

## **Minutes:**

Stowe Electric Commissioners' Meeting  
July 21, 2016 at 7:30 a.m. at Town of Stowe Electric Conference Room

### **Present:**

BOARD MEMBERS: Richard ("Dick") Marron, Chairman; Larry Lackey, Vice-Chairman; Denise Gutstein, Commissioner (via telephone)

STAFF: Ellen Burt, General Manager; Kevin Weishaar, Controller; Matthew Rutherford, Manager of Regulatory Compliance; Douglass Haselton, Director of Operations; David Kresock, Director of Operations in training; Lily Burgess, Clerk of the Board

Dick called the meeting to order at 7:36 a.m.

### **Approval of Order**

On motion made and seconded, the Orders were approved.

### **Approval of the June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016 Meeting Minutes**

On motion made and seconded, the minutes of June 23, 2016 were approved.

### **IT Report (CustomerConnect, EV Charging Stations, AMI, SEDC, Misc.)**

- EV Charging Stations: With 6 new EV charging stations installed in June, SED is working to ensure all online EV maps have proper information. Jamie opened a service ticket with ChargePoint requesting the map be updated.
- AMI: Doug has been working with Burlington Communications to install a repeater on Percy's tower.  
VPN to/from MeterSense was reconfigured with the move of MeterSense to the new facility; the old VPN was removed.  
SED is looking at potential of using a hard-wired Gatekeeper on Beech Hill to improve data connection to AMI head end and possibly sharing DSL circuit associated to the Solar Farm data acquisition system.
- SEDC:  
Hosting: Systems Administrator and Controller have 24/7 access to FirstLight facility. Off-Site server is secure and fire-safe. SED updated the data line coming to the office for better connectivity.  
Project Specs/Hardware: Server and networking hardware is currently being configured and delivery is expected next week. SEDC will be onsite for hardware initialization. A SEDC's implementation team will be onsite for the first two weeks of

August to start inputting the General Ledger portion and to begin building the dictionary for the billing portion.

Data Conversion: A second round of data was sent to SEDC for comparison following a billing cycle completion.

MDM: SEDC continues to try and understand how to incorporate our AMI data into their MDM.

## **Regulatory Update**

Update: Application for 500kW Solar Net Metering Project on Moscow Road: SED's engineer has finished the initial assessment of the 500kW solar project proposed for Moscow Road. The engineer determined that the project will require a full System Impact Study to be paid for by the developer. If built, the project would increase the current capacity of net metering project in the SED territory to 893.2 kW or 4.78% of SED's 15% cap.

New Net Metering Public Service Board Rule: The new PSB rule issued at the beginning of July will apply to all Net Metering CPG's issued as of January 1, 2017. The major changes are as follows: **1)** Net metering rate will be the lesser of a utility's blended rate or the statewide average blended rate. **2)** Will set different "Siting Adjustors" (between \$0.01/kWh and \$-0.03/kWh) for projects based on the size of the project (in kW) and where it is located **3)** Will set a REC adjustor (+/- \$0.03/kWh) depending on whether the owner of the system allocates the associated renewable energy credits to their utility. **4)** Will set an annual cap for new projects of 4% of the utility's peak load from the previous year. **5)** Will establish "non-bypassable charges", meaning that the customer charge, efficiency charge, etc, cannot be paid down using the customer's net metering credit. **6)** A typical solar Net Metering system currently receives a credit of \$0.20/kWh. That same system will receive a credit of \$0.19/kWh if the customer gives SED the RECs (which SED can count toward its Renewable Energy Standard requirements), or \$0.13/kWh if the customer chooses to keep the RECs.

### PSB Rule Implementing the Renewable Energy Standard (RES):

The PSB issued the rule at the end of June, establishing how utilities are to implement their RES plans, including transparent renewable portfolio information to customers, how to account for customer Net Metering projects that allocate their RECs to the utility, and Tier 3 program criteria (cost-effectiveness, equal opportunity to all ratepayers, partnership with other energy service providers, etc) that must be addressed in order for program to qualify, among others. Stowe is subject to Total Renewable Requirements (Tier 1) and Distributed Renewable Generation (Tier 2) requirements starting with next year. SED is not subject to Tier 3 requirements until 2019.

