

MINUTES OF GAS & ELECTRIC COMMISSION MEETING
REGULAR SESSION
OCTOBER 7, 2020

A meeting of the Holyoke Gas and Electric Department was held on October 7, 2020 at 5:00 P.M. in the Department's offices. In attendance were Commissioners Hoey, Griffin and Sutter; Manager Lavelle; Superintendents Beauregard and Ducheney; Acting Gas Superintendent Brian Roy; Brooke McMahon, Kirk Jonah, Kate Sullivan, Lisa Rogers and Attorney John Ferriter.

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Griffin called the meeting to order at 5:00 P.M.

Chairman Hoey noted that remote participation in the Commission meeting by Commissioners was authorized by an Executive Order issued by Governor Baker on March 12, 2020 and is required due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

MINUTES:

On a motion from Commissioner Griffin, seconded by Commissioner Sutter, it was voted 2-0 to approve the minutes from September 9, 2020. Commissioner Hoey abstained.

REPORTS & RECOMMENDATIONS OF MANAGER:

Financial Report:

Ms. McMahon reviewed the draft August financial statements and gave an update on outstanding receivables and cash flow status. There was a brief discussion on the matter.

DIVISION REPORTS:

GAS DIVISION

Mr. Roy reported that wholesale natural gas procurements continue consistent with the hedging plan for the current 12-month procurement window. He stated that approximately 70% of winter supply has been locked in. He then reviewed the October rate comparisons and reported that the Department remains very competitive in all rate classes. He then gave an update on the status of leak reductions, cast iron main replacements and bare steel service replacements. Mr. Roy also reported that crews completed the installation of a tertiary protection mechanism (slam-shut valve) at the Apremont/Dupuis regulator station. He also gave an update on the DPU audit of the Department's LNG Facility and reported that 93% of recommendations have been closed out and that the remainder are on schedule to be closed out by the end of the year. He further reported that the DPU is currently auditing the Department's Distribution Integrity Management Plan (DIMP) and that staff has responded to the first set of inquiries from the DPU regarding that audit. There was a brief discussion on the matter.

ELECTRIC DIVISION

Power Supply:

Mr. Beauregard reviewed the October electric rate comparisons and reported that the Department remains competitive in all rate classes. He then reviewed the October Mark-to-Market report and reported that all transactions are within policy limits and one counterparty remains below the minimum

credit rating while two others are on the watch list. He also gave an update on peak load reduction activities and an update on the Citizens Energy Battery Storage project. There was a brief discussion on the matter.

TRANSMISSION & DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Beauregard reported that all non-emergency field work that requires access to a customer premise continues to be suspended until further notice due to the COVID-19 outbreak. He reported that sulfur mitigation efforts were recently conducted at three transformer locations and that staff is following up on a couple of recommendations from the vendor. He also reported that staff has completed its review of options for relocating offices at Cabot Station and will conduct alternate site reviews next year for comparison. He then reported on recent outages on the 32W1, 2 and 3 circuits and the corrective actions that are being taken. There was a brief discussion on the matter.

ELECTRIC PRODUCTION

Mr. Ducheney reported that all fall canal drawdown activities were completed on schedule with no material surprises. He stated that water flows continue to be very low and that hydro production was behind plan for the month of September, and slightly behind plan year to date. There was a brief discussion on the matter.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Jonah reported that the Department phone system upgrade went according to plan with only a few minor glitches that were quickly resolved. He further reported that the Telecom team is supporting the City's evaluation of a pilot Wi-Fi deployment at Kelly School. There was a brief discussion on the matter.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Ms. Rogers reported that the new Inter-active Voice Response (IVR) system went live this week, and that the on-line component would be launched next week. She also reported that the moratorium for commercial customers has ended and that her staff continues to work with customers on payment plans. There was a brief discussion on the matter.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Sullivan reported that staff continues to provide updates to employees regarding operational changes and required precautions to minimize risks related to the COVID-19 outbreak. She stated that she continues to work with the HG&E Green Team to improve energy conservation assistance and energy efficiency programs and to better market those programs to customers. She then gave an update on current energy audit and energy efficiency activities. She also gave an update on Public Power/Public Gas week activities for the Department. There was a brief discussion on the matter.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

CYBERSECURITY POLICIES: Mr. Lavelle reported that, in an effort to improve the Department's cybersecurity posture, several policies have either been updated or created to ensure that network users and technicians are following best practices with regard to network use, maintenance, and protection of critical systems and data. He recommended that the Commission approve the following fourteen (14) cybersecurity policies:

1. Cybersecurity User Policy
2. Change Management Policy
3. Audit Logging Policy
4. Cloud Computing Policy
5. Data Protection Policy
6. Electronic Equipment Disposal Policy
7. Patching Policy
8. Privileged User Policy
9. Remote Access Policy
10. Sensitive Information Policy
11. Software and Hardware Acquisition Policy
12. Threat and Vulnerability Assessment Management Policy
13. Unified Threat Management Platform Policy
14. Virtualization Policy

After a brief discussion and on a motion from Commissioner Griffin, seconded by Commissioner Sutter it was unanimously voted to approve the policies as presented per the recommendation of management.

RESIDENTIAL ENERGY CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE – 87 BEECH STREET: Mr. Lavelle reported that the Department received a residential energy conservation request, in the amount of \$7,200, from the owners of 87 Beech Street for the installation of energy efficient windows and he recommended that the request be approved. On a motion from Commissioner Griffin, seconded by Commissioner Sutter, it was unanimously voted to approve the request per the recommendation of management.

BID AUTHORIZATIONS:

REAL ESTATE –LYMAN/CANAL STREET VACANT PARCEL: Mr. Lavelle requested authorization to solicit bids for the vacant parcel on the corner of Lyman and Canal Streets. He stated that the 0.06 acre parcel was purchased in 2009 as part of the North Canal Substation project and is no longer needed for utility operations. After a brief discussion and on a motion from Commissioner Griffin, seconded by Commissioner Sutter it was unanimously voted to authorize the bid per the recommendation of management.

BIDS RECEIVED:

INSULATION, ASBESTOS & LEAD ABATEMENT ANNUAL CONTRACT – EXTENSION: Mr. Lavelle recommended that the Commission authorize a one year extension to the Insulation, Asbestos & Lead Abatement Annual Contract with Atlantic Contract & Specialties, LLC. He stated that the terms and conditions for the extension period remain the same except for a 3.25% increase in labor rates. After a brief discussion and on a motion from Commissioner Griffin, seconded by Commissioner Sutter, it was unanimously voted to authorize the contract extension per the recommendation of management.

COMMUNICATIONS:

10/02/20 – Draft Commission Meeting Minutes from 09/09/20

09/25/20 – JL/DD/Financial Statements, Balance Sheet August 2020
10/01/20 – JL/WM/Cybersecurity Policy Updates Approval
09/23/20 – BB/ST/RECP – Rock Solid Renovations, LLC - 87 Beech Street
09/30/20 – KS/MC/Bid Authorization - Real Estate – Lyman/Canal Vacant Parcel
10/01/20 – JL/CW/Recommendation – Extension of Insulation, Asbestos & Lead Abatement Annual Contract

NEXT MEETING DATE:

It was agreed that the next Commission meeting would take place on Wednesday, November 18, 2020 at 5:00 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion from Commissioner Griffin, seconded by Commissioner Sutter, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the Meeting at 6:02 PM.

HG&E Commission