

Reading Municipal Light Board of Commissioners
Regular Session
230 Ash Street
Reading, MA 01867
August 29, 2012

Start Time of Regular Session: 7:15 p.m.

End Time of Regular Session: 7:30 p.m.

Commissioners:

Philip B. Pacino, Chairman

Gina Snyder, Vice Chair- Absent

Robert Soli, Commissioner

Marsie West, Commissioner

John Stempeck, Commissioner

Staff:

Beth Ellen Antonio, Human Resources Manager

Citizens' Advisory Board (CAB):

George Hooper, Vice Chairman

Employees:

Tom Davis, Paul Murphy, Peter Price, Tom Schiblio, Laurie Ann Sylvia

Opening Remarks/Approval of Meeting Agenda

Chairman Pacino called the meeting to order and stated that the meeting of the Reading Municipal Light Department (RMLD) Board of Commissioners was being videotaped. The purpose of the meeting was to re-constitute the General Manager Search Committee, adjourn the Regular Session then the committee will meet. According to the Attorney General's Office, a screening committee cannot consist of a majority of the Board cannot; therefore a majority cannot participate in the Search Committee. Only two Commission members can be on the General Manager Search Committee. While Chairman Pacino and the Board disagreed with this procedure, the Board elected not to oppose it at this time due to the time it would take to appeal this issue.

Chairman Pacino said that he will appoint himself and Commissioner West to the General Manager Search Committee, accompanied by Citizens' Advisory Board member appointee George Hooper.

Ms. West made a motion seconded by Mr. Stempeck that the RMLD Board reconsiders the structure of the selection for the General Manager Search Committee.

Motion carried: 3:0:0. Mr. Soli was not present for the vote.

Mr. Stempeck made a motion to seconded by Ms. West to appoint Chairman Pacino and Ms. West as members of the General Manager Search Committee.

Motion carried: 3:0:0. Mr. Soli was not present for the vote.

During discussion, Chairman Pacino asked the CAB to provide input to the search process and for any of the union representatives to also provide written input to help direct the search process.

Chairman Pacino commented that in the previous search, eight candidates were interviewed, resulting in four that answered questions in open session. Ms. West suggested that the Search Committee, with the help of Ms. Antonio identify a technical consultant that could help ascertain the technical skills of any potential candidate.

Ms. West pointed out that as far as the job description and the search process she does not believe that needs to take place in the Search Committee. Ms. West stated that there are things she would like to discuss in which other commission members. Ms. West stated that it is important that they hire a consultant to assist with this position that will provide some independent counsel in terms of having all the technical requirements

Mr. Stempeck suggested that the General Manager job description should be consistent for internal as well as external hires, and that the items that are marked 'essential' on the internal posting also be explained and included on any external posting. This would include items such as familiarity with collective bargaining processes and negotiations, ability to administer salary and personnel programs, operating and capital budgets, communication with the public, and development of appropriate strategies.

Mr. Soli entered the meeting at this point and had no issue with not being on the General Manager Search Committee.

Ms. West suggested a review of external postings for other utilities across the country to use as possible examples for RMLD. It was also suggested that as many phone interviews be done as possible to reduce the cost of candidate travel expenses. Ms. Antonio stated that most of the previous candidates were MA-based so there was not a lot of cost associated with their interviews.

Mr. Stempeck as suggested a more robust questionnaire be developed for interviewing the candidates, including questions from employees and the use of behavioral processes, such as asking the candidates to read and assess a series of short case studies to determine how they might respond to various situations.

Ms. West also requested that the search process be delayed a short time in order to get all of these suggestions coordinated. Ms. West requested that a calendar be established for the Board that includes both the end-of-month open meeting as well as a mid-month, informal, interim meeting, with firm times and dates, in the Executive Conference Room. The intent of this extra meeting is to try to reduce the number of committees.

Chairman Pacino noted that the Board will continue to pursue the Payables Warrant Signature issue as well as review internal document control procedures with an aim to streamlining the process. It was noted that Mr. Soli did not design the Energy Services Power Supply Memo.

The Board's intent is to also revisit the Renewable Energy Policy. Mr. Soli's request for discussion of a recent issue was tabled and moved to the Board's next meeting, since the Chair stated that the Board must post notices for Executive Sessions to be in concert with the Open Meeting Law.

Chairman Pacino noted that the next regular meeting was September 26 where budgets will be reviewed and discussed.

Adjournment

At 7:30 p.m. Mr. Stempeck made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ms. West.

Motion carried 4:0:0.

A true copy of the RMLD Board of Commissioners minutes
as approved by a majority of the Commission.

John Stempeck, Secretary
RMLD Board of Commissioners