



Town of Reading Meeting Minutes

Board - Committee - Commission - Council:

RMLD Citizens Advisory Board

Date: 2017-03-01

Time: 6:30 PM

Building: Reading Municipal Light Building

Location: Winfred Spurr Audio Visual Room

Address: 230 Ash Street

Session: Open Session

Purpose: General Business

Version: Final

Attendees: **Members - Present:**

Mr. George Hooper, Chair (Wilmington); Mr. Dennis Kelley, Secretary (Wilmington); Mr. Neil Cohen (Reading); Mr. Jason Small (North Reading)

Members - Not Present:

Others Present:

Mr. David Hennessy, Board of Commissioners
Ms. Jane Parenteau, Ms. Kathleen Rybak

Minutes Respectfully Submitted By: Mr. Dennis Kelley, Secretary

Topics of Discussion:

1. Call Meeting to Order – G. Hooper, Chair
Chair Hooper called the meeting of the Citizens' Advisory Board to order at 6:30 PM and noted that the meeting was being audio recorded.
2. Introductions – G. Hooper, Chair
Chair Hooper welcomed new CAB members Mr. Neil Cohen representing Reading and Mr. Jason Small representing North Reading.
3. Approval of Minutes – G. Hooper, Chair
Materials: Draft Minutes from the December 14, 2016, meeting.

Mr. Kelley made a motion that the Citizens' Advisory Board approve the Minutes of the December 14, 2016, meeting as written, seconded by Chair Hooper. Hearing no further discussion, **Motion carried 4:0:0** (4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 absent).

4. General Manager's Report – J Parenteau, Director of Integrated Resources
Ms. Parenteau presented in Ms. O'Brien's absence. Staff have been conducting the bi-annual Selectmen updates with each of the four towns. Lynnfield and Wilmington meetings have taken place, and the Reading and North Reading meetings are still pending. The presentation includes highlights of FY16 and some of the projects that the RMLD is currently working on, as well as, a preliminary projection for budgeting and planning. The presentations to date are being well received.
5. Energy Services Update – J. Parenteau, Director of Integrated Resources
Grant Applications Update: Ms. Parenteau reported that Integrated Resources (IRD) is working on a number of grant initiatives. The Department has been successful in partnering with WattJoule on a \$150k grant through the DOER (as part of their energy storage initiative) for a 25-kilowatt flow battery project. This will be a two to three-

year study to see how this technology works. The unit will be located in the Station 1 building (at the Ash Street facilities). The DOER is due to release \$10m in grants, and RMLD will be submitting requests for a few larger projects. Additionally, through the DOER, RMLD has applied for grants for electrical vehicle charging stations at 8-10 different locations. These grants are the result of Volkswagen's \$2.9m settlement.

As part of the Capital Improvements Budget, RMLD will be installing a charging station in the parking lot at the front of 230 Ash Street. This will be a potential revenue source to offset declining sales. Ms. Parenteau spoke about some of the current charging stations in place at commercial sites in Wilmington and North Reading.

Ms. Parenteau noted that IRD continues to explore additional grant opportunities for solar/battery storage initiatives.

Community Solar: Ms. Parenteau provided an overview of the Community Solar Program and the solar installation at 326 Ballardvale Street in Wilmington. The project has been fully installed, and the developer and bank are finalizing some tax forms through the FDIC. An April 1 go-live date is anticipated; we were not able to make the March 1 deadline. There are currently 80-90 customers on a waiting list for the next project and staff is exploring options for a second site. Mr. Kelley asked if CAB members could tour one of the solar facilities. Ms. Parenteau agreed to follow-up on that request.

Residential Water Heater Program: RMLD currently has about 263 residential customers with load-control modules installed in their homes which control their water heaters. The project has been in place for approximately six years and the load-control modules are approaching the end of their useful life. We are having difficulty with the software and communications with the units. It is very difficult to have RMLD equipment inside customers' homes; if we have a telecommunication issue, we have no way of communicating with the devices and correcting the issue. Therefore, we are discontinuing the program, and the devices will be removed from the homes. IRD is evaluating new technology for incentive programs to reduce residential use during peak periods.

6. LED Streetlight Upgrade Project/State Grant Opportunities - G. Hooper, Chair
Chair Hooper requested an update on the status of the LED streetlight project and the potential for additional funding through a proposed \$12m State grant available to municipalities.

Ms. Parenteau noted that RMLD is in the process of looking into this grant opportunity. However, in 2014, RMLD applied for and received a \$250k grant for municipal projects through the DOER. A portion of this grant (\$125k) was used for the LED streetlight conversion program. Therefore, we are not sure if RMLD would be eligible for this latest grant opportunity. We did reach out through the MAPC (an administrator for part of the grant), but this portion is only available for municipalities that are served by investor-owned utilities.

Ms. Parenteau updated the group on the current LED conversion program, which is scheduled to be completed by June of 2018. The lights have been very well received by customers.

7. FY18 Budget Review Meetings - G. Hooper, Chair
The FY18 budget review meetings were scheduled for April 5th and April 12th. One of the meetings will be held in Wilmington.

Chair Hooper asked (relative to resolution of double poles), whether RMLD transfers their own fiber or contracts out for the transfers. Wilmington does not want to hold up pole replacements, so would like to explore the option of RMLD transferring town fiber. Ms. Parenteau agreed to follow-up with Ms. O'Brien.

8. Adjournment – G. Hooper, Chair
Mr. Kelley made a motion to adjourn the Citizens' Advisory Board meeting, seconded by Mr. Cohen. Hearing no further discussion, **Motion carried 4:0:0** (4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 absent).

The Citizens' Advisory Board Meeting adjourned at 7:07 PM.

As approved April 12, 2017