

Village of Ludlow Electric Light Department

Special Meeting

Board of Commissioners Meeting Notice

May 2, 2024

4:30 P.M. Ludlow Town Hall, Howard Barton Jr. Conference Room

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Consideration of any changes, additions, or removal, to the agenda
3. Comments from Ratepayers
4. Appoint Superintendent
5. Other Business
6. Executive session - personnel
7. Adjournment

VILLAGE OF LUDLOW ELECTRIC LIGHT DEPARTMENT
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
THURSDAY, MAY 2, 2024
4:30 P.M. LUDLOW TOWN HALL, HOWARD BARTON, JR. CONFERENCE ROOM

PRESENT COMMISSIONERS:

Chairperson: Shannon Barton Stark
Vice Chair: Gary Pollender
Clerk: Robert Brandt

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:

None

OTHERS PRESENT:

Tom Petraska
Michael Gadway
Brian Benoit
April Taylor-Dunich
Jean Strong
Brett Sanderson
Gabriel Miller
Ryan Wardell
Kaelob Smith
Carroll Sanderson
Brittany Benoit
Scott Tatro
J.A. Jurkoic
Steve Stariknok

1 **CALL TO ORDER:**

2 Chairperson Shannon Barton Stark called the meeting to order at 4:31 P.M.

3

4 **CONSIDERATION OF CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR REMOVAL TO THE AGENDA:**

5 None

6

7 **COMMENTS FROM RATEPAYERS:**

8 Robert Brandt stated I'd like to ask, really, what this meeting is going to be about.

9 Shannon Barton Stark stated I think that I'd entertain a motion for discussions about appointing a new
10 superintendent, an interim superintendent.

11 Robert Brandt stated I'm not sure how this is all going, but I'm resigning.

12 Gary Pollender stated so this meeting is null and void.

13 Robert Brandt stated no, it's not, you have two, you have a quorum.

14 Shannon Barton Stark stated I suppose at this point I make a motion to accept his resignation. "I resign
15 my position as Electric Light Commissioner effective 5/2/24. Robert Brandt."

16 **MOTION was made by Shannon Barton Stark to accept Robert Brandt's resignation. The Motion was
17 seconded by Gary Pollender. No discussion.**

18 **Roll Call Vote:**

19 **Voting in Favor: Gary Pollender, Shannon Barton Stark**

20 **Voting Against: None**

21

22 **The MOTION was approved (2-0)**

23 **APPOINT SUPERINTENDENT:**

1 Shannon Barton Stark stated I'd like to entertain a motion to discuss the appointment of an interim
2 superintendent for a 6-month term.

3 **MOTION was made by Gary Pollender to discuss the appointment of an interim superintendent. The**
4 **Motion was seconded by Shannon Barton Stark. No discussion.**

5 **Roll Call Vote:**

6 **Voting in Favor: Gary Pollender, Shannon Barton Stark**
7 **Voting Against: None**

8

9 **The MOTION was approved (2-0)**

10 Shannon Barton Stark stated so as far as discussions with this, I've been doing a lot of research. I've been
11 doing my homework and on two visits to the office now; one to talk to Tom and Mike, another one, Tom
12 was not in the office, so I talked with Mike. To me, if your truck is broken, you bring it in and get it fixed
13 and I feel as though there is something broken here. The office seems to be working fine. There seems to
14 be issues in the shop and as someone who grew up here and lived here my whole life, Ludlow Electric is
15 a super important part of our town. I think at this point, it is not running properly. I think it hasn't been
16 running properly for quite a while now, and so it's time to fix it, and this is a hard position to be in. We
17 walked into this just over a month ago, but sometimes you walk into something hard and you're not
18 going to make everyone happy and that's the position I'm in. Let's get this fixed. I think, going as an
19 interim superintendent, which would be temporary, 6 months, we can see if it's going to make any
20 changes and after those 6 months, we can look at something else if it's not working. But in my opinion,
21 and my position, I believe there is something that needs to change at this point.

