

**MASSENA ELECTRIC UTILITY BOARD**  
**MINUTES of Thursday, August 17, 2023**  
Town of Massena Electric Department – 71 East Hatfield Street

Present:

James Shaw  
Charles Raiti  
Richard Maginn  
John Bogosian  
Eric Gustafson, Attorney

Andrew McMahon, Superintendent  
Jeffrey Dobbins, Treasurer  
Matt Gray, Deputy Superintendent  
Margo Rochefort, Deputy Treasurer  
Patrick Facticeau, Town Liaison  
Debra Willer, Town Liaison

Chairman Shaw opened the meeting at 1:05 p.m.

1) APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

RESOLUTION:

The Massena Electric Utility Board hereby approves the minutes of the regular meeting of July 24, 2023 as presented.

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

2) OPERATIONS UPDATE: by Matt Gray, Deputy Superintendent

A. Safety: MED has not had a lost time injury since June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022. The number of consecutive days without a lost time accident now stands at 418 days.

There were no reportable injuries in July. This brings the number of days without a reportable injury to 781 days.

B. Customer Impact Chart: MED experienced 6,980 Customer Impact Minutes throughout the month of July. The largest Customer impact in July was due to a lightning strike in Louisville that resulted in 3,430 Customer impact minutes. Even though our monthly CIM figure is double that of last months, our 12-month average has decreased slightly and is now at 33,411.

C. Reliability: MED Crews responded to thirteen calls in the month of July. Eight of the calls received contributed to our monthly CIM total. Given the amount of unsettled weather throughout the month of July the total CIM is an acceptable total. The largest CIM contributor was due to a lightning strike on CR 36 in Louisville that caused a main-line fuse to blow. This outage affected ninety-eight Customers for thirty-five minutes. The second largest CIM contributor was due to a bird contact on State Highway 131 that affected forty-five Customers for thirty-one minutes. The remaining CIM contributing calls were routine in nature and involved minimal Customer impact.

D. Work Schedule: Crews are continuing with make-ready adjustments in relation to the fiber optic installation in the village. This project will encompass the whole village and parts of the Towns of Massena, Louisville and Norfolk. To date MED has completed make-ready work for ten of the fifteen pole applications that SLIC submitted.

Crews have completed a service upgrade at the J.W. Leary Jr High. This job involved reconfiguring the primary conductor route and setting a new pad mount transformer.

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

A. Write-Offs:

RESOLUTION:

The Massena Electric Utility Board hereby authorizes the write-off of bad debt totaling \$11,502.19 as audited by Mr. John Bogosian.

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

B. Power Comparison Graph: Power Costs over \$575,000, higher than the previous 5 years. 2012 last time over \$570,000. Transmission/ISO Exp was the driving cost for July - \$194,000. Unforced Capacity was \$59,000. Other ISO related charges were \$62,900. Charges for Transmission (NYPA and Long Sault) totaled over \$71,000. Supplemental Power costs were \$166,500. 4,795 MWh of incremental energy purchased during July. Zone D Average Energy rate was \$34.70/MWh. Impact to Customers – PPAC for Aug of 1.1¢ / kWh. MWh purchased, over 17,000, slightly higher than previous years and first time over 17,000 during the summer. Typically purchase between 14,000 – 15,000 MWh in July. Peak Demand for July was 32,850 kW, set July 6<sup>th</sup> at 4:00, warm/humid day. Higher than July 2021-2022. July 2020 peak was over 32,600.

C. Cash Flow: The Operating Fund increased by \$82,840. The Operating Fund at month end was \$7.2 MM. July receipts were \$896,600. Customer payments remain steady and were slightly less than projected for the month. Interest revenue remains higher and the Department was reimbursed \$29,000 for contract work. July expenditures totaled \$813,755, this is \$106,845 less than budgeted

RESOLUTION:

The Massena Electric Utility Board hereby approves the bills as audited by Mr. John Bogosian totaling \$910,192.05.

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

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

A. Personnel

1. Staff Update: Mr. McMahon discussed that staff was in good health.

He also brought up a training opportunity with Schweitzer on some of our relaying systems. He intends to send two technicians for the training. The training for the two of them is in Philadelphia. The travel costs should be less than \$3500.

RESOLUTION:

The Massena Electric Utility Board hereby approves Mr. McMahon's request to send two technicians to training in Philadelphia. Travel cost not to exceed \$3500.00

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

2. Security Update: Mr. McMahon noted that there were no significant updates on this matter. Mr. Bogosian asked if the locks on the front door had been installed. Mr. Dobbins responded that the front doors now have remote locks.

