

VILLAGE OF LUDLOW ELECTRIC LIGHT DEPARTMENT  
COMMISSIONERS MEETING MINUTES  
Thursday August 24, 2023,  
4:30 P.M. BUSINESS OFFICE, 9 POND STREET

**PRESENT COMMISSIONERS:**

Chairman; Nicholas Baitz, Vice Chair; Robert Brandt, Clerk, George Dunnett

**OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Foreman: Brian Benoit

Department Manager: Thomas Petraska

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Cass Baitz	Kim Martel	Ryan Silvestri
Dianna Benson	Brendan McNamara	Steve Starnok
Gary Benson	Marcia Moore	Shannon Stark
Liz Crowley-Smith	Ken Nolan	Jean Strong
April Dunich	Cara Philbin	George Thomson
Michael Gadway	Paula Pollander	Linda Thomson
Beth Hart	Peter Pollander	Ryan Wardell
Barb Hyland	Jeanette Ricciardo	Rebekah Fontaine OVTV
Jay Jurkoic	Terri Rose	Lisha Klaiber
Steve Kondraki	Brett Sanderson	
Brian Martel	Carroll Sanderson	

**CALL TO ORDER**

Commissioner Baitz called the meeting to order at 4:32 PM.

**CONSIDERATION OF ANY ADDITIONS, DELETIONS, AND CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:**

1. **MOTION by Nick Baitz and seconded by Bob Brandt to reorder the agenda to put Ken Nolan from VPPSA discussion before Comments from Ratepayers. Motion passed unanimously.**

**KEN NOLAN GENERAL MANAGER FROM VPPSA (VERMONT PUBLIC POWER SUPPLY AUTHORITY) TO SPEAK ON WHAT VPPSA DOES FOR LUDLOW ELECTRIC**

VPPSA was established by the State in 1979 – Title 30 Chapter 84. There are currently 11 local electric company members who own interest, including Ludlow. VPPSA provides services to the local community owned utilities. The municipal utilities own shares in VPPSA. It allows for beneficial consolidation while maintaining local control. Services provided to the member companies by VPPSA include:

1. Power supply purchasing and generation
2. financial services
3. rates and planning
4. legislative and regulatory assistance
5. IT support and technology upgrades
6. Communications and outreach
7. GIS and field services
8. Renewable Energy standards
9. Key account programs

Ken Nolan continued, added that VPPSA has a person in the legislature and also lobbyists. He said that VPPSA is present at any open docket. He outlined VPPSA's Operational Philosophy:

1. Operates like a captive consulting company with one or two expert staff in each focus area
2. Services are designed to take advantage of: areas where consolidation produces savings and areas where staffing is not needed full time, but often enough to make consultants expensive.
3. Recent service expansions have been in: Assisting in distributed generation development (solar, rebates, heat pumps). Providing consolidated technology upgrade to share costs. Expanding customer outreach capabilities (due to state requirements and customer expectations.)

He continued and gave a VPPSA staff overview. He then described VPPSA Current Strategic Priorities/End Statements:

1. Financial Strength – leverage of VPPSA’s capabilities to improve the financial strength of its members
2. Policy Leadership - proactively create a positive operating environment that recognizes the unique attributes and accomplishments of member communities
3. Organizational Excellence – establish a sustainable company culture based on unity, initiative and critical thinking
4. Joint Action/Membership Value – leverage VPPSA’s capabilities to provide valuable services to its members
5. Technology Competence – deploy secure, unified systems that meet the member’s emerging business and regulatory needs.

Ludlow Contributions to VPPSA 2023 Budget

1. McNeil Generator = \$738,788
2. Central Computer = \$0
3. Project #10 Generator = \$333,380
4. Renewable Energy Standard = \$228,612
5. New Metering Software = \$0 – Ludlow not part of this
6. AMI = \$0 (Costs will begin upon deployment in 2024)
7. GIS = \$36,824 (Ludlow withdrew as of August 2023)
8. Sanders Grant = \$38,077 (one year only)
9. Member dues (General Operations) = \$273,501

