

Village of Ludlow Electric Light Department  
Meeting Notice

Board of Commissioners

Date 03/27/2025

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

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Shannon Stark, Chair

Logan Nicoll

Jean Strong

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Chris Recchia

Brett Sanderson

Michael Gadway

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Laura Coriel

Lisha Klaiber

**Agenda**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

- A. Shannon Stark called the meeting to order at 4:32. All members present.

**II. CONSIDERATION OF ANY CHANGES, ADDITIONS OR REMOVALS TO THE AGENDA**

- A. Jean Strong asked if in his report will the Manager provide an update of the Personal Polices.  
B. Chris Recchia said yes.  
C. Jean Strong asked if before the agenda is published, she would like to have a draft sent to all board members for review. This will help avoid changes to the agenda.  
D. Chris Recchia said he will do this.

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- A. Chris Recchia advised that the minutes to be approved are from the meetings of 2/27/2025 and March 13, 2025.  
B. **MOTION by Logan Nicoll and seconded by Shannon Stark to approve the minutes for the meetings listed above as presented. Motion passed unanimously.**

**IV. NEW ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2025**

- A. Chair  
i. **MOTION by Logan Nicoll and seconded by Jean Strong to elect Shannon Stark as Chair. Motion passed unanimously.**  
B. Vice Chair  
i. **MOTION by Jean Strong and seconded by Shannon Stark to elect Logan Nicoll as Vice Chair. Motion passed unanimously.**

- C. Secretary
  - i. **MOTION by Logan Nicoll and seconded by Shannon Stark to elect Jean Strong as Secretary. Motion passed unanimously.**
- D. Minutes Recorder
  - i. **MOTION by Logan Nicoll and seconded by Jean Strong to appoint Lisha Klaiber as Minutes Recorder. Motion passed unanimously.**
- E. Public Publications – VERMONT JOURNAL (primary and RUTLAND HERALD back-up)
  - i. **MOTION by Logan Nicoll and seconded by Jean Strong to continue with the VERMONT JOURNAL (primary and RUTLAND HERALD back-up.) Motion passed unanimously.**
  - ii. Chris Recchia thanked Okemo Valley TV for recording and airing the meetings.

V. **MANAGER'S REPORT**

- A. Chris Recchia said he was not able to submit a written report this month.
  - i. He said that they have been working on the Organization Chart, which is now complete, and are now reviewing positions and Job descriptions for next month's meeting. He said he is working on the Personnel Manual, and it is half done. He is referring to the existing manual, the union contract and a model from Stowe and integrating them. He expects to have it for the next meeting.
  - ii. He said that he and Brett Sanderson are working well on the draft of the job description for the lineman position. He said that now that he knows the structure, it will help with job descriptions.
  - iii. He said that they have done all that they can do to receive payments from FEMA. (They have paid 90% so far). The balance will be paid on pole removals and installation of the transformer.
  - iv. He said that personnel information is now located in a fire-proof, locked cabinet. He and Brett Sanderson have weekly meetings. He said that the audit is done and there were no issues. He thanked Michael Gadway for his help.
- B. Jean Strong asked who did the audit.
- C. Michael Gadway said KBS.
- D. Chris Recchia said that the firm has been doing the audits for a long time.
- E. Michael Galway said that it has just come up that the Village of Ludlow Electric Company is a proprietary fund of the Village of Ludlow but has separate accounting.
- F. Jean Strong said she saw an invoice from KBS for \$24,000.
- G. Chris Recchia said that was for the annual audit. He said the Special Systems Audit has been delayed and should happen within a month.
- H. Jean Strong asked the timing on the job posting for the lineman position.
- I. Chris Recchia said he and Brett Sanderson have been working on it – Lineman/Safety Coordinator. It must be posted in the shop first and then in the papers.
- J. Logan Nicoll suggested that they hire someone to help recruit. VLCT has a list of preferred vendors, and he can reach out to them. He said that Tom Yenerell sent quotes, but they were directed more toward Chris Recchia-type position. For \$7,000, he does everything, advertising, and interviews. He suggested that for this position, we may want to engage with GMP or VPPSA, they have experience that we do not.
- K. Shannon Stark said we pay VPPSA for that.

