

## **Minutes:**

Stowe Electric Commissioners' Meeting

April 30, 2019 at 8:00 a.m. at Town of Stowe Electric Conference Room

### **Present:**

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

STAFF: Ellen Burt, General Manager; Matthew Rutherford, Manager of Regulatory Compliance; David Kresock, Director of Operations; Lily Burgess, Clerk of the Board

Larry called the meeting to order at 8:12 a.m.

### **Approval of the March 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Meeting Minutes**

On motion made and seconded, the minutes of March 27, 2019 were approved.

### **Regulatory Update**

PUC Docket Exploring Changes to Rules that Govern the Attachments to Utility Poles: The first workshop on this issue will be held Friday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### Legislative Bills:

- H.529 - The Transportation Bill was approved by the Senate Committee on Transportation and referred to the Senate Committee on Finance. It attempts to address several questions that are also before the Public Utility Commission (PUC) in their EV adoption docket. The latest version of the bill would restrict those (unregulated) third parties that are selling electricity for EV charging purposes from participating in the net metering program, since the third party would in effect be making a profit off of both, at the expense of the ratepayers, however with no PUC oversight. The PUC is to report whether this is the best solution by December 15, 2019. The PUC is also to report on what would be necessary to collect a "per kWh" fee on EV charging, if that were to be implemented. The bill furthermore establishes that the EV incentive will be restricted to vehicles with a base MSRP of \$40,000 or less, and be available to households at or below 140% of the five year average median household income level, which currently is \$77,000.
- H. 513 - Broadband Bill. The bill was passed with considerable support by the House members.
- S. 95 - Municipal Bonding and Energy Programs was originally focused entirely on municipal utility bonding. It now has been amended to include language to grant school districts (i.e. merged school districts) an exception from the net-metering rule that currently does not allow any single customer to have more than 500 kW of net-metering capacity.

Electric Vehicles (EV) and Cold Climate Heat Pump (ccHP) incentives: Larry asked that at the next Commissioners' meeting Matt provide an update on the participation level in the EV and ccHP incentive programs, as well as usage at SED's various EV charging stations.

## Operations Report

Review of Pole Ownership (Consolidated Communications vs SED) was discussed in detail. The liability of replacing the many old poles not owned by SED would be considerable. There also are numerous unnecessary double-set of poles within the SED territory.

There has been a huge uptick in customers contacting SED for new service. Each new project is tracked on a weekly basis. David reported that the spectrum of staff time spent on a new service is big. Improving procedures and creating a "new service requirements package" available online was discussed.

The down-town undergrounding project details, weekly meetings with Town officials and the time schedules for the various phases were discussed in detail.

The concrete equipment pad for the 3V0 relay cabinet at Wilkins Substation has been poured and will be ready for SED to mount the cabinet. The ship date from the manufacturer has been delayed yet again until Friday, April 26<sup>th</sup>, if they receive the defective UPS back on time. SED line crews are installing the new CTs in the VFI cabinet this week. The constraint problem in general was mentioned.

SED has awarded the bid for paving the driveway (late June/early July) to S.T. Paving.

## Personnel Matter (Executive Session)

The Board moved to go into Executive Session at 8:50 a.m. to discuss a personnel matter. The Board made a motion to come out of Executive Session at 9:22 a.m. and the motion carried.

Dick Marron made a motion that the General Manager, Ellen Burt, be granted a 4% increase in pay, effective April 1, 2019, plus a bonus of \$17,000 be awarded in recognition of her work on the Highgate Asset deal as part of her gross earning eligible for retirement benefits, Denise Gutstein seconded the motion and the motion carried.

## Other Business

Dick Marron thanked Denise for her many years of service as a Commissioner of Stowe Electric.

Ellen received the draft audit from Kittell Branagan & Sargent. She is in the process of reviewing it and also writing the management letter. Gregory Sargent will attend next month's meeting to discuss the audit results with the Board.

The Board scheduled the next Commissioners' meeting for Tuesday, May 21<sup>st</sup> at 8:00 a.m.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:36 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Lily Burgess  
Clerk of the Board