McNeil Project

1. VPPSA owns a 19% interest in the McNeil biomass plant in Burlington
2. Ludlow contracted for a 10.526% entitlement in VPPSA’s ownership share
  - a. Ludlow receives  $10.526\% * 19\% = 1.999\%$  of all products produced by McNeil
  - b. Ludlow pays 10.526% of VPPSA’s costs related to the plant
3. VPPSA allocates staff time to manage its ownership share
  - a. sits on the management committee, process billings, manages RECs received, etc.
4. Burlington Electric Department (BED) owns 50% of McNeil and operates it
  - a. VPPSA is billed for capital and operational costs by BED and in turn bills [project participants
5. Significant VPPSA Budget Items
  - a. Fuel (wood, gas, oil) = \$4,206,366
  - b. Fixed (BED labor and O&M) = \$2,812,328

Project #10 Generator

1. Ludlow contracted for a 10% entitlement in VPPSA Project 10 – Peaking Generator in Swanton.
  - a. Ludlow receives 10% of all projects produced by the facility
  - b. Ludlow pays 10% of all costs
2. VPPSA fully owns and operates this facility
  - a. There is one (1) FTE position at Project #10 to maintain the facility
3. Significant VPPSA Budget Items
  - a. Debt Service = \$1,923,794
  - b. O&M and Insurance = \$867,529
  - c. Admin and Taxes = \$238,909

Renewable Energy Standard

1. All Vermont Utilities are obligated by Statute to meet the Renewable Energy Standard
  - a. This entails general renewables (Tier 1), small scale Vermont renewables (Tier 2) and Energy transformation (Tier 3.)
2. VPPSA members are allowed to meet the statute “in aggregate”
  - a. All members have chosen to do so
  - b. Purchases RECs, develop solar generation, manages a customer outreach efforts, manages a robust rebate program for members
  - c. Prepares annual plans and compliance reports
  - d. Handles mandated coordination with Efficiency Vermont
  - e. Manages a key accounts program utilizing 4 existing staff
3. Significant VPPSA Budget Items
  - a. Purchased RECs = \$1,142,341
  - b. Rebate Associated Costs = \$274,728
  - c. Admin = \$93,402
  - d. Direct Customer Outreach = \$13,850

AMI Project

1. Project set up to evaluate and deploy advanced meter infrastructure (AMI)
  - a. Needed to respond to legislative/regulatory pressure
2. Created as a separate project, but at present all members continue to participate
3. Beginning in 2023 costs are allocated to deployed participants
  - a. Development costs were previously allocated based on load ratio share
4. Ludlow had no costs in the 2023 budget
  - a. Anticipated Ludlow costs are:



- i. Capital = \$767,433 (after a \$550,890 state grant)
- ii. Annual ongoing costs = \$20,580 (+ 3% annual escalator)

GIS Project

- 1. VPPSA established a centralized GIS program to bring all members to a similar base level of capability
- 2. Ludlow has participated through August 2023
  - a. Became frustrated with VPPSA's progress
  - b. VPPSA responded by hiring a former GMP district manager to evaluate concerns
  - c. Then hiring mPower to make project improvements
- 3. Ludlow decided to move to NISC for GIS services
  - a. Will not incur VPPSA charges beyond September 2023
  - b. All data from VPPSA system has been transferred to Ludlow
  - c. Could complicate VPPSA-wide analytics and require future integrations

Sanders Grant

- 1. VPPSA obtained a \$1 million "earmark" in the 2022 Appropriations Bill from Senator Sanders
  - a. Intended as a revolving loan fund for large commercial and industrial customers
  - b. To fund Renewable Energy Standard (RES) Tier 3 eligible projects
- 2. This should reduce RES costs for all members
  - a. No/low interest loans will replace rebates
  - b. Resulting Tier 3 credits will be allocated to all members based on contribution to match
- 3. Grant requires a 20% Match
  - a. VPPSA collected this match through customer billings in 2023
  - b. Will bill staff time against these funds as the grant is deployed