### New 143kW Solar Net Metering Application:

SED received the application for a new roof top solar project on July 18<sup>th</sup> and has 10 business days to file comments if SED foresees any issues with the project. This project would expand the total capacity of commissioned Net Metering projects in Stowe from 2.22% of the current 15% cap to 2.98%, leaving plenty of room for new Net Metering projects.

## **Solar Project Update**

The substantial completion phase of the Solar Project is scheduled for July 19<sup>th</sup>, with inverter/AC wiring, cabling and terminations all completed. The electrical wrap up is scheduled for the week ending July 22<sup>nd</sup>. The major outstanding item is the communications line extension, however, Namaste engineering is working closely with FairPoint engineering to resolve the issues. Because of the size of the project, FairPoint needs to evaluate and determine whether or not a high voltage protection system will need to be installed. FairPoint understands the urgency and is working to resolve the issue.

The only other issue involves the quality of landscaping. SED will be working closely with Encore, the landscape architect and Green Mt. Landscaping.

## **Financial Update**

Kevin presented an interim Profit & (Loss) statement with preliminary numbers. Revenues are \$246,000 under budget, but since Power Costs are also declining, the Revenues Less Power Costs are \$1,800 above budget. Direct System Costs (Other) is higher than budgeted since SED is ahead of the regular Tree Trimming schedule for the year due to the milder spring. The other portion of the higher Direct System Costs (Other) is the materials for the line extension for the upgrade to 3-Phase up to the Solar Project site. However, this materials expense will be capitalized soon. Purchased Power prices are expected to stay low. A potential rate reduction for 2018 was discussed.

## **Operations Report**

It was agreed by all that the crew did an excellent job installing the new EV charging stations in an efficient and very skilled fashion. The location of the EV charging station at the beginning of the Recreation Path was discussed.

## **VLITE Project Update**

SED staff and VEIC have completed the last of the EV site assessments for a fast-charger at The Alchemist Brewery. Currently there are only 2 fast-chargers that have the same capabilities as SED's in all of Vermont, both along Route 7. SED line crew completed the installation and activation of 6 of the 8 charging stations so far. As of last Friday, SED already had 8 charging sessions on those new EV charging stations.

## **Potential Real Estate Transaction (Expected Executive Session)**

The Board moved to go into Executive Session at 8:54 a.m. to discuss a potential Real Estate matter and invited Ellen Burt and Kevin Weishaar to stay. The Board made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 9:14 a.m. and the motion carried.

Larry Lackey made a motion to approve the sale of the Kirchner property for the purchase price of \$325,000, subject to the notice period until after August 6<sup>th</sup>, Denise Gutstein seconded the motion and the motion carried.

## **Other Business**

### **A) Utility Billing - Landlord/Tenants Rights**

After carefully considering the various options available, SED is implementing the following changes to reduce potential losses to landlords due to transient, delinquent tenants:

- 1) Shorten time between meter reads and mailing of utility bills from 14 days to 7 days. With AMI this could be shortened to 2 days, however, with the necessary variance controls and subsequent back-calls for Water & Sewer, a part-time meter reader position, and the need to prepare "manual" bills and spreadsheets for Net Metering and Snowmaking, 7 days are necessary to prepare the bills. SED will continue to monitor and consider shortening this time, especially once conversion to the new billing program is complete.
- 2) Send out disconnect notices approximately 7 days after due date vs. the current approximately 35 days after due date.
- 3) Once the conversion to the new billing system is completed after November 2016, SED will require deposits from credit-risk customers (new tenants and disconnected customers).

The Board scheduled the next Commissioners' meeting for Thursday, August 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 a.m.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:17 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Lily Burgess  
Clerk of the Board