22 Gary Pollender stated I've got nothing to say.

23 Shannon Barton Stark asked any comments.

24 Jay Jurkoic stated you said 6 months.

25 Shannon Barton Stark stated an interim of 6 months.

26 Jay Jurkoic asked why that number.

27 Shannon Barton Stark stated well I think that if we did three months, that's not quite enough time to see
28 the changes that we could possibly see. I think 6 months gives us a little time to start seeing if there's any
29 changes.

30 Jay Jurkoic asked so in the period, whatever period you decide, are you going to advertise the position of
31 superintendent and let whoever apply, apply.

32 Shannon Barton Stark stated I believe how that works is we would warn a position to the office first and
33 provide applicants there. And I know opinions are tough here, but in my opinion, we have somebody
34 that knows the job.

35 Michael Gadway stated per the book, you have to open up the position, put the position in the town
36 offices, at our office, and at the shop and put it in the local newspaper.

37 Gary Pollender asked before you appoint anybody, correct.

38 Michael Gadway stated no, to do an interim appointment.

39 Gary Pollender stated for now, but then you have to advertise the position.

40 Michael Gadway stated but then you have to advertise the position.

41 Shannon Barton Stark stated by our local charter, "said board, may, in its discretion, appoint a
42 superintendent of Ludlow Light Department, fix his or her compensation, and remove him or her at their
43 pleasure." So, as far as the charter goes, the board is allowed to appoint; we do not have to warn the
44 position.

45 Jay Jurkoic stated an interim.

46 Shannon Barton Stark stated an interim position, yes.

47 Jay Jurkoic stated, but permanent you do.

1 Shannon Barton Stark stated permanent, you have to warn it, correct. As far as appointing an interim, we
2 as the board have the power to appoint. And again, I've been doing a lot of work, a lot of research. I'm
3 taking this position very seriously. I've lived in Ludlow my entire life. I am a ratepayer. I took this position
4 because I was going to a lot of board meetings and seeing what was going on and it didn't feel right to
5 me, so I ran for this, and this is the position I find myself in. It's not an easy one, but I'm here to do it.

6 Michael Gadway asked what are the qualifications for this position.

7 Shannon Barton Stark stated that's a good question. I don't have the answer for that right now.

8 Michael Gadway asked how can you appoint somebody if you don't know if they're qualified.

9 Shannon Barton Stark asked well do you know the qualifications for this position.

10 Michael Gadway stated I don't off the top of my head, no, but you're appointing somebody so you
11 should know the qualifications.

12 Shannon Barton Stark stated you are correct. I do know that appointing somebody that has been in the
13 position, assistant position, prior to, has knowledge of where we're going. Now, being an interim
14 position, superintendent, that gives us time to look at it and see if this is going to fix things.

15 Jean Strong stated my question is kind of a follow up to what you just said, because it seems like that
16 position was, I don't know if that position was removed or whatever, so if there was a position there,
17 there must've been a job description, I would think, by the management that was in charge of it prior.
18 So, there should already be a position with a job description. That shouldn't be new. That should already
19 be there. Right.

20 Michael Gadway stated it doesn't exist.

21 Jean Strong said that doesn't exist.

22 Jay Jurkoic stated it wouldn't be hard to write one.

23 Jean Strong stated will you let me finish.

24 Jay Jurkoic said I'm sorry.

25 Jean Strong said so when that position was eliminated or whatever, was there a job description with
26 duties for the position that took its place. I mean, it seems like you're starting from scratch anyway. So,
27 good luck with it and I think you just got to keep going forward, that's my two-cents.

28 Shannon Barton Stark stated one of the sites visits, I went down to the office, I asked to see the agenda
29 and the minutes from the January 25, 2022 meeting that occurred. Reviewing them and looking back on
30 it, there was an illegal decision made. There was a motion made under "other business". So, there are
31 ways we can go about this. Legality-wise, if we look back on that meeting, the position of assistant
32 superintendent was terminated, but not legally. So, and even going back to our handbook, it still has the
33 board, superintendent, office manager. So, it's still saying it in our handbook. The meeting, it was not run
34 properly. The motion was made under "other business". It wasn't a legal termination. We can discuss
35 this, if we wanted to go back and do this legally, he would still be, Brett Sanderson, would still be
36 assistant superintendent. So, there's other ways we could look at this. I felt calling this special meeting
37 was going to be the best way to do it, versus having to go back years and go down that rabbit hole. Quite
38 honestly, I think if we did it that way, we'd look into legal ramifications of retro pay and I felt this was the
39 better solution, going in and calling a special meeting this way, versus having to get lawyers, go back and
40 assess the situation from 2022. It was going to be a messy way to do this.