Overall Grants Efforts

- 1. Received
  - a. Sanders = \$1 million toward RES compliance effort (DOE)
  - b. AMI = \$5 million toward AMI deployment costs
  - c. Cyber = \$120,000 for assessments and remediation plans
  - d. EV Grants = \$72,000 to evaluate option for developing EV rates
  - e. VLITE = \$90,000 for panel upgrades, heat pump incentives
  - f. ACRE = \$1.5 million toward a low income community solar project
  - g. ESAP = \$4.1 million (joint with BED and WEC) for battery storage and load management
- 2. Applied
  - a. VPPSA GRIP = \$100 million for utility scale battery storage
  - b. State GRIP = \$6 million as part of a larger statewide application for residential scale batteries
- 3. Evaluating
  - a. USDA REAP Program
  - b. USDA PACE Program
  - c. IRA Tax Credits

Member Dues

- 1. Intended to cover costs for "Core Services"
  - a. Rate cases, rate design and reporting
  - b. Power supply and ISO New England interactions
  - c. IT services and cyber security
  - d. Regulatory support and legislative lobbying
  - e. Communications and customer outreach efforts
  - f. Interactions with VELCO and VTRANSCO
  - g. Interactions with Efficiency Vermont
  - h. Key customer support
  - i. Integrated Resource Plans
  - j. Grant acquisition and management
- 2. Includes building costs, office supplies, insurance, legal, contractors, outside lobbyists, travel and training
  - a. Any costs not allocated to a project or covered by third party revenues
- 3. Allocated based on load ratio share

RATEPAYER Comments to Mr. Nolan

- 1. Shannon Stark noted that an employee was having trouble putting photos into email – does VPPSA train older linemen?
- 2. Ken Nolan said he hasn't heard of problems with basic email. He said that linemen training is done by New England Public Power Association in Massachusetts. He said that they do have training for GIS.
- 3. Ryan Silvestri asked if there is a contract with Vermont Electric
- 4. Ken Nolan said no. VSPPA is set up for all 11 members and approved by the board. As we convert, we will re-look at a project with MASS Power.
- 5. Ryan Silvestri noted that since Tom Petraska sits on VSPPA's board, is he compensated by VSPPA.
- 6. Tom Petraska said no.



7. Ryan Silvestri asked why they kept paying on the GIS project.
8. Tom Petraska said it was supposed to happen faster.
9. Ryan Silvestri asked if we could see the project and see the check.
10. Tom Petraska said yes.
11. Jean Strong noted that at last month's meeting, it was noted that LEC had paid \$75,000 to the GIS project that we were never able to use.
12. Ken Nolan said the service was available. You had the license for the software and access to it. We did not operate as quickly as LEC wanted and it wasn't available in structure the way LEC wanted.
13. Jean Strong asked if Tom Petraska can look at it.
14. Tom Petraska said yes.
15. Jean Strong asked for the exact number, it was more than \$75,000.
16. Tom Petraska said he can provide it, but not at this time.
17. Ken Nolan said it was \$36,000 for a full year and less for the previous 2.
18. Jean Strong said she would like the board to have all of the numbers.
19. Ken Nolan said that LEC has not been billed for August through December – about \$20,000.
20. Jean Strong asked if AMI is state mandated.
21. Ken Nolan said it is never that simple. It is not mandated, however you need to make time of rate, separate for electric vehicles and are required the utility to meet them technically.
22. Jean Strong asked about compliance
23. Ken Nolan said this was a 3-year RFP. They started with an RFI that was open to all. Out of the responses, we selected 7 and asked for an RFP. We picked 3 that were most aligned conceptually to our function. We chose ACLARA system
24. Jean Strong asked if LEC could contract with its own company.
25. Ken Nolan said any of the members can. He said that most utilities went back to 2009, except for the small municipal utilities. VPPSA meters, tech support, collects data, provides software and communication. It runs about \$200,000 per year to keep the system operating and Ludlow pays about 10%. He said that he did the project with Burlington Electric in 2009. At that time it was cost prohibitive for the smaller utilities to do it on their own and still is. VSPPA set up a centralized project providing AMI – systems, meters, electronics, and secured codes. All 11 members can see the code.
26. Shannon Stark asked how LEC is going to recoup the \$75,000.
27. Ken Nolan said it was a cost/benefit analysis.
28. Ryan Silvestri asked how LEC will recoup the money for the GIS – will VSPPA take money off the AMI project costs to compensate.
29. Ken Nolan said that he does not have that authority
30. Brian Benoit asked if it is safe to say that AMI members of their free will have communication more that the state mandates
31. Ken Nolan said if you don't move in this direction, you will find that when you file for a rate increase, your request will be scrutinized" by the state (they will inflict pain.) He added that another downside is that LEC only exists as a franchise by the state and they can take away that franchise if LEC is not doing what the state wants, although that is very unlikely.
32. Shannon Stark asked why VPPSA stuck with GIS.
33. Ken Nolan said that GIS is one out of 30 to 40 projects that VSPPA has done. Look at our track record – it is successful. He said that the GIS administrator left the company and they brought in a consultant. It will be on track for the other 10 members. He said it was his fault that he didn't make the change as soon as LEC wanted. He said that all 11 members had bought into the contract. He added that it is hard to keep all 11 members happy, even with a contract.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

