

Chairman Thomas Reynolds called the meeting to order at 5:07 p.m. in the BELD Board Room. Those present at the meeting included Chairman Reynolds, Vice Chairman Anthony Agnitti, Secretary Daniel Morrissey and General Manager William G. Bottiggi, all of BELD. Also present were Ms. Elizabeth Inglis of the Braintree Festival of Trees and Mr. Sean Powers of the Braintree 4th Committee.

I. Minutes of Prior Meetings

i. February 11, 2025 Open Meeting

Voted: on motion of Mr. Agnitti, seconded by Mr. Morrissey, to accept the minutes of February 11, 2025 Open Meeting as written. So voted.

II. Items for Action

i. Braintree Festival of Trees

Chairman Reynolds recognized Ms. Inglis of the Braintree Festival of Trees. Ms. Inglis reported that December 2024 was the first year that Braintree hosted the Festival of Trees and it was a success. They raised just under \$40,000 to help better the lives of Braintree residents – through sports, schools, neighborhoods or emergency situations. She continued: with the profits they paid for the outdoor lighting around the Town Hall and the library and gave money to the fire victim from January 2025.

Ms. Inglis said currently they are building a website that should be up and running by mid-June and planning the next Festival of Trees which includes asking BELD to participate once again in hopes that they can do more. Mr. Agnitti asked if there would be a comprehensive list of where the monies went to on the website. Ms. Inglis said there would be and explained the first year they had some one-time fees to set up accounts such as the 501(c). They are being very careful with how they are spending their money right now as so many emergencies can come up at the last minute. The fire station will also be taking part in this – they are going to decorate their building and on the Saturday night of the Festival they will be doing a fire pit and smores with Santa. They are trying to involve more people and make it the whole block this year. There will be more to come this year. We had 48 trees last year and we are hoping for 85 this year. There was discussion.

Voted: on motion of Mr. Agnitti, seconded by Mr. Morrissey, to sponsor the Festival of Trees at the gold level.

Mr. Bottiggi said he would speak to Mr. Ritchie about Ms. Inglis using some BELD things for the tree.

ii. East Braintree Little League

Mr. Bottiggi explained we usually do the Bronze level which has two signs – and asked them to be placed in the two different fields. With this level of advertising you get a website listing and weekly emails listing. There was discussion on the Bronze level or the Bronze Plus level which would include an all-star team for one game.

Voted: on motion of Mr. Agnitti, seconded by Mr. Morrissey, to do the Bronze Plus level of advertising with the East Braintree Little League.

iii. Braintree 4th Committee

Chairman Reynolds recognized Mr. Powers of the Braintree 4th Committee. Mr. Powers explained they are already in the midst of planning this year's celebration which will be held on Saturday June 28, 2025. He continued: this is the 52nd celebration and they are also celebrating the 249th anniversary of our country's

independence with an eye toward next year. He reminded everyone that last year the Town was faced with some very significant financial challenges and BELD has been a partner for many years, particularly right after COVID. We were one of the few towns that were ready to come right out of it. BELD stepped right up and made a significant financial contribution so that the celebration could continue and be financially stable so that we could have a celebration and parade that Braintree can be proud of and has come to expect. Mr. Powers said this year they are facing a lot of upward pressure on their operating costs. The fireworks provider has told the Committee that his costs are going up 16% and that is in one year. There was discussion on financial considerations for the committee.

Voted: on motion of Mr. Agnitti, seconded by Mr. Morrissey, to support the 4th of July event at the high school in the amount of \$30,000.00.

iv. Nelson Chin Summer Concert Series

Mr. Bottiggi reported that a letter from Mayor Joyce requesting \$12,000 for the annual Nelson Chin concert series and one cookout. Most of the concerts are at Sunset Lake and one is at Smith's Beach. There was discussion.

Voted: on motion of Mr. Morrissey, seconded by Mr. Agnitti, to sponsor the annual Nelson Chin Summer Concert Series.

v. Relay for Life

Chairman Reynolds announced that this item is on the agenda to approve the funding support for the Relay for Life. All commissioners had voiced approval via an email vote previously. This vote is being confirmed in open meeting.

