

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, Secretary James Regan and General Manager William G. Bottiggi, Joseph F. Bracken, all of BELD, Brian Evans-Mongeon of ENE-T, Sean Powers of Braintree's July 4th Committee, Michael Cavanaugh, resident, Elizabeth Eromin and Karen Mosman of Relay for Life, Meredith Boericke, Town Council. Vice Chairman Anthony Agnitti was not in attendance.

I. Minutes of Prior Meetings

i. February 7, 2023 Open Meeting

Voted: on motion of Mr. Regan, to accept the minutes of February 7, 2023 Open Meeting as written. Mr. Reynolds stepped down and seconded. So voted.

II. Items for Action

i. Relay for Life Request

Ms. Mosman and Ms. Eromin came forward to explain the activities for this year's Relay for Life and to update us as to what happened last year. They have rebranded the name to the Relay for Life of the Greater South Shore so that other towns can join Braintree. They had an in-person event last year and it went great. They raised \$68,394 and had 20 teams registered with 113 participants.

They have set goals for this year which include \$85,000, 25 teams and 200 participants. They have already expanded in comparison to where they were last year at this time. This year's event is going to be held on June 3, 2023 at the Norfolk Sheriff's Office department site, which is where the event was last year and it was wonderfully received. There were nice moments acknowledging BELD's long time Relay rep Susan Clawson. Last year they focused on getting back to an in-person event and this year they are focusing on growing the event. The theme this year is Freedom from Cancer.

They continue to offer the digital advertising opportunities: social media presence, the BELD logo on everything that is printed, signs on the track, acknowledgement during the ceremony. There was discussion among the Board members – we have been long time supporters of this event and it is a good advertising opportunity. Ms. Mosman commented that this is going to be a family friendly event and BELD can have any kind of presence that we want on that day. If we increase we will also get naming rights on the website homepage and other benefits. They also give a prize spot to the BELD rep – which is usually Mr. Ritchie who brings the EV to the event.

Voted: on motion of Mr. Reynolds, seconded by Mr. Regan, to go with the \$5,000 advertising plan. So voted.

Discussion Item 1 – Proposed Tree Ordinance Update

It was decided at this time to take Council President Boericke as she needed to get back to work with the storm happening.

Council President Boericke explained that she wanted to bring the Light Board up to date on where things stand with the proposed tree ordinance. She is very hopeful to get this item on the Town Council agenda for the April 25th hearing. Ms. Boericke has spent the past year meeting with

various members of Sustainable Braintree, the DPW, the legal department and other members of the Mayor's office along with BELD to try to get the best possible tree ordinance and accomplish the goal which is to strengthen MA existing tree protection law by making sure any tree removals are done transparently with public notifications, public hearing process and a formal mechanism to replace those trees when it is doable

with a one-for-one replacement of native species and other guidelines that go along with the conservation commission.

Council President Boericke reported that one of the provisions that has changed is that she started with a 5 member proposed tree committee which would help the tree warden in Braintree which is the DPW director oversee expenditures from our tree replacement fund. They have not yet established the fund – this is part of the process of developing a tree maintenance plan for when they do have those funds available – where they should be planted so that they are in areas of town where there is a low tree canopy today. That would be the priority places when the trees cannot be replaced one-for-one. The tree committee would also be responsible for the helping to implement the tree protection ordinance making sure the public hearings are being held and amplifying the importance of the tree canopy in town and also helping to explain the reasons why sometimes trees need to be removed. There was discussion on having a Light Board member on the committee. Mr. Bottiggi said he agreed with having a BELD Commissioner on the committee because it will enhance the communication. He continued we are dealing with trees all the time. It had been discussed at a previous meeting to have Mr. Reynolds on the committee. Mr. Reynolds said he is fine with being on the committee but he thought he would have to be appointed. Ms. Boericke said yes, this would be like all of the town’s boards and commissions it would be appointed by Mayor Kokoros. She agrees that Mr. Reynolds would be the best choice for the committee and she appreciates the support BELD has given her on this ordinance. She continued the Town Solicitor’s office recommended making the tree committee a 7 member committee as it helps to have a quorum with more people on the committee. She would also like to get either the conservation planner or her designee and an arborist. Mr. Reynolds asked about when the meetings would take place. Ms. Boericke replied currently she envisioned having the meetings on an as-needed basis when trees need to come down. There was discussion on developing funds.

It was decided to go back to the agenda and continue with action items.

ii. July 4th Committee Request

Chairman Reynolds recognized Mr. Powers of the 4th of July Committee. Mr. Powers said this year marks the 50th anniversary of the celebration. He thanked the Board for last year’s help with the celebration and said 2022 was one of the best. He continued there are rising costs associated with this event – he received a call from the fireworks company and the shipping and transportation costs for them to get the product from China has seen a 100% increase. The good news is there is no issue with getting a professional to shoot off the fireworks but a long time company that did that has gone out of business so there may be some towns who will not be able to do fireworks this year.

