

**Joint Meeting of the Water & Sewer Commission  
And the Electric Utility Commission  
Meeting Minutes, March 7, 2022**

**Roll Call:** Steve Fitzhugh, Dennis Donahue, John Stevens, Charlie Morse. Others present: Town Manager Jeff Schulz, Utility Superintendent Patrick Demasi, and Sarah Wolfe, Northfield Energy Committee. Also attending and representing DeLorean Power was Rory Jones, Mike Hebert and Joseph Leavitt.

The meeting started at 6:30 PM.

**Minutes from Previous Meeting**

Motion by Charlie Morse, seconded by Dennis Donahue, to approve the minutes of the January 3, 2022 meeting. Steve Fitzhugh noted that the cost of AMI is closer to \$625,000 and not the higher amount noted which is the long-term cost. **Motion passed 4-0, as amended.**

Next, Sarah Wolfe of the Northfield Energy Committee stated that she attended the Utility Commission several times in the past and wanted to reintroduce herself to the Commission. Sarah added that the Energy Committee is interested hearing about the many Electric Commission projects, but specifically most interested in having vehicle charging stations in the Downtown. Charlie Morse welcomed Sarah and noted that the American Recovery Plan Act Funds can be used for vehicle chargers.

**Meeting of the Electric Commission**

**Battery Storage - King Street**

Steve Fitzhugh introduced representatives of DeLorean Power noting that DeLorean is working with VPPSA to locate battery storage on the parcel next to the King Street Sub-Station.

Rory Jones stated that DeLorean is a utility-scale energy storage development company specializing in standalone storage units to reduce costs and improve power system reliability. DeLorean is working with VPPSA to develop a fleet of battery storage projects in the VPPSA's network and are proposing a 3MW approximately 9MWh battery storage system at the King Street Sub-station. The battery storage project utilizes lithium-ion battery technology and last 20 years. DeLorean has an option on the parcel adjacent to the substation and propose a direct connection to the substation. The plan is to submit an inter-connection request to the Utility Commission. There will be no costs to Northfield Electric for the project.

Charlie Morse noted that Northfield Electric has done a good job at keeping the electric rates low. How does this project help with power disruption? Mike Hebert noted that the project does not provide redundancy, but is a cost savings measure. Steve Fitzhugh added that the project is about peak savings and results in a reduction of charges. Charlie asked about time frame and project life. Rory Jones noted that they should have final plans and documents completed in about 6 to 8 weeks. The project life is 20 years.

### **Budget Status Reports**

Jeff Schulz noted that the budget status reports provided the Commission are through the end of February (66% complete). Northfield Electric's overall financial position remains solid and the status reports reveal that the FY 21/22 revenue estimates and expenditures are at or below the 66% mark. The revenues are above estimates (69%) and the expenditures are well below the 66% mark at 46%.

### **Other Business**

Steve Fitzhugh noted that the Bone Hill Solar Project is near completion and should be ready for energizing by April 1.

Dennis Donahue asked if battery storage helps with renewable energy requirements. Steve note that it does not.

### **Water Sewer Commission**

#### **Drinking Water Corrosion Control Measures and WWTF Copper Removal Optimization**

Jeff Schulz stated that the VT Department of Environmental Conservation recently informed the Town that over the past year the effluent from the Sewage Treatment Plant exceeded the maximum allowable copper levels for several months. As a result, the State is requiring the Town to develop a plan with measures to reduce the copper loads, to include reviewing treatment of the water supply over the past number of years, hiring an engineer to assist with the develop of the plan, and perform an industrial customer survey. This frustrating for a number of reasons. First, the Town has done a very good job at reducing the amount of stormwater and phosphorus load releases from the plant below the State's requirements, and that the Northfield's Sewer Plant is not designed to treat copper at the mandated levels. Further, the State's maximum copper levels are about 1/3 of the EPA limits. The Town has not exceeded the EPA limits. Regardless, we will address the State's concerns.

The Commissioners discussed the issue and agreed that the source of copper is likely from copper pipes in residential homes.

## **Budget Status Reports**

Jeff Schulz presented water and sewer status reports for the period ending February 28, 2022 (66%), and was pleased to report that both the water revenues and expenditures are on target at 65% of budgeted. The sewer revenues are also on track at 66% and the expenditures at 61% of budgeted.

## **Other Business**

Jeff noted that sludge management is working well and that the Canadian company is easy to work with and has stated that the Water and Sewer Department is helpful and very professional.

Jeff added that we are working on the FY22/23 utility budgets and plan to present at the April meeting.

Motion by Charlie Morse, second by Dennis Donahue to adjourn the Joint Meeting of the Electric and the Water/Sewer Commission. **Motion passed 4-0.**

Jeff Schulz, Town Manager