1. **MOTION by Nick Baitz and seconded by Bob Brandt to enter in to Executive for Personnel Issues and to include Tom Petraska.**
2. George Thomson noted that there are 25 people here and asked if there was another space that could be used for meetings. He said we are all concerned about the future of LEC. It is unfair of the board to have people standing and can the meeting be moved to another space. There are lots of people standing and it is disrespectful of the board to have the Executive Session now. He said that while lovely, the presentation took 1 ½ hours. People are here to discuss other issues.
3. **Motion passed unanimously.**
4. Board entered into Executive Session at 5:45 p.m.
5. **MOTION by Nick Baitz and seconded by Bob Brandt to exit Executive Session. Motion passed unanimously.**
6. Board exited Executive Session at 6:10. No action taken.
7. **MOTION by Nick Baitz and seconded by Bob Brandt to authorize the chair to write a letter of reprimand to the employee discussed in Executive Session. Motion passed unanimously.**



COMMENTS FROM RATEPAYERS:

1. Ryan Silvestri asked Tom Petraska if he is a lineman?
2. Tom Petraska said no.
3. Ryan Silvestri asked if Tom Petraska supervises the linemen
4. Tom Petraska said he doesn't oversee, he listens to their needs and looks to Brian Benoit and Jeff for information.
5. Ryan Silvestri asked if that is the safest dynamics.
6. Tom Petraska said probably not.
7. Ryan Silvestri asked how they plan to fix it.
8. Tom Petraska said hire some linemen.
9. Ryan Silvestri asked if they would need to create positions
10. Tom Petraska said possibly.
11. Ryan Silvestri asked the thoughts of the board.
12. Bob Brandt said that GMP has a woman supervisor and she doesn't run the outside.
13. Steve Starnok said they have more people and she can go to someone with more experience. We need to have someone who knows and has experience.
14. Jean Strong said that at the last meeting, we discussed job descriptions and the handbook. She said that the job description should list the responsibilities.
15. George Thomson asked where he can get a copy of the handbook.
16. Jean Strong said she has an old copy. She said board members or Tom Petraska should have copies.
17. Tom Petraska said the one Jean Strong has is outdated and they are in the process of redoing it.
18. George Thomson asked to have access to a copy.
19. Tom Petraska said when the update is complete, it will go to the board for approval, but he can get George Thomson a copy of the old one.
20. George Thomson said he wants a copy and would stop by the office tomorrow to pick one up.
21. Jay Jurkoic asked when the last one was written.
22. Tom Petraska said about 2 years ago.
23. Jay Jurkoic said that every employee should know his job title, job description and also, the chain of command.
24. Shannon Stark asked when the board got rid of superintendent and started to use foreman. She said Brett Sanderson reported to the superintendent.
25. Tom Petraska said bas is a lineman. He said the board will vote on new job descriptions. We now have Department Manager and Foreman. That was voted on a year ago.
26. Jean Strong said there should have been a motion and vote. She said that the minutes only go back as far as January/February. Older minutes should be available on the website.
27. Tom Petraska said they can be put on the website. There was a vote to make me Department Manager and outside personnel report to me.
28. Bob Brandt said the change was not a lot. The superintendent does most of the business in the office. The foreman goes out and works in the field.
29. Ryan Silvestri asks if the board thinks it would be more efficient to have the field manager reporting to the t to the board . Now, the field reports to Tom Petraska who reports to the board – that's 3<sup>rd</sup> hand.
30. Bob Brandt said that the field foreman gives the board monthly reports.
31. George Dunnett said that years ago, when Dean Brown was the super, Howard Barton, Sr. was in charge.
32. Shannon Stark was if Brian Benoit, the foreman, is a lineman..
33. Brian Benoit said no, but he trained under Howard Barton, Jr. He added that he works in the field, but had no formal training.
34. Tom Petraska said that Brian Benoit is an electrician.
35. Ryan Silvestri asked the difference between a lineman and an electrician.
36. Brian Benoit said voltage.
37. Shannon Stark asked Tom Petraska if he has an electrical background.
38. Tom Petraska said no, but this is his 5<sup>th</sup> year here and he serves on the VPPSA board.
39. Jay Jurkoic asked who took over his position when Howard Barton left.
40. Tom Petraska said Brett Sanderson as lineman.
41. Jay Jurkoic asked if it wouldn't make more sense to have him stay in that position..
42. Bob Brandt said that is part of a personnel issue and we can't discuss it now.
43. Steve Starnok said without putting in names, wouldn't it be better.
44. Carroll Sanderson asked how long they have been looking for linemen. This makes no sense – you need linemen.
45. Nick Baitz agreed that linemen are needed.
46. Carroll Sanderson said they need 3 linemen.
47. Linda Thomson asked if the new handbook would have job descriptions as well as requirements for those positions.



