

Village of Ludlow Electric Light Department

Meeting Minutes

Board of Commissioners

Date 3/26/2026

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

Members Present:

Shannon Stark

Jean Strong

Members Absent:

Logan Nicoll

Staff Present:

Chris Recchia

Brett Sanderson

Lisa Griswold

Others Present:

Cathy Grant

Patrick Cody

AGENDA

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. Chris Recchia called meeting to order at 4:29 pm. He stated that since the new vote the positions of the board members needed to be nominated/voted on.

II. ANNUAL BOARD RE-ORGANIZATION

A. Election of Chair

- a. Jean Strong nominated Shannon Stark for Chair. Shannon Stark seconded the nomination. Nomination passed unanimously.
b. Meeting passed to Shannon Stark after appointment of Chair.

B. Election of Vice Chair

- a. Shannon Stark nominated Jean Strong for Vice Chair. Jean Strong seconded the nomination. Nomination passed unanimously.

C. Election of Secretary

- a. Shannon Stark nominated Logan Nicoll for Secretary. Jean Strong seconded the nomination. Nomination passed unanimously.

D. Appointment of Recording Clerk.

- a. Shannon Stark appointed Lisa Griswold as Recording Clerk.

E. Set Day and Time for Meetings

- a. Jean Strong suggests continuing to hold meetings on the fourth Thursday of every month at 4:30 pm, in the event the fourth Thursday falls on a holiday meeting will be moved to third Thursday for that month. Shannon Stark agrees.

F. Designate Newspapers of General Circulation

- a. Shannon Stark designates the use of Vermont Journal.

G. Adopt Robert Rules of Order

- a. Shannon Stark adopts Robert Rules of Order for the board.

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

- A. None

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

A. None

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES- February 26, 2026 Meeting

A. MOTION by Jean Strong, seconded by Shannon Stark to approve minutes for February 26, 2026 as they are presented. Motion passed unanimously.

VI. DEPARTMENT MANAGER'S REPORT

- A. Chris Recchia stated that the annual financial audit is done, and the department should have a draft by Monday.
- B. Okemo sent final agreement for the Compressor Project for signature. Recchia has signed and returned the agreement. He is waiting for Okemo/Vail to sign it and send him the agreement signed by all parties.
- C. The EV charging stations project is currently on hold. Recchia stated that he is waiting to talk to Penny, the Town Manager, now that the merger vote is over.
- D. Updating the regulators for the Howard Barton Substation is currently in limbo. The lawyers are figuring out if and what permits are needed in order to complete the work needed.
- E. As a result of the Village and Town Merger, the board will need to discuss expanding the board to town residents.
- F. Chris Recchia shares that there are 2 bills that are being discussed at the state level that will need to be watched. They have been passed by State Senate and going to the House.
- a. Bill S.202, Portable Generation Act. Which allows solar panels to plug into 110 outlets and feed into the system. This could be problematic, as it is a safety concern for our lineworkers.
 - b. Bill S.230, an act relating to fair employment practices. This relates to "extreme temperature" workplace provisions.
- G. Brett Sanderson and Chris Recchia attended a meeting with VPPSA on Wednesday, March 25th regarding the SCADA system that the department was working on independently pursuing a grant. After that meeting, VPPSA is moving forward with that project quickly so it makes sense for the department to join the project with them and change our grant to vegetative management equipment. Will continue during Agenda item 11.
- H. ACRE program is moving forward. VPPSA has resolved how they will treat customers who leave the program and has a balance. Participants will get a credit of \$18.55 per month for five years. If they build a credit and close their account, the customer will get reimbursed the credit. This is all reimbursed by VPPSA. The applications open April 7th, and there are applications available in the office, and online. The March Bills will have a bill insert telling customers about the program. Customers that are on paperless billing will receive a link that includes the application.
- a. Shannon Stark asked to add that if customers don't have access to the internet or printer to go to the office to get an application.

- b. Jean Stron asked who does the bill inserts for the department, Chris Recchia answered that NISC does it combined with the regular billing process.
- c. Jean Strong asked if VPPSA will pay any of the department's administrative expenses. Chris Recchia stated that he brought that up to VPPSA because they receive administration costs through the grant, but the department has to do a lot of the work as well as pay additional cost for the bill inserts. VPPSA came back saying that they will reimburse the department for expenses incurred from the program.

VII. OUTSIDE OPERATION'S MANAGER REPORT

- A. Meter Reading- done for month
- B. Substation Maintenance- Regulators for Howard Barton sub, and reclosure for Smithville both on schedule for this summer.
- C. URD Locates- 3
- D. Outages- 1 on Fox Lane, Ellison Rd needed to be turned off to take tree down.
- E. Service Upgrades- 2
- F. Line Trimming- Commonwealth Ave. spur line.
- G. Safety Meeting Topic- Arc flash hot stick safety. Also, equipment was tested for year.
- H. Shop and Office Maintenance- Winter maintenance.
- I. AMI meters down to just over 800 meters left to change. Inventory was a little off, so Sanderson needs to order some more. Waiting to hear the turnaround time on order.
- J. Sanderson stated that there was an issue found while changing the meters. While changing the meters out there was a meter found that had a device installed between the meter and the meter socket. It is a inter-disconnect for a generator, which have not been accepted by our department as of yet because they make safer disconnects for generators. It creates another trouble point when the meter/meter socket stops working. The electrician cut the seal and pulled the meter without permission from Sanderson. This is something the electrician can be fined for. Sanderson has talked to the customer and has reached out to the electrician.

III. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON AMENDMENT TO EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

- A. Chris Recchia stated that he made an amendment to the HRA portion of the Employee Handbook saying that the department shall fund a HRA for all **eligible** employees who are enrolled in the department's health insurance plan(s) **to the extent those plans allow**. Lisa Griswold stated that the reason for the amendment is because the time the handbook was written there was only one health insurance plan. The department has since decided to offer a Gap insurance plan to those on Medicare, which is not a HRA eligible plan.
- B. MOTION by Jean Strong, seconded by Shannon Stark to approve the amendment as proposed. Motion passed unanimously.

C. Brett Sanderson said that the shop employees are going to start the trial for the summer hours working four- 9 hour days, and one- 4 hour day for the summer, which was discussed during the Union negotiations. Shannon asked how the holiday pay would be done. Chris Recchia said there were some updates and wanted to talk to Sanderson and Griswold before he reports it to the board. Jean Strong asked if the shop would be closed on Friday afternoons, or if they would rotate. Brett Sanderson stated that the shop would be closed, and it would be an On-call situation but the On-call pay was not changing. Jean Strong asked if this could be brought up again for the April Board Meeting.

IX. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON POWER SERVICE AGREEMENT WITH VPPSA FOR FLATLAND SOLAR PROJECT, SWANTON

- A. Chris Recchia stated that last month the board gave him authorization to express interest in the Flatland Solar Project up to 30%. VPPSA has allocated 20% to Ludlow Electric. There are 7 utilities participating. The lowest percent is 8%, highest is 25%, Ludlow is recommended for 20%. Recchia recommends going forward with the project and asked the board to authorize him to sign the contract.
- B. MOTION by Jean Strong, seconded by Shannon Stark to authorize Chris Recchia to sign the agreement for 20% of the Flatland Solar Project, Swanton at \$122.40/kw. Motion passed unanimously.

X. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON FINANCING NEW BUCKET TRUCK

- A. Chris Recchia stated that there are two options to finance the new Bucket Truck. M&T Bank has offered the department a 6- or 7-year loan at the municipal rate. 4.864% interest for 6 years or 4.896% for 7 years. The other option is to finance through Altec at 6.25% interest. Recchia asked for permission to go through M&T Bank for 7-year option. The only thing that Recchia mentioned is that it is lease financing, meaning that if the loan is paid off early, the department will still need to pay all interest that is due for the 7-year period of the loan. This is the same for all of the options through both banks.
- B. MOTION by Jean Strong, seconded by Shannon Stark to finance the new bucket truck through M&T Bank and to have Chris Recchia sign for the loan. Motion passed unanimously.

XI. DISCUSSION AND ACTION ON REVISED CAPITAL BUDGET

- A. Chris Recchia stated that there is a plan for replacing the second bucket truck in 2029. He said that the board needs to start think about it now and needs to plan for 2-3 years for buying it. This is now in the revised Capital Budget.
- B. Recchia stated that the second revision is adding vegetative management equipment to take care of more vegetative management in house, instead of hiring it out. The department will get an excavator for this.
- C. MOTION by Jean Strong, seconded by Shannon Stark to approve the revised Capital Budget. Motion passed unanimously.

XII. CONTINUE DISCUSSION OF RATE DESIGN AND TARIFFS

- A. Chris Recchia stated that in February's Board Meeting the Board gave him some guidance on the direction that they were wanting to go with the demand rate.

Currently the guidelines are 2000 kwh or 9 kw triggers the demand rate. If the guidelines are changed to eliminate the kwh trigger, and the kw trigger is moved to 15kw, this changes the number of customers on demand rate from 263 to 67. To make this revenue neutral, the rate for demand would need to be raised to \$.14/kwh. Recchia said that he did reach out to Logan Nicoll about this before the meeting and he was in approval of this direction. Chris Recchia stated that id the board is comfortable with this, then he will check with the DPS to see if they are ok with this. Jean Strong asked for the department to check the numbers again before moving forward.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. None

IV. ANY ACTION FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. None

XV. OTHER BUSINESS

A. None

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

A. MOTION by Jean Strong, seconded by Shannon Stark to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Shannon Stark adjourned the meeting at 5:52 pm.

Minutes Submitted by Lisa Griswold

Shannon Stark, Chair

Logan Nicoll, Secretary

Jean Strong, Vice Chair