

Chairman Thomas Reynolds called the meeting to order at 5:12 p.m. in the BELD Board Room. Those present at the meeting included Chairman Reynolds, Vice Chairman Anthony Agnitti, Secretary James Regan and General Manager William G. Bottiggi and Support Services Manager Gail Cohen, all of BELD.

**I. Minutes of Prior Meetings**

**i. October 11, 2022 Open Meeting**

Voted: on motion of Mr. Regan, seconded by Mr. Agnitti, to accept the minutes of October 11, 2022 Open Meeting as written. So voted.

**II. Items for Action**

None.

**III. Items for Discussion**

**i. Silver Blaze's My Electric Demo**

Ms. Cohen gave a presentation on the new electric platform – My Electric portal for residential and business customers. This will allow customers to pay their bill online and to check on their usage. Ms. Cohen explained that we went from our old Customer Connect system which was very old and the security was not up-to-date and the vendor was no longer supporting that model. We used to have a model for people to look at their usage and bills and a separate model to pay their bills. Now we have it all in one.

Ms. Cohen continued this change did cause all our customers to have to sign back up again on the site. As of today we have 5200 sign-ups. We are offering customers that sign up, and for the inconvenience, a \$10 gift card for a business of their choice. The options are all merchants that are in Braintree that we have selected to be on that list. We have had some complaints from some customers but we could not migrate them to the new system because that wouldn't be secure. The CSRs and Marketing Rep are explaining to customers how to sign up – over the phone or in the office. We are suggesting to customers that just want to set it up and forget about it to use their checking or savings account and not a credit card. The credit card will expire and then the customer will have to go in and update it. It does not take long to sign up. All you need to sign up is your account number and your meter number. You register, get an email to confirm with a link and then you are in.

Ms. Cohen showed the home screen with an account to the Board so they could see how the system works and where information can be found. Customers can compare this month's bill to previous bill or the current month for last year. There are graphs so customers can watch the usage. There is an area where they can put in notes for why their usage was higher than normal. There is an area for hourly, daily, monthly data.

Ms. Cohen explained the previous process for the CSRs when someone moves in or out and the much more efficient process now. We average 5-10 move in/out per day, 5 days a week. A Monday is worse because of the weekend. There was discussion. Mr. Regan asked about the deposit required for renters. Ms. Cohen explained that the deposit is based on the previous tenant's electric usage. The system looks at 12 months of usage and averages it out and gets the 3 month amount total. This is decided by Chapter 164 of the MA General Law. There was discussion. We stopped the forfeit of discount in September so no one got adversely affected for not signing up. We also are coming to the end of the collection process – November 15 is the end – those people that were auto-pay and haven't signed up haven't had a deduction come out. They are now getting a yellow notice saying did you forget to pay your bill? The CSRs are making calls to customers who have not signed up yet and were previously on autopay. We have gone through the whole month billing cycle. There was further discussion.

**ii. Watson Gas Turbine Upgrade Status**

Mr. Bottiggi said engine 2 (EN40) is in Montreal now. They will strip it down and start the overhaul this month. Everything is going fine.

Mr. Bottiggi reported that we have also finished negotiating a new Long Term Service Agreement (LTSA) with Siemens. It is currently at Siemens in the final approval process and has been for a couple of weeks. There was discussion. We will pay \$126,000 per year and this will include previous items like the leased engine. This will be in effect for 15 years.

Mr. Bottiggi said we ran today – we have been running a lot, on oil and on gas. We still have 500,000 gallons of oil in the tank at Citgo which should get us through the winter and its all paid for. There was discussion.

**iii. MBTA Bus Maintenance Facility Update**

Mr. Bottiggi explained we are in good shape on this. We have given them our design. Mr. Li and Mr. Bottiggi had a zoom meeting today with National Grid. We explained we need to get some of the long lead items and need approval to get them. Some things may take a year to get. We want to make sure if we ordered these items that they will pay for them. We would like to go out to bid before the end of the year. There was discussion.

**iv. Eversource Electric Rate**

Mr. Bottiggi explained that he had mentioned last month that National Grid is going to \$0.48 a kilowatt hour. He continued Eversource is supposed to go up on January 1, 2023. They went out to bid for the energy last month and no one bid. They haven't announced what the new rate will be and it may be even higher than National Grid. This doesn't affect BELD at all – just information for the Board. There was discussion.

**IV. Personnel Update**

**i. Electric Engineering Co-op**

We have hired an electric engineering student who is graduating in 2023. There was discussion about the engineering division.

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

None.

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

**i. Environment Group, Braintree High – awareness event for light pollution**

Mr. Regan reported that there is a group of students in the environmental group at the high school who would like BELD's help to isolate a part of the town and turn off streetlights for a period of time to reduce ambient light in the neighborhood and bring awareness about light pollution. He continued they are looking at using French's Common which may not be a good idea with all the business lighting there. There was discussion regarding where might be a good idea of where to have their event. Some places discussed were Eaton's Pond, Great Pond or even at the high school grounds or the Town Forest.

Mr. Bottiggi explained that we cannot turn the streetlights off all together – they need to be done one at a time. He continued when we replaced the streetlights we used International Dark Sky compliant type. They

are made for this – there is no light pollution from them. After discussion, it was decided that Mr. Bottiggi would email the student the information about BELD’s streetlights and explain about public safety issues.

**ii. 5 Year System Study**

Mr. Bottiggi explained that Mr. Li has completed the 5 year system study and its really the capital plan for the next 5 years. We look at what our load is going to be, the condition of our system and what we need to do. There is \$8 million for replacing transformers, upgrading switchgear and putting in the circuits for the MBTA. Mr. Bottiggi said he would send this to the Commissioners and discuss the full budget at the next meeting.

**iii. Bottiggi Appearance at Town Council**

Mr. Bottiggi reported that he had made the appearance at the Town Council and gave a presentation about BELD and where we stand as far as electric rates. He also made a suggestion on getting heat pumps if you live in Braintree.

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

None.

**VIII. Tabled Items**

None.

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

**i. December 6, 2022 at 5:00 p.m.**

**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 6:05 p.m. So voted.

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James P. Regan  
Secretary