Voted: on motion of Mr. Morrissey, seconded by Mr. Agnitti, to approve the support for the Relay for Life. So voted.

vi. Letter to Legislators

Mr. Bottiggi explained that all of the Municipal Electric Association of Massachusetts (MEAM) managers have decided to send letters to the State. The letter had been sent previously to the Board so they could review it. Mr. Bottiggi said it is addressed to Representative Mark Cusack as he is the Chair of the Telecommunications and Energy Committee. Governor Healey and her administrative staff are trying to make municipals more like investor-owned utilities.

Mr. Bottiggi explained there are four topics in the letter and went over each one. The first one is Large Building Reporting – they want BELD to report on how much electricity our customers in large buildings use. He continued our position is that it is confidential between our customers and BELD; if they want the customer to report it that is fine, but we do not give our customer information out.

The next topic is the Clean Heat Standard which requires our customers to install heat pumps to get off gas and oil. If they do not, they want BELD to pay compliance payments. We do not believe they can do this without legislation, but we are still pushing back.

Another portion of the letter is the Advanced Clean Trucks Regulation. The State wants all vehicles in the state to be electric and they want this to start in 2025 so we could not buy a diesel bucket truck or a digger truck –we are pushing back because the technology is not there yet. However, they just postponed it until 2027.

The biggest topic is the Building Decarbonization Clearinghouse which would create a whole new agency and put all their other agencies under it. They want to apply the decarbonization requirements equally to investor-owned utilities (IOUs) and municipalities. We have pushed back on that and they have agreed not to include us. However, they are still doing this to the IOUs.

This letter will be sent to Representative Cusack and cc Senators Driscoll and Keenan, Mayor Joyce and MA DEP Commissioner Heiple. By sending this letter we are also trying to show solidarity amongst the municipalities.

III. Items for Discussion

i. New Day-Ahead Market vs. Forward Reserve Market

Mr. Bottiggi explained the old market, the Forward Reserve Market where we had a summer period and then a rest-of-the-year period which started in October 2015 and ended March 1, 2025 – a period of a little less than 10 years and Watson made \$17.8 million. We don't get all that – we get our share of it along with the other unit entitlement holders.

He continued the new market, the Day-Ahead Market is a 7 day a week, 24-hour market which has four components to it. It is very complicated – ENE understands it and the best way to explain it is we can make money some days and we can lose money some days. There was discussion. Mr. Bottiggi reported that for the first month Watson made \$121,500. In the first week of April it made \$25,000. We may not make as much as previously but we are still making money in this market. Mr. Reynolds asked if we were always on the plus side of it. Mr. Bottiggi said yes, we made \$65,000 in one day – March 3, 2025. Then we lost, through no fault of our own, \$41,000 in one day – a couple of weeks later. What happens is there is a strike price and if the market clears below the strike price we get to keep that money. It has nothing to do with physically running the plant. It's all modeling and financial. If the market clears above the strike price, we lose money. There was further discussion on what this could do to some plants. Most of the plants are not owned by municipal utilities so they may just retire. Mr. Bottiggi said he did not know where this is going but he wanted to make the Board aware of this situation. He will hold off for a while and then update them again – perhaps the September meeting.

ii. Electric KWH Sales

Mr. Bottiggi updated the Board: electric sales are growing and they are up 6.7% year over year; Jan- Feb-March, 2024-2025. He continued, part of that is weather, part is load growth. We were only up 2% from 2023-2024 during the same period. Electrifying everything is kicking in. For instance, Tesla just upgraded all their charging stations at the South Shore Plaza. We were selling Tesla \$16,000 to \$20,000 a month worth of electricity before the upgrade and now are up to \$36,000 - \$39,000 and that is at \$0.18 a kilowatt hour (kwh) and they are probably charging \$0.50/kwh.