3. Summer Help: Mr. McMahon reported that our summer help has returned to school but may come back at Christmas. He made a presentation to the Engineering Committee. Both Mr. Shaw and Maginn commented that they thought he did well and had a better understanding of the events that have elevated our customer impact numbers.

## B. Finance & Economic Development

1. Energy Efficiency Programs: Treasurer Dobbins reported that the Finance Committee met with Jeff Loomis of Energy Answers to discuss the existing programs offered to customers and ideas for new programs. Treasurer Dobbins noted there were no proposed changes to existing programs at this time. He then discussed two PILOT programs recommended by the Committee. Each of these programs are to increase participation by residential customers and continue to reduce energy usage in the community. Treasurer Dobbins also noted that each of these programs would meet the requirements set forth in the long-term agreement with NYPA as it relates to investment in energy efficiency and/or smart grid programs. In 2023 the Department is expected to spend over \$200,000 on these types of initiatives.

The first program is a Walk-Through Audit option for residential customers that are looking for simple ways to reduce energy usage. This program would be at no cost to customers and include a quick visual inspection by Energy Answers. There would be no blower door test associated with this audit and no incentives for customers that participate in this program. Once completed Energy Answers would supply a brief report of improvements customers could make to lower energy usage.

Treasurer Dobbins noted that Energy Answers does something similar to this for NYSERDA. Energy Answers is a Building Performance Institute (BPI) auditor and also contracts with NYSERDA.

Mr. Raiti asked what the requirements were to participate. Superintendent McMahon indicated that all residential customers would be eligible to participate in this PILOT program. He also noted that he had discussed this program idea with the Department's legal counsel. The final terms and conditions still needed to be completed and reviewed by the Department's counsel. The PILOT program would be on a first come basis and the Committee was recommending an initial budget of \$5,000.

### RESOLUTION:

The Massena Electric Utility Board hereby authorizes \$5,000 towards a Residential Walk-Through Audit program, pending final approval of the terms and conditions by the Department's legal counsel.

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

The second program recommended by the Committee is a Home Attic Insulation program. This program would focus on high electric users on two circuits that are heavily loaded during the winter heating months. The goal of the program is to lower overall usage on these circuits and postpone/delay larger capital investment to address the higher loads. The recommendation from the committee is to set aside \$50,000 towards this PILOT program. The initial PILOT would be on circuits 61 and 2303. To be eligible, customers on this circuit would need to heat with electric and not received assistance as part of another efficiency program offered by the Department.

Superintendent McMahon also spoke to the Department's counsel regarding this program. The program would focus on attic insulation and include an audit to identify if attic insulation levels met the recommended level for the home. Attic insulation would then be added to those homes that have insufficient levels of attic insulation, and do not have health or safety issues that need to be addressed, at no cost to the homeowner.

Treasurer Dobbins noted that previously the Department contracted with Energy Answers for a similar low-income program. Under that program the customer agreed to the audit and a report was submitted by Energy Answers for the Finance Committee to review and approve. Once approved by the committee the work was performed at no cost to the homeowner. A similar process would be used for this PILOT program. There would be no income requirement and the homes targeted would be those that heat with electric and are on circuit 61 or 2303.

#### RESOLUTION:

The Massena Electric Utility Board hereby authorizes \$50,000 towards an Attic Insulation program on circuits 61 and 2303, pending final approval of the terms and conditions by the Department's legal counsel.

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

2. Insurance Review: Treasurer Dobbins reported that he and Superintendent McMahon met virtually with the Executive Director of PURMA (Public Utility Risk Management Association). The Department is covered by several policies issued by PURMA and its related companies. During the review all the coverages recommended by PURMA, which included some coverages purchased locally or through the Town, were discussed. The review did not identify any gaps in coverage. Treasurer Dobbins distributed a spreadsheet received from PURMA showing the coverage types, the provider and the levels of coverage for the lines recommended.

Superintendent McMahon also asked the PURMA Executive Director if the Cyber Security provider offered a review of how the coverage works. The policy includes coverage for multiple losses and services (business interruption losses, forensic services, public relations, customer response...) and the session would be to give an overview of what to expect and how the utility should respond. The Executive Director was unsure if they offered this and indicated that she will reach to the provider to find out if this is something they could do.

During the discussion on the coverages Mr. Maginn asked if there was a review of insurances held by contractors. Treasurer Dobbins indicated that this review did not include that, it was specific to the coverages held by the Department. After completing the report on the review, Treasurer Dobbins reported that Certificates of Insurance (COI) from contractors are presently sent into the Department at renewal and tracked manually. He then discussed a project that he and Deputy Treasurer Rochefort will be working on this fall that will help to automate the process to obtain COIs from contractors.