48. Tom Petraska said yes.
49. George Thomson asked what those qualifications are.
50. Ryan Silvestri said the qualification for a foreman. He said he never has someone do a job that he, himself has not done. With the dynamics here, it seems like it could be dangerous.
51. Shannon Stark said they need a team of 3 for a job. She said that Brett Sanderson was written up for not having a team of 3. How often are there teams of less than. Aren't they mostly 2? Why was Brett Sanderson written up for having a team of 2, when you mostly have teams of 2 and no one else is written up. Why do you send our teams of 2?
52. Brian Benoit said they do send out teams of 2.
53. George Thomson asked about safety.
54. Liz Crowley asked if they currently have 2 class 1, 2 apprentices and Brian as linemen.
55. Shannon Stark asked if they need to go to school in order to become a lineman.
56. Brian Benoit said he is working on that now.
57. Ryan Silvestri asked isn't it a liability if they do not have 3 person teams on a job..
58. Tom Petraska said he had a conference with VOSHA regarding the last accident.
59. George Thomson said that if the PUC authorizes LEC to function as a utility, can it also take that away if they find out that you are sending out trucks with only 2 – not 3 – people
60. Tom Petraska said they could.
61. George Thomson asked if this should be addressed. He said that he has brought up the question about not having enough staff and asked if a pay increase is in the budget for the superintendent. Give the linemen a pay increase.
62. Shannon Stark suggested a contract where LEC pays for schooling, but they would have to commit to staying a certain amount of time after schooling is complete.
63. Bob Brandt said that Vermont is an at will state. We can send them to and pay for their schooling, but they can leave when they want. He asked, do you want someone who is not happy working for you?
64. Steve Starnok said the contract could be for 2 years.
65. Brian Benoit said that even 2 years with an unhappy employee could be damaging.
66. Jean Strong asked if the salary for the supervisor is in the budget?
67. Tom Petraska said it was, but now it is not. It was there until the sick time ran out. Our budget runs by the calendar year. It was never put in the budget in January.
68. Liz Crowley said that they took the money out and are operating without a supervisor.
69. Jean Strong said the budget is approved by the board. She would like to see the budget. There must have been a motion to approve the budget.
70. Tom Petraska said he does not know if there was a motion to approve the budget.
71. Liz Crowley said that since there is no secretary, is that the reason they can't produce the minutes?
72. Nick Baitz said that Tom Petraska does them.
73. Ryan Silvestri said that we all want LEC, but things are happening that may take that decision away and put it in the hands of PUC and VOSHA.
74. Shannon Stark asked how many 3<sup>rd</sup> class people.
75. Brian Benoit said 2.
76. Ryan Wardell said there is a lot of turmoil and problems that could be avoided. Every day there is something. He said that when he first came to the department, it was like family and he looked up to Brett Sanderson.
77. Steve Starnok said that at the last meeting, we (the employees) said we stay because of Brett Sanderson. He said the actions that have happened since the last meeting amaze him.
78. Barb Hyland asked who was present at the Executive Session.
79. Tom Petraska said the board and himself.
80. Barb Hyland asked if the clerk was present.
81. George Dunnett said that he is clerk of the board, but does not do minutes.
82. Barb Hylan asked if any minutes of the Executive Session or votes.
83. Bob Brandt said they do not take minutes, nor take actions in Executive Session.
84. Shannon Stark said that at the last meeting, you were asked if there had been any illegal meetings. And you said no. She said that there was a meeting with the board members and employees.
85. Bob Brandt said we were just asking questions, not making proposals.
86. George Thomson asked if this board follows Roberts Rules of Procedure.
87. Jay Jurkoic said that the board can meet, but cannot discuss business among themselves. They can ask questions.
88. Bob Brandt said that is what they did.
89. Jean Strong asked the board to make and vote on a motion to move the monthly meetings to town hall or another place where people can sit.
90. Bob Brandt said they are working on it.
91. Brendan McNamara said that the town hall can accommodate the meetings. This board just needs to warn the meetings and locations.