41 Steve Stariknok stated as far as the interim appointment, it doesn't really matter much, but do we have a
42 preference or a policy in place when we are warning for a job position that we actually promote from
43 within or are we legally allowed to do that.

44
45 Shannon Barton Stark stated we are legally allowed to promote from within, yes. Legally, and again, the
46 board is, in our charter, allowed to appoint a superintendent. We do not have to warn it.

47
48 Steve Stariknok stated I was just looking into the promoting from within policy. You know we talk about
49 the benefits packages and things, where we're a small company, room for advancement and looking
50 ahead on the position, it's especially nice if you know that preference is given to the people who have
51 worked for the company before.

1 Shannon Barton Stark stated and we're also looking at, we would have to now bring somebody in and
2 train them. Spend all the time doing that and quite honestly, if we are to say warn the position, put it in
3 the newspaper and all of this, are we actually putting out a position and giving people hope for a job that
4 more than likely we have somebody who can do the job. If someone is qualified and knows the job, are
5 we spending the money to advertise. I personally feel as though making an appointment from within is
6 going to first off go smoother, hopefully. We do not have to do training. The person is, I believe, the most
7 qualified person to promote from within. I know there is promotions that maybe the person wasn't
8 completely qualified. I own a cleaning business and I'm here tidying things up.

9
10 Shannon Barton Stark stated I'd like to entertain a motion to appoint an interim superintendent for six
11 months.

12 **MOTION was made by Gary Pollender to appoint an interim superintendent for six months. The**
13 **Motion was seconded by Shannon Barton Stark. No discussion.**

14 **Roll Call Vote:**

15 **Voting in Favor: Gary Pollender, Shannon Barton Stark**

16 **Voting Against: None**

17

18 **The MOTION was approved (2-0)**

19 Michael Gadway asked who are you appointing.

20 Shannon Barton Stark stated I'd like to entertain a motion to appoint Brett Sanderson as interim
21 superintendent for six months.

22 **MOTION was made by Gary Pollender to appoint Brett Sanderson as interim superintendent for six**
23 **months. The Motion was seconded by Shannon Barton Stark. No discussion.**

24 **Roll Call Vote:**

25 **Voting in Favor: Gary Pollender, Shannon Barton Stark**

26 **Voting Against: None**

27

28 **The MOTION was approved (2-0)**

29 Shannon Barton Stark stated Brett Sanderson, congratulations.

30 **OTHER BUSINESS:**

31 None.

32 **EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL:**

33

34 Shannon Barton Stark stated I'd like to entertain a motion we go into executive session under personnel.

35 **MOTION was made by Gary Pollender to go into executive session under personnel. The Motion was**
36 **seconded by Shannon Barton Stark. No discussion.**

37 **Roll Call Vote:**

38 **Voting in Favor: Gary Pollender, Shannon Barton Stark**

39 **Voting Against: None**

40

41 **The MOTION was approved (2-0)**

42 1. The board entered into Executive Session at 4:51 p.m.

43 2. The board exited Executive Session at 4:56 p.m.

44

45 **ADJOURNMENT:**

46

47 1. **MOTION made by Shannon Barton Stark and seconded by Gary Pollender to adjourn. Motion**
48 **passed unanimously.**

49 2. Meeting adjourned at 4:56 p.m.

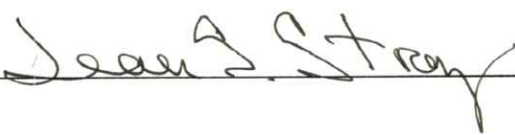
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51

52

1 Respectfully submitted,
2 Tina M. Jarvis
3 Recording Secretary

4
5
6 Shannon Barton Stark, Chairperson  _____

7
8
9
10 Jean Strong  _____

11
12
13
14 Logan Nicoll  _____