. Mr. Bottiggi has put together an analysis that shows if they give us the \$4.5 million and we take on their \$700,000 in interest we will get that capacity back. So, instead of BELD having 30% of Watson we will have 41¼%. Mr. Regan asked about the original contract – it is in the contract that BELD has the first right. There was discussion. Mr. Cavanaugh of ENE who looks at the industry - and there are a lot of renewables coming in but you need quick start generation - he thinks Watson will become more valuable as more renewable energy gets installed. There was further discussion.

iii. Internet Transition Status

Mr. Bottiggi reported we are now under 1,000 customers – we started out with 2,500. People are slowly transferring over. We are hoping by the end of this month to be down to 5-600. There was discussion. Mr. Bottiggi and Chairman Reynolds met with the mayor and representatives of the schools and the golf course– they have not switched over yet. There are also some businesses that have not transferred over yet. There was further discussion.

iv. OPEB Valuation

Mr. Bottiggi reminded the Board that this had been discussed many years ago – OPEB stands for Other Postemployment Benefits and is a requirement for government employers – and we had a liability of \$8-10 million. He continued we have been putting \$520,000 per year into that fund since the Board voted. We have reached a point where – there was another OPEB actuarial study done in 2020 and for two more years we have to put \$500,000 in and then we are fully funded and we get dividends each year. There was discussion.

v. NEPPA Update

Mr. Bottiggi reported to the Board that he is on the executive search committee for a new executive director. Michael Hyland is clearly the front runner.

IV. Personnel Update

Mr. Bottiggi explained there had been a personnel issue that involved two employees and was witnessed by a few others. There was discussion. We immediately took action: we met with the employees, and they were interviewed by the police and EAP. We felt we dealt with the situation correctly – however, in hindsight we should have sent an email to all BELD employees so that they were aware that one of these employees was not allowed on our property immediately. One of the employees is now gone but the other is still here. Mr. Bottiggi reminded the Board of a time when we had concerns about some customers and we previously had Blue U, a security outfit run by former police officers, come in and do an assessment. They gave us some recommendations – he gave some examples – and we did what they suggested. He continued we are going to get Blue U back in here to do an update and talk about this specific scenario. There was discussion. The Board asked that Mr. Bottiggi reach out to the employee involved and explain that they were briefed on this situation and they have their concerns.

V. Old Business (As Determined/Needed)

None.

VI. New Business (As Determined/Needed)

i. National Grid

Mr. Bottiggi reported that there was a press release and National Grid is putting a bus maintenance facility in and they are going to be putting in electric charging stations in for 120 buses. He continued the BELD team will be meeting this Friday with the Grid team – they want us to provide the power. We are going to give them a high-level estimate to run two circuits – they want (2) 9 megawatt circuits. Mr. Bottiggi explained this would come out of Station 10 and explained the route it would take to National Grid. We will sell power – between 6-9 megawatts to the Grid. There was discussion – this is at the beginning stages and it won't be running until the end of 2024. There was discussion on key accounts in Braintree.

ii. Stowe Electric

Mr. Bottiggi reported that he received a call from Ms. Burt, general manager of Stowe, VT Electric Department. They have a river behind their facility and there is also a building back there which was a sawmill which was built in 1820. The town is very attached to this building so she is trying to put a hydro project there. Mr. Bottiggi told her that BELD would love to participate. There was discussion.

iii. APPA and NEPPA conferences

There was a lengthy discussion on which conferences would be best to attend in person or virtually, dependent upon location of the conference.

iv. Allen Street

There is a possibility that Gamble & Associates will be doing a presentation on Allen Street at the next meeting. Mr. Bottiggi explained they want to show what they are doing with the property and they want a BELD theme for the name of the place.

VII. Public Participation (As Determined/Needed)

None.

VIII. Tabled Items

None.

IX. Next Regular Meeting – Upcoming Meetings

i. Tuesday, March 8, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.

There was discussion on this date. It was decided to change the date to later in the month and perhaps not have a meeting in April depending on agenda items.

X. Executive Session (As Determined/Needed)

None.

XI. Adjournment

Voted: on motion of Mr. Regan, seconded by Mr. Agnitti, to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 p.m. So voted.

James P. Regan
Secretary