In 2022 PURMA contracted with TrustLayer, a third-party on-line software provider, to track COIs for its members. The Department will add all contractors through a portal and include copies of the existing coverage, as well as contact information for the contractor. Once established in the System, PURMA will review the coverage to make sure proper limits are listed for the type of work being performed by the contractor. TrustLayer will also track the renewal dates for the coverage and initiate reminders to the contractor that new COIs are due. The contractor will be issued a link to update the new COI to TrustLayer.

After contracting with TrustLayer several larger members did a pilot to test the program. They found it to be very helpful. In addition to having one location for all COIs, the system provides reports/notifications to the members letting them know who has not provided the new COI. PURMA has also received a favorable response from the underwriters of the various lines of coverage offered. The addition of TrustLayer shows that the members are doing everything they can to subrogate the risk to the appropriate party. PURMA has requested everyone be set up on TrustLayer before the end of the year.

Treasurer Dobbins also discussed the copier/printer/scanner in the front office, that is over 8 years old. There has been some maintenance required on this unit, and due to its age getting parts has become more difficult. The 2023 capital budget included some money for IT related purchases, including this unit. The unit selected is a HP that is on state contract.

Board Member Bogosian asked if there was any use for the unit in another department or resale value. Treasurer Dobbins noted due to the age and size of the machine, there really was no other department that could utilize it. He also indicated that the Department would keep the hard drive since it may contain private information. Removing this takes away much of the resale value. The final price is under \$11,500 and will include disposal by the vendor.

#### RESOLUTION:

The Massena Electric Utility Board hereby authorizes the purchase of a new HP scanner/printer/copier from the NYS Contract at a price not to exceed \$11,500.

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

#### C. Engineering & Energy

1. Cybersecurity: - Mr. Dobbins reported that we are still installing equipment with Dragos.
2. EAB extra work: Mr. McMahon shared that work on this problem is still continuing. Mr. Gray reported that he has noticed significant EAB emergent damage on Wilson Hill. Mr. McMahon reaffirmed to the board that there is still an expectation that there will be federal funds made available to address this problem.
3. NYSERDA Submittals: - One proposal has been approved and we are prepared for a kickoff meeting. The other proposal is still pending NYSERDA approval.
4. Grant funding: Mr. McMahon directed the board's attention to page 11 of the board packet which describes the advancement of certain IRA funds. Mr. McMahon explained that these funds took approximately 10 months to go from the federal government to the state government. There is no timeline on when the state government will make it available to local entities. The superintendent also discussed potential collaboration opportunities. These include working with Liberty Utilities on some Geothermal opportunities. Some of these opportunities might require some contribution from MED. Separately, NYPA is looking to add value and help the municipals take advantage of certain federal programs like PACES.
5. Transformer purchase: MED made two separate emergency orders of transformers in the last year due to supply chain issues. One order has been received. The second order is expected near year end. Our inventory is at an acceptable level presently. Mr. Gray reminded the board that the operations staff is trying to be more open to repairing used transformers rather than selling them for scrap. He noted that repairing is running about 1/3 the cost of new and the turnaround time has been much better than he thought.

6. Potential vehicle purchase: Mr. McMahon reminded the board that they had approved purchasing two new pickups for the fleet at a do not exceed of \$105k. He noted that both vehicles have now been ordered and the total cost was approximately \$98k. We expect the vehicles to be delivered by year end.

7. Tree Power: Mr. McMahon updated the board on some grants from Alcoa. Specifically, that we have carried over close to \$10k. We will work with NYPA and Alcoa in the coming weeks to distribute these funds in the form of improvements to the local urban forest.

5) LEGAL ISSUES: *by Eric Gustafson, Attorney:* Mr. Gustafson had no remarks for open session.

6) UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Mr. McMahon reminded the board of an attachment from the June board meeting that showed flooding in the community if the Massena intake ever breached. He noted that he was drafting a letter for Supervisor Bellor and Mayor Paquin to send to NYPA asking NYPA to elaborate on the extent of flooding and potential response.

7) NEW BUSINESS:

8) ARTICLES OF INTEREST:

Mr. McMahon discussed the article on page 15 of the packet regarding Justin Driscoll's permanent appointment as President and CEO of NYPA and the nuance of being conferred the position rather than being confirmed.

9) SCHEDULE OF EVENTS: Next regular meeting scheduled for September 21, 2023

10) PUBLIC COMMENT:

11) EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Motion to move into executive session at 2:09 p.m.  
Moved by Richard Maginn– Seconded by Charles Raiti- All in Favor

Motion to move out of executive session at 2:29 p.m.  
Moved by John Bogosian – Seconded by Charles Raiti -All in Favor

Motion to adjourn at 2:29 p.m.  
Moved by John Bogosian – Seconded by Richard Maginn- All in Favor