We increased the rate on March 1, 2025. What we did is we added a half a cent to the energy charge. There is a lot of load coming. The T is going to start testing in September. Fireking is potentially adding a new 150,000 square foot building.

iii. Watson P30 Cooler Update

Mr. Bottiggi reported that Unit 2 was delivered in early March and it was swapped out right away and the problem is gone. Now we have two new coolers – one in each unit. We are going to take one of the old ones and have it refurbished. This is a single point of failure – so even if we have to buy a new one, we want a spare. Mr. Bottiggi explained we also need to get a new starting motor as well. We have a spare gas turbine. There was discussion.

iv. Watson- Inventory Energy Program (IEP) Days

Mr. Bottiggi reminded everyone that this is the program where we need to have enough oil to run for full load for seven days in storage, which we did. This program was for December, January and February and we made \$625,000.

v. Legislative Committee – MEAM Lobbyist

Mr. Bottiggi reported that Bob Rodophele has been the MEAM lobbyist for thirty years and he is retiring. MEAM went out to bid and then held interviews with three firms. They have hired TSK Associates. Robert E. Travaglini, who was head of the Senate at one time, Christian Scorzoni, is also on ENE's board, and Thomas R. Kiley, the former MA Attorney General.

vi. ENE Financials

Mr. Bottiggi reported that ENE had another really good year. They made about \$900,000 and their equity is up to \$7.9 million of which 33% is BELD's.

vii. PILOT

Mr. Bottiggi said that he had spoken with Chairman Reynolds about changing the PILOT. He explained we could go with what we have voluntarily given the Town since 2009 which is \$1 million per year plus the \$500,000 for Watson until 2029 and then do whatever is decided at that time. Mr. Bottiggi met with the mayor and showed her a spreadsheet which he had given to the Commissioners.

Mr. Bottiggi explained the change: if we take what we sold for kilowatts in 2024 and we give the Town a third of a cent in June 2025 – so a 6-month lag – we would be giving them \$1,064,157.00 this year. He continued, on his spreadsheet he assumed a growth rate and then bumped it up in 2026 because the MBTA should be running by then. This will give the Town significantly more money but it won't hurt our electric rate because we will be making more money. Mr. Agnitti asked if this had been run by counsel. Mr. Bottiggi said yes, and this would still be a voluntary payment. If we do not make this money we cannot give it to them. The new financial director would like the 1st third of a cent to go up by a percentage every year. There was discussion. Mr. Reynolds explained we want to have a working relationship with the Town on pursuing commercial business and bringing business into the town. He continued, this should be an incentive for the Town to bring business in so that we can sell more kilowatt hours and that is how the increase would go higher. There was further discussion. Mr. Bottiggi said for Watson we pay 40% of the \$500,000 because we share with the unit entitlement holders. Mr. Agnitti asked how are we in comparison with other municipalities as far as voluntary payments. Mr. Bottiggi said if you include the IT services and the various Town events on a cents-per-kilowatt basis we are right at the top.

Voted: on motion of Mr. Agnitti, seconded by Mr. Morrissey, to present the memorandum of understanding to Mayor Joyce.

IV. Personnel Update

Mr. Bottiggi reported that we have hired a new customer service representative, Ms. Stano. There is growth potential in that department. There was discussion.

Mr. Agnitti left at 6:14 p.m.

V. Old Business (As Determined/Needed)

None.

VI. New Business (As Determined/Needed)

Mr. Bottiggi told the Board that there is an employee breakfast on Friday May 2 to celebrate that BELD is getting many awards: gold-level customer service, diamond safety, exceptional reliability, Mutual Aid commendation. He plans on giving a talk about the power plant having a high 95% reliability score. He continued: everybody works hard here, and he just wanted to recognize that.

VII. Public Participation (As Determined/Needed)

None.

VIII. Tabled Items

None.

IX. Next Regular Meeting – Upcoming Meetings

i. **Tuesday, May 13, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.**

X. Executive Session (As Determined/Needed)

Not Needed.

XI. Adjournment

Voted: on motion of Mr. Morrissey to adjourn the meeting at 6:20 p.m. Mr. Reynolds stepped down and seconded. So voted.

Daniel E. Morrissey
Secretary