

**MASSENA ELECTRIC UTILITY BOARD**  
MINUTES of Monday, May 24, 2022  
Town of Massena Electric Department – 71 East Hatfield Street

Present:

James Shaw  
Rene Hart-via Zoom  
Richard Maginn  
John Bogosian  
Charles Raiti  
Eric Gustafson, Attorney

Andrew McMahon, Superintendent  
Jeffrey Dobbins, Treasurer  
Matt Gray, Deputy Superintendent  
Margo Rochefort, Deputy Treasurer  
Patrick Facteau, Town Liaison

Chairman Shaw opened the meeting at 1:04 p.m.

1) APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

RESOLUTION:

The Massena Electric Utility Board hereby approves the minutes of the regular meeting of April 25, 2022 as presented.

*Moved by Richard Maginn - Seconded by Charles Raiti - All in Favor*

2) OPERATIONS UPDATE: by Matt Gray, Deputy Superintendent

A. Safety: MED experienced no lost time accidents in the month of April. The number of consecutive days without a lost time injury now stands at 642 days. There were also no reportable injuries in April. As of April 30<sup>th</sup>, MED has been 324 days without a reportable injury.

Lou Gabrielle with NEPPA was on-site to present an Advanced Transformer and Trouble Investigation Training for all members of the Line Crew.

B. Customer Impact Chart: MED experienced 13,056 Customer Impact Minutes throughout the month of April. The largest Customer Impact was due to a failed insulator and pole fire that affected the western portion of Circuit 2303. Given that our monthly CIM continues to trend downward, our 12-month average has also decreased slightly and now stands at 26,422.

C. Reliability: MED Crews responded to seventeen calls in the month of April. Of the calls received, six calls affected no Customers, five calls had affected only one Customer and six calls affected more than one Customer. Seven of the eleven calls received contributed to the monthly CIM total. The largest Customer Impact occurred on April 19<sup>th</sup> and was the result of a failed insulator on County Route 40. This incident affected 450 Customers for 28 minutes. Also due to the magnitude and location of the fault, the 1350 Customers served by 2303 breaker and O1M recloser saw a momentary outage.

MED also responded to calls involving osprey activity. One call in particular on Willard road involved a planned outage that affected 11 Customers for 10 minutes. A temporary outage was required to clear the hazard and install an osprey deterrent system.

The remainder of the calls received throughout April were due to Customer requested disconnects, wind related issues and one broken pole due to motor vehicle contact.

D. Work Schedule: Crews have completed the North Raquette rebuild in the vicinity of the Massena Airport and have now moved on to the intersection of N Raquette and State Highway 37c. Both jobs entailed multiple road crossings that have been upgraded to improve vertical clearances over the roadway.

The service upgrade at Jefferson School is now complete, as we received the shipment of padmount transformers that were required for the job. The upgrade involved moving the transformers from the school basement to a padmount location, which should streamline MED maintenance efforts in the future.

Crews have also completed the pole replacement project on Belmont St as well as various other poles in the village that had been earmarked for replacement.

3) FINANCIAL REPORTS: by *Jeffrey Dobbins, Treasurer*

A. Write-Offs:

RESOLUTION:

The Massena Electric Utility Board hereby authorizes the write-off of bad debt totaling \$8,226.59 as audited by Mr. John Bogosian.

*Moved by John Bogosian - Seconded by Richard Maginn - All in Favor*

B. Power Comparison Graph: Power cost for April totaled \$440,600. Supplemental Power costs were \$117,635, 4,890 MWh of incremental energy purchased. Zone D Average Energy rate was \$24.00/MWh. Higher than April 2021, abnormally low at 6.70/MWh. CES Charge over \$78,700. Impact to customers-small PPAC credit projected for June. Peak Demand was 32,200 kW, similar to previous years. Peak set April 1st at 8:00pm. MWh purchased, over 18,390, slightly higher than 5-yr max, cooler temperatures throughout the month.

C. Cash Flow: The Operating Fund increased by \$532,857 during April. The Operating Fund at month end was over \$5.176 MM. April receipts were 1,796,600, \$378,690 more than budgeted. Increased sales related to cold weather and payments from LI-HEAP and other assistance programs. April expenditures totaled over \$1.26 MM, \$187,000 more than budgeted.

D. Approval of Bills:

RESOLUTION:

The Massena Electric Utility Board hereby approves the bills as audited by Mr. Rene Hart totaling \$786,068.32.

*Moved by John Bogosian – Seconded by Charles Raiti - All in Favor*

4) COMMITTEE REPORTS: by *Andrew McMahon, Superintendent*

A. Personnel:

1. Staff Update: No notable changes to the staff.

2. Summer Intern: Our intern will begin immediately after Memorial Day.

3. Security Update: Superintendent McMahon noted that he and Treasurer Dobbins met with 2 members of the Massena Police department and in the coming weeks they will be coming in to do a desktop drill with staff.

#### B. Finance & Economic Development:

1. Payment and Delinquency: Treasurer Dobbins reported that staff continues to work with customers to get caught up on the past due amounts owed and that the Department is also actively attempting to collect from these customers, including performing shut-offs for non-payment. Some customers have been unmotivated to apply for LI-HEAP prior to service being terminated and now that LI-HEAP was extended until the end of August, these customers are still able to get assistance and the Department is able to recover some the past due amounts owed.

Mr. Bogosian asked if other agreements were in place to allow customers to pay their past due amount. Treasurer Dobbins noted that if a customer is not eligible for assistance through any of the programs offered or will not apply, customers may enter into a Deferred Payment Agreement (DPA). Since the Department started performing shut-offs, Treasurer Dobbins reported that several customers have entered into DPAs. The majority of these agreements require the customer to go on budget since many of the customers entering into the DPAs heat with electric. The budget payment remains fixed for the customer and during the summer and shoulder months more of the payment is applied to the arrears on the account.