Mr. Powers reported to be able to maintain our same level of show that the residents have become accustomed to – this year the fireworks alone will cost \$25,000.00 - the Committee is hoping that BELD would like to partner with them and have full name rights advertising that BELD put on the entire fireworks show. This is top level and includes top billing on all promotional advertising, on the website and on the billboard truck that leads and ends the parade and at the high school. There was discussion. The date of the celebration is Saturday July 1, 2023.

Voted on motion: of Mr. Regan, seconded by Mr. Reynolds to use this advertising campaign in the amount of \$25,000.00. So voted.

iii. ENE-T Discussion with Executive Director Brian Evans-Mongeon

Chairman Reynolds recognized Mr. Evans-Mongeon, Executive Director of Energy New England. Mr. Evans-Mongeon reported he has appeared to discuss ENE-T which stands for Energy New England – Transmission. He explained a few years ago ENE did some investigation into the evolving interests of transmission. There is a lot going on in the regulatory area and in the industry in general and as a result of the

changes ENE believes there are opportunities going forward. ENE looked into creating a SPE which is a Special Purpose Entity under Massachusetts statutes: this would offer transmission type services.

Mr. Evans-Mongeon continued his explanation: some of this may be for new generation but there will be other opportunities in New England as well relative to reconfiguring, redesigning, reimplementing the transmission system and we believe public power could have a hand in making that happen. ENE wants to establish a transmission organization that will help to develop new capabilities and new transmission but also existing capabilities as well because a number of municipalities already own transmission.

They have put together this organization and have 8 to 10 entities that are looking to be involved. They have established the structure which has 2 classes: Class A are typically the transmission owners that exist today, like BELD. Class B are entities who do not own transmission today and thus it is more of an interest for them. If an entity is Class A there would a person designated to be a voting member on the board and they will have a guiding hand in setting policy and deciding what happens with the transmission. Since Class B entities are interested in this opportunity they will make contributions against the budget for ENE Transmission. If Class B members see an investment down the road that they want to invest in then they could upgrade to Class A. They tried to set it up to recognize the existing structure today and allow for growth.

Mr. Bottiggi explained we should be looking at this as project development money – we don't know exactly where this is going – but there is a lot of opportunity out there. The energy world is always talking about transmission. The Eversources and National Grids of the world are the transmission owners with the exception of small pieces like BELD and they make a fortune on transmission because they get a guaranteed rate of return. We could bring our low cost capital and just be investors. There are laws – the FERC Order 1000 - that are encouraging this kind of partnership. This is worth investing some capital to check out and see if this will work for us. It could have a real impact on our balance sheet. Mr. Evans-Mongeon added that the structure that is there today is just operating expense associated with the personnel and resources of being able to provide these transmission services. Once a project is identified then they would go out to the membership and find out who has the specific capital interest to put the money into those individual projects. Organizations can participate uniformly under the project or they can chose to opt in or out of particular projects. ENE wants to be as fluid and flexible as possible. There was discussion.

Voted: On motion by Mr. Regan, seconded by Mr. Reynolds, to accept membership in ENE-T as a Class A member. So voted.

iv. Braintree American Little League Request

The Commissioners discussed this request. We put an ad in their book when they were in the Little League World Series because it was a once in a generation event.

Voted: on motion of Mr. Regan, seconded by Mr. Reynolds to table this request to the next meeting. So voted.

III. Items for Discussion

i. Proposed Tree Ordinance Update - Council President Boericke

This was taken care of under the Action portion.

ii. Potter Equipment Sale

Mr. Bottiggi recounted that Potter had the catastrophic failure back in 2020 and we settled with the insurance company and received \$2.5 million to not do the repairs and start the retirement cycle of Potter which will be

completed at the end of May, 2024. We are still getting capacity value even though it cannot run. Mr. Nelson, Bracken and Hitchings worked with Allied Power Group (APG) out of TX and disassembled the gas turbine, generator and other equipment associated with them. They were delivered to TX and APG refurbished them at a cost of a little over \$1 million. APG was able to sell all that equipment for just under \$4 million and the deal was that we would split the profit 50/50. We received \$1.45 million. All in all, we have received about \$4 million so far. There is some other equipment that might be able to do this with. There was discussion.

iii. Watson Update

Mr. Bottiggi reported Engine 40, which was in Unit 2, is in Montreal right now. He recounted Engine 39 was in Montreal – it was in Unit 1 and is now back but in Unit 2. We currently have a leased engine in Unit 1 right now. Mr. Nelson and Mr. Hitchings went to Montreal last week to do an inspection. Siemens are reassembling Engine 40 right now and in a couple of weeks they will put it in a test berth and run it. Mr. Nelson and Mr. Hitchings will go to Montreal at that time again. The plan is for Engine 40 to be shipped back on March 29. We will disassemble Unit 1, take the leased engine out, put the new refurbished engine in and hopefully be done before Easter. A lot of other work is being done here at the same time: cooling mods, intake filters are being replaced with a higher quality filter. Basically, this will be like having a brand-new power plant. We should be all set for another 25,000 hours or 4,000 starts. There was discussion. We are making a principal payment on the bonds and then 2028 will be the last payment. There was further discussion.