92. Jean Strong asked if it will be on the town website. She then said that Ken Nolan said they can approach VSPPA about return of funds – close to \$100,000.
93. Shannon Stark asked about the funds for July and August.
94. Tom Petraska said they have to true up the funds.
95. Shannon Stark said that at the last meeting, they discussed a small rate increase and they are waiting for a grant and there is money in the reserves, but the PUC did not want us to raise our rates to increase pay wages. Is that reasonable.
96. Tom Petraska said the PUC wants us to pay staff, and then run down the reserves, and then we can raise rates. He said they will have to go into the reserves to raise wages.
97. Shannon Stark asked if the PUC said that there is too much in the reserves.
98. Tom Petraska said we need to present a case to raise our rates to the PUC, but they will probably deny it. He said we can reapply again next year. They will only allow increase based on known and measurable facts – past information.
99. Steve Starnok said to take the money out of the reserves and pay the employees more – put the money in a separate account.
100. Tom Petraska said that would still be recognized as part of equity.
101. Ryan Silvestri asked if pay raises could be included.
102. Tom Petraska said they could be.
103. George Thomson said we pay employees lower than other companies. We can't raise the rates because the reserves are too high. We should use part of the reserves to increase our wages. That would lower the reserve, and then you could apply for a rate increase. He doesn't see why they can't do this. It seems like the Board should find the money to increase the wages for the employees and to hire new employees. This doesn't make sense.
104. Carroll Sanderson said it is a conflict of interest – the higher ups vs. the employees.
105. Shannon Stark asked how the board will fix this.
106. Bob Brandt said he doesn't know what the conflict of interests is.
107. Carroll Sanderson said people not getting raises.
108. Jay Jurkoic said it is not a conflict of interest.
109. Liz Crowley said they are not hiring the right, properly qualified people to make decisions. We are hearing the problems, but not proposals to solve them, just head shaking. Maybe we should change the executive management to allow the company to operate properly.
110. Shannon Stark asked if the executive session is just the board.
111. Bob Brandt said and whoever they invite in person or call them in. He said that Tom Petraska was in tonight.
112. Liz Crowley asked if the person has had a chance to defend himself.
113. Jay Jurkoic said that it is in the handbook that they can respond.
114. Brian Martell said that Tom Petraska and the board are doing a good job and thanked them.

