

Minutes: Stowe Electric Board of Commissioners' Meeting

April 29, 2025, at 8:30 am at Town of Stowe Electric Department Conference Room with remote participation available via Zoom.

Present:

BOARD MEMBERS: Larry Lackey, Chair and Mark Gilkey, Commissioner (via Zoom)

STAFF: Jackie Pratt, General Manager, Sarah Juzek, Director of Finance; Michael Lazorchak, Manager of Regulatory Compliance; Brent Lilley, Director of Operations; Caroline Klosowski, Business and Communications Manager; and Amber Ives, Clerk of the Board

GUESTS: Catherine Crawley, Chair of Stowe Energy Committee

Call to Order: L. Lackey called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

Agenda Approval:

M. Gilkey moved to approve the warned agenda, L. Lackey seconded, all were in favor, and the warned agenda was approved.

Approval of March 25, 2025, Meeting Minutes:

On a motion made by M. Gilkey and seconded by L. Lackey, the minutes of March 25, 2025, were approved.

Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger Relocation Discussion:

Stowe Electric Department (SED) staff notified the Board of Commissioners that Sun & Ski requested the removal of the SED-owned charger located on their property and that SED now needs to decide what to do with the charger.

SED staff informed the Board of Commissioners that the charger is part of the Assure Plan and Cloud Plan which SED has paid for through September 2026.

SED staff and the Board of Commissioners discussed the assorted options for the charger:

- Decommissioning the charger
- Moving the charger to SED's headquarters on Moscow Rd

- Working with the Energy Committee and the Town of Stowe to relocate the charger to a Town-owned parcel
- Giving the charger away if a suitable location could not be found on School-owned or Town-owned land
- Costs and responsibilities of relocation

L. Lackey suggested that SED staff should also consider properties owned by the school district as viable options for the charger and reiterated that the charger should be in a place easily accessible by the public.

C. Crawley notified SED staff and the Board of Commissioners that the Vermont Clean Cities Coalition would be providing the Energy Committee with an EV road map plan for Stowe that would identify relevant places that would work for chargers, and that this plan would be discussed during their next meeting.

SED staff and the Board of Commissioners agreed to discuss the EV charger relocation at a future SED Board of Commissioners meeting once potential locations and costs have been finalized.

8:43 am: C. Crawley leaves the meeting.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Planning:

J. Pratt informed the Board of Commissioners that there is a substantial amount of hazard mitigation funding that could be available due to the outages caused by Winter Storm Elliot in December 2022.

J. Pratt explained that as part of the Winter Storm Elliot Mitigation, SED needs a survey of the complete Mountain Line to move forward with engineering design, environmental review, and permitting/legal review. J. Pratt notified the Board of Commissioners that SED cannot move forward with the scope of work, engineering design of the project, and the request for proposals without the survey, and therefore, SED would need to incur expenses, known as Phase I expenses, in order to complete the required survey.

J. Pratt notified the Board of Commissioners that once the survey is completed and FEMA approves the scope of work for the project, SED will issue a request for proposal (RFP) for Phase II, which reflects the environmental, permitting, legal costs, and engineering costs.

J. Pratt apprised the Board of Commissioners that SED estimates that Phase I will cost approximately \$74k and that Phase II will cost approximately \$140k.

J. Pratt informed the Board of Commissioners that SED can file for reimbursement for Phase I only after the mitigation funding is obligated, and that reimbursement is 75% of the 75% federal share of the project after each phase, while the remaining 25% of the federal share is reimbursed after the project is completed.

J. Pratt explained that regardless of the outcome of FEMA funding, the survey would be useful to SED for planning future Capital investments and hardening on the Mountain Line.

J. Pratt apprised the Board of Commissioners that Phase II consultation would not begin until funding is obligated, and that SED can seek reimbursement at the close of scope of work for Phase II.

L. Lackey moved to authorize the General Manager to enter into contracts estimated at a cost of \$214k for a survey of the Mountain Line and Pre-implementation Consultation fees. M. Gilkey seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion was approved.

Time of Use Tariff Update:

J. Pratt notified the Board of Commissioners that the new Time of Use (TOU) electric rate for Commercial customers that was approved at the February meeting would need to be modified due to constraints within SED's billing system.

J. Pratt explained that Commercial customers on the TOU rate would now need to be charged demand across all hours versus only across peak hours.

J. Pratt apprised the Board of Commissioners that in conjunction with consultation from PLM engineering, it was determined that charging demand across all hours of the day would better capture the costs of an Independent System Operator (ISO) New England and/or Vermont Electric Power Company (VELCO) system peak, which can occur outside of the coincident time period a customer's peak or maximum electric load/demand occurs.

L. Lackey moved to revise the proposed Commercial Demand Time of Use rate to implement the changes as recommended by SED staff, and that the new rate will reflect demand charges calculated across all hours of the day and not just during on-peak periods. M. Gilkey seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

General Manager Highlights:

J. Pratt and the Board of Commissioners discussed:

- The appointment of Reginald Beliveau to the VELCO Board
- Lineworker Appreciation Day
- Staff Quechee Hydro facility tour

- SED's electrical safety presentation at the Stowe Elementary School
- SED's Service Quality and Reliability Plan (SQRP) update
- Availability of resiliency grant funding through the Public Service Department and the projects proposed to DPS for the grant
- Update on bills currently in the legislature
- Approval of SED's Integrated Resource Plan (IRP)

Other Business:

J. Pratt notified the Board of Commissioners that the newly adopted employee handbook had been provided to the staff and that an issue in regards to the 'Smoke and Vape Free Workplace' policy had been identified as the current version of the handbook prohibits smoking or vaping on any SED property, both inside and outdoors.

J. Pratt apprised the Board of Commissioners that staff are proposing to modify the Smoke and Vape Free Workplace policy to state:

"The Stowe Electric Department is dedicated to maintaining a healthy, safe, and comfortable environment for all Employees and visitors. To support this commitment, smoking and/or vaping is not permitted anywhere in SED vehicles, buildings, or facilities. Smoking and/or vaping on SED property must be limited to designated outdoor areas and should never occur within 20 feet of a building entrance."

L. Lackey moved to adopt the revisions to the Smoke and Vape Free Workplace policy as recommended by J. Pratt in her April 29th memo to the Board of Commissioners. M. Gilkey seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion was approved.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amber Ives

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Clerk of the Board