- L. Chris Recchia said engaging with GMP is a terrific idea. Mari McClure – the CEO may agree to help. He said that interviews should be done by him, Brett Sanderson, Michael Gadway and at least one board member.
- M. Shannon Stark said she would participate.
- N. Chris Recchia said that Brett Sanderson's truck is here. We got a quote from M&T for 6.9% interest. We applied for a State Loan at 2.6%, but they only meet every 6 months. We will have to finance this now and can perhaps refinance this and the loader at a later time.
- O. Shannon Stark asked how long do we have on the M&T loan to cancel.
- P. Michael Gadway said he does not know.
- Q. Chris Recchia said their rate is higher, but we have no options. We will finance \$65,000. We could pay cash. He said that we spent a lot of money efficiently and effectively. We have \$4,600,000 cash. And will cash in another CD for back payment for personnel. Our expenses exceed revenue. That is the emphasis of the PUC.

**VI. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – Copy attached at end of minutes**

- A. Brett Sanderson said that they have done meter readings, checked substations, worked on the 248J Permit for the Howard Barton, Jr. substation, and worked with GMP on the Smithville Substation. New service 13 S Hill and service upgrade Andover Street old Grange. Tree down at Buttermilk Falls Road and the ash tree by the office needs to come down. They will schedule a crane. He said that Vehicle Maintenance and inspections have started. They have had 2 safety meetings.
- B. Jean Strong asked who conducts the safety meetings.
- C. Brett Sanderson said everyone is involved, but Northeast Public Power Association (NEPPA) conducts them.
- D. AMI Meters
  - i. Brett Sanderson said meters have been ordered and should arrive April/May. We have to get some antennas up.
  - ii. We need a meter tester and that is a big expense (\$30,000). We have to test 10% of the new meters on the pallet, but he wants to test the pulled meters because they are not all accurate. He said that GMP came in because a customer complained. We will test the pulled ones and log them into the accounts.
  - iii. Chris Recchia said we need to get the message out that if there is a discrepancy between the old and new meters it is usually because the old ones were running slow.
  - iv. Logan Nicoll asked about widespread discrepancy.
  - v. Brett Sanderson said 4 ½ to 5% loss to us – what we pay and what we bill.
  - vi. Michael Gadway said 4.6% industry average.
  - vii. Logan Nicoll suggested contacting Efficiency Vermont to upgrade to 200 Amp.
  - viii. Michael Gadway said we are working with VPPSA on this. He said that Efficiency Vermont works with VPPSA.
  - ix. Logan Nicoll said that may work well, we do not use enough of the Efficiency Vermont money.
  - x. Michael Gadway said that Efficiency Vermont has a salary cap and not many people in Ludlow are in that range.