**ACT ON MINUTES OF JULY 27TH, 2023 MEETING**

**MOTION by Commissioner Bob Brandt and seconded by Commissioner Nick Baitz to approve minutes from July 27, 2023 as written. Motion passed unanimously.**

**FOREMAN'S REPORT: August 2023**

St. Light Maint.	1
Meter Reading	has started today with training a new employee
Substation Maint.	Monthly Checks
Urd Locates	21 URD LOCATES
Line Maint.	Tyson store move was worked on and moved to a temporary pole. there will be a scheduled outage on Wednesday the 30 around 10 am -12
Services	Multiple service upgrades
Service cover ups	Multiple Service covers
Line Construction	103 project is out to bid one contractor has responded for pulling the wires

Line Trimming	will be starting up in the next few weeks depending on traffic control availability
Safety Meeting	Electrical test equipment
Banner	Disaster Relief, summer festival
Vehicle Maint.	New tires on both newer pickups

GMP is almost done with the line to Southface Village

New fr clothing has been ordered

Fuel pumps quotes are in I would like to go forward with what Kennedy quoted.

#### Board Comments on Foreman's Report

1. Bob Brandt asked about replacement of the fuel tanks.
2. Brian Benoit said the tanks are at the end of their lives, rusty and need to be replaced. One quote is for \$22,000 + \$2,500. A cheaper tank is about \$3,000 with a one year warranty. The Beardsley quote is \$15,000 and the Kennedy quote is \$12,000, with 30 year warranty.
3. Bob Brandt say they should not go with the quote for only one year warranty. He said when GMP takes over SFV what will that do.
4. Tom Petraska said he thinks the existing customers.
5. **MOTION by Bob Brandt and seconded by Nick Baitz to go with the quote from Kennedy for the 30 year tank. This is with the condition that if there is a big difference in the process, they should bring this back to the board before making the purchases.**
6. Brian Benoit said \$24,000 for the 2 tanks, less \$6,678.36 or about \$17,400. He added that it has a fuel monitoring system that would respond to his and Tom Petraska's computers.
7. **Motion passed unanimously.**
8. Bob Brandt asked when they would be getting this done.
9. Brian Benoit said hopefully before the winter. He added that Kennedy will let our staff work with them and use our crane.

#### DEPARTMENT MANAGERS REPORT 8/24/23.

The Light Department continues to work with customers who are still trying to get their businesses and homes back online from the flood.

On August 7<sup>th</sup> the Department of Public Service issued a (call-to-action) to all Vermont regulated utilities to participate in a voluntary two-month moratorium on disconnections. Ludlow Electric joined in on the call to action to support the moratorium.

#### **Update on Compressors for Okemo Snowmaking:**

The Light Department has been able to get three prices on transformers for the Okemo project. We are now waiting on estimated freight charges and final order for transformers should go out in the few business days.

#### **Update on Magris Solar Project:**

Another month has gone by with no finalization on the lease agreement.

#### **GIS update**

NISC account manager was on site August 16<sup>th</sup> to get the paperwork in place to get the Light Department signed on to the NISC GIS platform.

On Tuesday August 22, the light Department had a closing conference with VOSHA regarding our April 21,2023 accident. We will be receiving citations in the mail.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**



1. Bob Brandt said that we did raises in December, assuming that the town would give 5% raises. The Town went to 10%, retroactive until July 1<sup>st</sup>. He would like this item to be put on the agenda for their next meeting. He said it would bring us closer to GMP pay rates.
2. Tom Petraska asked where Bob Brandt would like that to be placed on the agenda.
3. Brian Benoit said that one lineman is really stepping up and should get a raise. He added that for the Route 103 project, we have no bids and we don't have the manpower to do the job. We will look at Groton next week and also a railroad crossing. He said we can get bids for excavating, but not for lineman. He said that NEPA worked with us during the flood, but that was an emergency.
4. Bob Brandt said we are still in need of linemen.
5. Brian Benoit said yes and added that he is maxed out and could use an assistant. He said that he is doing dig safes and high end metering. He said that it does help with Tom Petraska and Mike doing the paperwork. He said he couldn't do it without that help.

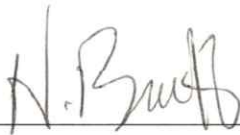
**ADJOURNMENT:**

1. **MOTION by Nick Baitz and seconded by George Dunnett to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.**
2. Meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Lisha Klaiber

Nicholas Baitz, Chairman



Robert Brandt, Vice Chair



George Dunnett, Clerk