iv. Long Term Noncarbon/Greenhouse Gas Emissions Standards Projects

Mr. Bottiggi said he wanted to give an update on our green portfolio. He reported that BELD is entering into 4 new projects with ENE that start in 2025, 2026 and 2030. He continued there are 2 onshore wind projects. There are 2 hydro that qualify for renewable energy – MA Class 2 RECs. We will sign up for another 20 year piece of Seabrook in 2030 and a wind project - Patriot Wind which is located in Moscow, MA – which starts in 2025. This is really pushing us towards over 90% renewable but our load is going to grow with the MBTA project and hopefully the marijuana facility

will go in. There was discussion of projects that will contribute to that. Mr. Bottiggi explained that with a lot of the projects we have now- even though by 2025 we will be 85% green – they are rolling off. The idea is net zero carbon neutral so we need to keep investing. There was discussion.

v. Elm Street Directional Drilling

Mr. Bottiggi explained that the weakest spot in our distribution system is the Elm Street bridge. The bridge moves every time cars go over it. We have a duct bank hanging under that bridge, 4 circuits in that bridge plus fiber optic cable. We are not comfortable – especially with taking Station 8 out of service to rebuild the substation and feeding all that load over to Station 10 on Elm Street and Station 4 at Mahar Highway – being dependent on that bridge. We are going to try to do directional drilling on the roads on both sides of Elm Street. The hard part is not the drilling but the permitting – we have to go under the MBTA tracks, the commuter rail tracks and there is another railroad there too and the highway. There was discussion on what company we are going to use and getting the permit.

vi. GRID Resilient Grant Application

Mr. Bottiggi reported that we are working with the Beneficial Electric League that promotes electrification of everything which goes with what everyone is doing – like heat pumps, electric buses, etc. They are tied in with the Department of Energy and suggested we apply for a grant from Smart Grid for our substation upgrade at Station 8 and the next battery storage project. We have applied for a few million dollars of grant money. There was discussion.

vii. Legislative Rally

Mr. Bottiggi explained that he and some other GMs, along with ENE, went to APPA's Legislative Rally in Washington, DC. He met with Senator Markey and the energy representative from Congressman Lynch's office. There was discussion.

viii. Luke Sign/Ceremony

Mr. Bottiggi said we are looking at a date in May. There was discussion – it will probably be a weekday between noon and 1:00 p.m. so hopefully the weather will be nice.

ix. Summer Hours

Mr. Bottiggi explained that we have not done this before and he isn't sure we are going to do it but the Union has approached us about working summer hours. They proposed working 9 hours Monday through Thursday and then 4 hours on Friday. Mr. Bottiggi said he is not against it but there is usually a lot of overtime in the summertime and some departments cannot do this. There was discussion on the regular hours – we are not longer staying open until later on Thursday evenings as there is less foot traffic. We no longer take cash and most people pay electronically. This would be a trial and we would see how it works. Mr. Bottiggi will let the Board know what is decided. There are some utilities that do this all year.

IV. Personnel Update

Mr. Bottiggi reported that Ms. Cohen has moved her retirement date up to May 11, 2023. We are going to post her job. There was discussion.

V. Old Business (As Determined/Needed)

None.

VI. New Business (As Determined/Needed)

Mr. Regan reported that he was asked by the Braintree Elks – it is actually the Weymouth Braintree Elks. They were located over in Weymouth and they have sold that property and bought the DAV building. There are some lights in the parking lot out back and they are looking to see if they can be changed to LED lights. They were interested in having someone to come out and give them an estimate of what would need to be done.

VII. Public Participation (As Determined/Needed)

Mr. Cavanaugh, ratepayer and member of Sustainable Braintree introduced himself and reminded the Board that he had been at the meeting last month asking about the Palmer biomass project and getting out of the project and was wondering if there was an update. Mr. Bottiggi said we are just waiting until the right time which is in either April or May – we will be sending a letter to confirm we are getting out – but we are definitely getting out. Mr. Cavanaugh explained that we are an environmental group and Palmer Biomass has some negative environmental impacts and we are interested in BELD not being part of that.

Mr. Cavanaugh commented that with regard to the net zero by 2050 he did not believe there was a lot of information on that on the BELD website and it would be very useful for it to be on there. He thinks a lot of residents would like to know some of this information. There was discussion.

VIII. Tabled Items

None.

IX. Next Regular Meeting – Upcoming Meetings

i. April 11, 2023 at 5:00 p.m.

There was discussion on this date. It was decided to not have a meeting in April and to meet instead on Tuesday, May 9, 2023 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 6:02 p.m. So voted.

James P. Regan
Secretary