**VII. PRESENTATION by LIGHTSHIFT RE: OKEMO 3MW BATTERY PROJECT**

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- A. Laura Coriel said that Lightshift is a standalone energy developer. They have been working on a comparable project for 4 years. They provide analytic, origination, development, engineering/construction and operations. The purpose of the storage is to shave off peaks. They have 6 municipal operational projects in the 2 to 12 MW range. Ludlow's would be 3 MW. She said that demand changes throughout the day. The batteries store energy during low usage times. When the peaks occur, the battery provides energy and takes it out of the grid. For this project, the batteries will be located by the Okemo snowmaking pond, but the battery is for the benefit of Ludlow Electric. Okemo is a great location and offered use of the land for \$0, in exchange for LED to raise the load threshold.
- B. Shannon Stark asked what happens if Vail sells.
- C. Laura Coriel said that is covered in our lease with Okemo for 20 years. She added that the life expectancy of the batteries is 20 years.
- D. Chris Recchia asked if VPPSA is going to manage the project.
- E. Laura Coriel said that VPPSA is their count-party, and we sign the agreement with them.
- F. Michael Gadway added that LED signs with VPPSA.
- G. Chris Recchia said he thought that Okemo would run it in the winter and we in the summer, but we run it all year on behalf of LED.
- H. Laura Coriel said we maintain and VPPSA operated.
- I. Michael Gadway asked about the interconnection line.
- J. Laura Coriel said she is not sure; she thought LED would provide it.
- K. Chris Recchia said that our load includes 1 MW lost.
- L. Michael Gadway said 15.2, he added that the total system load for GM is 3MW.
- M. Laura Coriel indicated the access easement that Okemo has committed to - .3 acres – 30 feet wide.
- N. Chris Recchia said the lines will be underground.
- O. Laura Coriel said there will be 3 containers with 5 MW each and the site is excellent for permitting.
- P. Shannon Stark asked about possible flooding issues.
- Q. Laura Coriel said none.
- R. Chris Recchia said if a dam breaks, the water will go the other way.
- S. Jean Strong asked about local zoning and ACT 250.
- T. Laura Coriel said this project is under the PUC and will receive a Certificate of Public Good (CPG).
- U. Chris Recchia said it is not subject to local zoning.
- V. Shannon Stark asked about loons in the pond.
- W. Chris Recchia said it is a man-made pond and will be regulated.
- X. Laura Coriel said an Endangered Species assessment will be done.
- Y. Chris Recchia said the loons are protected.
- Z. Michael Gadway asked about noise.
- AA. Laura Coriel said they have not done the study, but the inverter fans are the loudest – 70 decibels.
- BB. Michael Gadway said that LED owns land just below on Dug Road – it is 10 feet wide.
- CC. Laura Coriel said she will look into it. She showed pictures for aesthetics at another project that is similar to this one. There is a tolling agreement with VPPSA, and we guarantee it. The rate is about 14 to 16 KWMO; it is a 20-year project with monitory tariffs. She added that battery prices are low right now.
- DD. Chris Recchia said may be ready 2026 – 2027. Are there battery delays? Laura Coriel said Trina batteries in 6 months. Compliance 2 years at minimum – 2027.
- EE. Logan Nicoll asked about augmentation space.

- FF. Laura Coriel said they could add to it, depending on feeder capacity. She said the potential average annual savings is about \$800 k (sum of demand changes and net payments). Total net potential savings of \$18+ million – nominal over 20 years. It shows potential savings for RNS and LNS capacity.
- GG. Michael Gadway said the total transmission charge is \$1.7 million.
- HH. Laura Coriel said even 3 – 8 K. Arbitrage is not included.
- II. Michael Gadway said the peak 12 month rolling average by GMP. If we can shave peak, it will lower costs. He added that Okemo will use more power. He said the process will include a 45-day notice to abutters and then will apply for CPG permit. It will include natural resources, archeology, aesthetics, sound, and development. We will send form to ISO NE to ensure integration with distribution and transmission grid.
- JJ. Chris Recchia said there are some constraints in the Northeast kingdom wind project. It produced more power than the lines could handle and they had to cut back. They have to balance use and storage.
- KK. Shannon Stark asked if this location is not feasible, are there sites further outside of town.
- LL. Laura Coriel said it would have to be within a mile of the substation.
- MM. Michael Gadway said there is not room at our garage.
- NN. Brett Sanderson said we are about the same distance between 2 substations.
- OO. Logan Nicoll asked about up around the Coolidge substation, where the solar project is.
- PP. Brett Sanderson said that it is not tied into our system.
- QQ. Laura Coriel said the 248J is an accelerated project.
- RR. Chris Recchia said he did not think the 248J required a 45-day notice. It may interfere with our other project. He will check with the lawyers.
- SS. Laura Coriel said the project will adhere to NFPA 855 and they will set meetings up with Fire and Ambulance Chiefs.
- TT. Chris Recchia asked if any fire equipment is needed on site – lithium batteries can catch fire.
- UU. Laura Coriel said we have redundant operations and check temperatures remotely.
- VV. Shannon Stark asked if there would be an automatic shutdown if hot.
- WW. Laura Coriel said she thinks so. They have not had issues with batteries.
- XX. Chris Recchia said this meeting is just to get a sense of the project, not for formal approval. Do they have any thoughts about costs?
- YY. Shannon Stark said and time.
- ZZ. Michael Gadway said the contract has to go to VPPSA. We reimburse VPPSA.
- AAA. Chris Recchia asked about the decommissioning process.
- BBB. Shannon Stark asked, if okayed, how long is the project is.
- CCC. Laura Coriel said from 9 months to get contracts signed then 2 years if all goes well. We definitely need to get VPPSA input.
- DDD. Logan Nicoll said he thinks it is a great idea and wondered if we should go bigger.
- EEE. Chris Recchia said that 5MW capacity is a barrier. ISO NE would then have to regulate it, but as they are now reaching into net metering, it may not matter.
- FFF. Michael Gadway said he sends reports to ISO NE and the power grid will become more complicated. He said the data will be available.
- GGG. Logan Nicoll said that the new fire chief may ask about a plan for local training.
- HHH. Laura Coriel said we have plans to work with local EMS before we start.