2. Energy Efficiency Programs: Treasurer Dobbins informed the board that a customer who previously received an audit submitted the paper to work to apply for a credit under the commercial program. The customer had installed new lighting in parts of their facility. Treasurer Dobbins noted that the customer was also a neighboring municipality and requested a check instead of a credit to the bill. The terms and conditions were amended a few years back to allow for this.

#### RESOLUTION:

The Massena Electric Utility Board hereby approves a commercial energy efficiency reimbursement of \$1,065.00.

*Moved by Rene Hart - Seconded by John Bogosian - All in Favor*

3. Communication: Mr. McMahon reported that he will be on WMSA on Thursday morning. He also noted that he appeared at a town board meeting to speak on high bill complaints. He explained to the Town Board the very high usage in January and the high cost of energy we were buying at that time. He apologized to the board for the number of calls they had had to endure and encouraged them to direct the calls to MED as our front office staff is used to handling these issues and explaining how we got here.

#### C. Engineering & Energy:

1. Cybersecurity: Mr. McMahon and Mr. Dobbins discussed a recent table top event hosted by NYPA with a few of the municipalities. Mr. Dobbins noted that a representative from Adirondack techs sat in on the meeting as well. Mr. McMahon thought it was constructive to have this contractor participate as they note have a better feel for the nuances of our operation.

2. Forward Energy Procurement: Mr. McMahon and attorney Gustafson both indicated that the agreement with NextEra was progressing slower than desired. Mr. McMahon also noted he continues to press NYPA for assistance with the forward energy procurement.

3. Smart Water Heaters: Mr. McMahon explained that all 10 units have been installed but some of the units are having communications problems.

4 Arbor Issues: Mr. McMahon advised the board that Alcoa came through with a \$10k grant. He also reported that he had been to all of the elementary schools to celebrate Arbor Day. He also noted that we are having trouble getting seedlings for the student and mulch (historically donated by Pat Curran) is already hard to find. Due to the difficulty in finding mulch, we will delay the normal sprucing up of the schools until late summer.

5. Potential Projects. Mr. McMahon is working on 3 projects for the NYSERDA RFP 4942. The projects are a system evaluation that takes into account more severe weather and a more electrified customer base. Then there are separate projects to evaluate the installation of smart water heaters similar to those installed in the NYPA program as well as a WiFi switched alternative. The third program is to evaluate installation of various heat pump designs. Mr. McMahon explained the NYSERDA process as he understands it. He suggested that as part of our initial proposal we offer to pay 20% of the cost on any grant we receive.

#### RESOLUTION:

The Massena Electric Utility Board hereby authorizes Mr. McMahon to offer an 80/20 split on any proposal accepted by NYSERDA.

*Moved by John Bogosian - Seconded by Charles Raiti - All in Favor*

Mr. McMahon also updated the board on supply chain issues. While some equipment and materials have not been impacted staff is keeping an eye on certain key equipment, including Transformers. Both the cost and lead time on some models is 4x what it was pre-pandemic.

Finally, Mr. McMahon and the engineering committee recommended that Mr. McMahon sign the TCC documents with NYISO but not ask for any contacts. In doing this MED will not have any contacts next year (11/1/22 through 10/31/23), however it leaves the door open to purchasing some in future years. Mr. McMahon pointed out that congestion patterns in the North Country may change in future years once NYPA's Smart Path high voltage transmission system work is completed.

#### RESOLUTION:

The Massena Electric Utility Board hereby authorizes Mr. McMahon to sign the TCC documents with NYISO, without asking for any contacts.

*Moved by Richard Maginn - Seconded by James Shaw - All in Favor*

## RESOLUTION:

The Massena Electric Utility Board directs staff to continue the suspension of system expansion for new high-density load customers greater than 300 kW. The suspension will be for an additional 6-months and will be for any customer that has not signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) as of 4/20/21. The MEUB further directs any system upgrade for non-traditional commercial loads must be approved by the Superintendent.

*Moved by John Bogosian - Seconded by Charles Raiti - All in Favor*

5) LEGAL ISSUES: *by Eric Gustafson, Attorney:* No update

6) UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

- Explanation of CLCPA and market impacts

Mr. McMahon had sent some introductory documents to the board to begin to explain the de-carbonization efforts of the state. He will send this information on to the Town Liaisons as well. Mr. Shaw noted this is a very confusing issue, the state's goals are overly aggressive and it will alter the way we do business.

7) NEW BUSINESS:

- NNY PPAB

Mr. McMahon explained that the 20MW of power received by the RVRDA has historically been monetized for the benefit of Northern NY when not allocated for economic development projects. NYPA arranged the law to cut the amount we are able to monetize in half after 5 years. At that point NYPA receives the financial benefit for the unallocated power.

8) ARTICLES OF INTEREST:

9) SCHEDULE OF EVENTS: Next regular meeting, Monday June 20, 2022 at 1:30 pm.

10) PUBLIC COMMENT:

11) EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion to move into executive session to discuss contract negotiations at 2:01 p.m.,  
Moved by Charles Raiti – Seconded by John Bogosian- All in Favor

Motion to move out of executive session at 2:25 p.m.  
Moved by John Bogosian– Seconded by Charles Raiti -All in Favor

Motion to adjourn at 2:25 p.m.  
Moved by Charles Raiti – Seconded by Richard Maginn- All in Favor