

**\*\*\*DRAFT\*\*\***  
**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING**  
**BURLINGTON ELECTRIC COMMISSION**

**Wednesday, March 10, 2021, 5:30 pm**

The regular meeting of the Burlington Electric Commission was convened at 5:34 pm on Wednesday, March 10, 2021 via Microsoft Teams Video Meeting.

Channel 17 was present via Microsoft Teams Video to record this meeting.

Commissioners Chagnon, Herendeen, Stebbins and Whitaker participated via Microsoft Teams. Commissioner Moody joined the meeting at 5:55 pm

Staff members present via Microsoft Teams included Darren Springer, Paul Alexander, James Gibbons, Mike Kanarick, Munir Kasti, Laurie Lemieux (Board Clerk), Dave MacDonnell, Paul Pikna, , and Emily Stebbins-Wheelock.

**1. Agenda**

There were no changes to the Agenda.

**2. February 10, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Herendeen asked for clarification in the minutes, under section *General Manager's Update*. Commissioner Herendeen asked that the minutes be amended to clearly explain the carbon fee of \$100 per ton. The following clarification was added to the minutes:

*If they (new buildings) did not meet these requirements, they could pay a carbon dioxide compliance fee of \$100 per ton which would be based on 10 years after which time this fee would renew.*

Commissioner Herendeen made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 10, 2021 Commission Meeting as amended; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Whitaker.

The Board Clerk, Laurie Lemieux, conducted a roll call vote by calling on the following Commissioners:

Commissioner Chagnon. Abstained as he was not present at the February 10, 2021 meeting  
Commissioner Herendeen. Aye  
Commissioner Stebbins. Aye  
Commissioner Whitaker. Aye

Results: 3 Ayes with 0 Nays, the motion carries.

### **3. Public Forum**

There was no members of the public present.

### **4. Commissioners' Corner**

Commissioner Herendeen thanked Mr. Gibbons for sending his request for information regarding HULA and the ground source heat pump. The information was very clear and helpful.

Commissioner Herendeen noticed in the monthly report that the January solar capacity factors for the two solar installations (Pine Street and Airport) were very low and assumes that was due to snow cover and asked for verification. Mr. Gibbons stated that weather (clouds and snow) was the driving factor in the low-capacity data, and we shouldn't expect any improvement in the February data due to the amount of snow we experienced last month. Mr. Springer stated his personal residential solar capacity factor during the months of January and February were extremely low and stated that even on a sunny day if the panels are covered with snow, they will not produce much.

Commissioner Herendeen would be interested in knowing what a typical reduction in residential energy use is when one of the weatherization projects is complete. And also the cost effectiveness of 75% rebate for heat pumps. Mr. Gibbons will respond to Commissioner Herendeen before the next meeting.

### **5. GM Update**

Mr. Springer stated that as of March 1, 2021 BED is now offering new leaf blower incentives of \$40 for Burlington residents. The Department is looking at offering a modest rebate or discount on electric snow blowers later this year for the next Winter season.

Chris Burns compiled a helpful list that was included in the monthly report of BED's low- and moderate-income customer enhanced incentives and programs, and information on participation in those programs. The Department has checked the numbers again this month on the EV program between the low- and moderate-income incentives for new vehicles and the purchase of pre-owned vehicles and are seeing about 20% of total rebates going to one of those two categories. Likewise with heat pumps, we are seeing the incentive up to 75% which is inclusive of the low- and moderate-income rebate which helps BED get to the 75% threshold.

The Department's final tiering packet is heading to Board of Finance and City Council later in March which will complete our work under the current IBEW contract to create career ladder/tier positions across BED. We are ahead of schedule by more than a year in finishing this work, with many thanks to Munir Kasti and Lynn Reagan and Duke Dutra for their efforts, and all of the employees and supervisors who participated in the process.

Mr. Springer stated that he and Betsy Lesnikoski published a commentary in VTDigger regarding McNeil and sustainability and economics.

Next month we are expecting to have a much busier agenda which may include a FY22 draft budget, a potential power supply MOU, and expect to have the completed 2019 and 2020 Roadmap data updates from Synapse.

Mr. Springer thanked Commissioner Moody for joining the Executive Team in the selection of the second annual Jim Reardon Public Service Award. We will be setting a date this week and Jim Reardon's family will be joining us at the virtual award presentation. Once a date is set we will let the Commissioners know so if they wish to join the presentation as long as it does not trigger a public meeting requirement.

### Financials

Ms. Stebbins-Wheelock reviewed the January FY21 financial results.

Ms. Stebbins-Wheelock provided an update on the event of default on BED's revenue bonds that was cured as of February 8, 2021 by the Department's new Bond Trustee Zion Bank. Ms. Stebbins-Wheelock stated that this was the last piece of business that the former Finance Director Andrea McNeil took care of prior to her departure. Ms. McNeil worked through the transition to the new Bond Trustee to file the supplemental resolution that this Commission and the City Council passed last spring. This resolution is now on file with EMMA, the bondholder disclosing service and serves as a notice to bond holders that the event has been cured.

In reviewing the financials Ms. Stebbins-Wheelock stated that the system energy was down by just over 2.2% with residential usage higher and commercial usage lower. For February it's looking a little different overall with residential up higher along with an improvement in commercial. This means as a system we are only down just under 1/2%.

In January we had a net loss for the month of \$320K compared to our budgeted expected loss of \$253K which leaves a \$67K variance to the negative.

Sales to customers continue to be down which is one of the main sources of the variance under budgeted results. Power supply expenses were favorable by \$150K with the main driver being McNeil production coming in 36% under budget for the month of January which means we had less fuel expense. However, this was somewhat offset by higher ISO energy exchange purchases compared to budget, but the fuel savings were greater on operating expenses. We had some favorable timing of outside services and we continue to be careful and proactive in limiting any unnecessary expenses.

Gain loss on disposition of plan is in large favorable which is mostly due to timing. There was a \$35K amount that hit in December that was planned to hit later in the year but that will balance out on the budget by the end of June. Also, we've again seen throughout the year fewer customer contributions

to capital projects due to COVID-19. Overall for the year-to-date we have an actual net income of \$262K compared to budget of almost \$700K which leave \$428K variance.

As of January the Department is about halfway spent through the capital budget. Distribution in general includes IT Forward and having more timing issues. BED is kicking off the MDM implementation next week so this these figures will start to change between November and June 30 as we implement license purchases, the MDM, and professional service fees.

Cash on hand is just under \$8M in the cash and operating fund. Adjusted debt service coverage ratio is at .86 as of the end of January which is slightly down by .100 of a percent and we were at .87 last month. Our cash on hand bumped up a little, we were at 105 as of December close and we are at 109 as of January close. This is largely due to receiving almost \$500K from LEGR local government COVID Grant Relief which reimbursed the Department for some of our COVID related labor expenses.

## **6. Commissioners' Check-In**

There were no Commissioner check-ins.

Commissioner Herendeen made a motion to adjourn; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Chagnon.

The Board Clerk, Laurie Lemieux, conducted a roll call vote by calling on the following Commissioners:

Commissioner Chagnon. Aye  
Commissioner Herendeen. Aye  
Commissioner Moody. Aye  
Commissioner Stebbins. Aye  
Commissioner Whitaker. Aye

Results: 5 Ayes with 0 Nays, the motion carries.

The meeting of the Burlington Electric Commission adjourned at 6:13 p.m.

Attest:



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Laurie Lemieux, Board Clerk