VIII. **AMENDMENT TO BUDGET TO ACCOMMODATE NEW LINEMAN POSITION**

- A. Chris Recchia said that the position was approved by the board, but it was not included in the budget. We need to add about \$150,000 - \$70,000 salary, plus health and overhead, plus Brett Sanderson.
- B. Logan Nicoll asked if that includes a vehicle.
- C. Chris Recchia said to talk to Brett Sanderson. We have vehicles and at this point a vehicle is not in the plan.
- D. Brett Sanderson said he does not think they will need to add a vehicle.
- E. Jean Strong said that for the next meeting, she would like to see an updated budget and up to date costs.
- F. Chris Recchia said yes.
- G. **MOTION by Jean Strong and seconded by Logan Nicoll to approve the amendment to the budget to include the increase of \$150,000 as discussed. Motion passed unanimously.**
- H. Chris Recchia said this goes into the rate case adjustment. We are getting there.

**IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION - PERSONNEL**

- A. **MOTION by Logan Nicoll and seconded by Jean Strong to enter into Executive Session for Personnel Matter of which premature general public knowledge of discussion would clearly place the public body at a substantial disadvantage. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Board entered into Executive Session at 5:53 p.m.
- C. Board exited Executive Session at 6:35 p.m.
- D. **MOTION by Logan Nicoll and seconded by Jean Strong to exit Executive Session at 6:35 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.**

**X. ACTIONS FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- A. No action taken.

**XI. OTHER BUSINESS**

- A. There was none.

**XII. ADJOURNMENT**

- A. **MOTION by Logan Nicoll and seconded by Jean Strong to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously.**
- B. Meeting adjourned at 6:36 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Lisha Klaiber

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Shannon Stark, Chair

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Jean Strong

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Logan Nicoll

## Superintendents Report

### March 25, 2025

- **Street Light Maintenance**
  - 2 light
- **Meter Reading**
  - In progress
- **Substation Maintenance**
  - Monthly checks
  - Need to schedule to install Regs at Howard Barton Jr. sub Summer of 2025
  - Install Recloser at Smithville sub Summer of 2025
  - Snow removal and shoveling
- **URD Locates**
  - 6 Dig Safe locates
- **Line Maintenance**
  -
- **Monthly outages**
  - Rod gun Rd Tree took line down in cross country
- **Services**
  - New service 13 S hill
  - Service upgrade Andover Street old Grange
- **Line Trimming – Tree removals**
  - Tree removal Buttermilk falls road
- **Vehicle Maintenance**
  - Truck inspections starting
- **Safety Meeting Topic**
  - 2 safety meetings Arc flash & hot stick safety

- Capacitors
- **Shop & Office Maintenance**
  - Snow removal and shoveling
  - Stick and cover testing Completed

**Miscellaneous**

- **Hung Banner Glow event**

DRAFT