

## **Minutes: Stowe Electric Board of Commissioners' Meeting**

July 24, 2024, at 8:30 am at Town of Stowe Electric Department Conference Room with remote participation available via Zoom.

### **Present:**

BOARD MEMBERS: Larry Lackey, Chair; Sara Teachout, Vice-Chair and Mark Gilkey, Commissioner

STAFF: Jackie Pratt, General Manager; Sarah Juzek, Director of Finance & Amber Ives, Clerk of the Board

**Call to Order:** L. Lackey called the meeting to order at 8:34 am.

### **Agenda Approval:**

M. Gilkey moved to adopt the warned agenda, S. Teachout seconded the motion, and the agenda was approved.

### **Meeting Minutes Approval: May 29, 2024 & June 18, 2024**

All were in favor of approval.

### **Alchemist Electric Vehicle (EV) Chargers:**

J. Pratt informed the Board of Commissioners that the Alchemist requested that Stowe Electric Department (SED) remove both charging stations on their property:

- Alchemist I- DC Fast Charger (1<sup>st</sup> Generation Technology): Non-Operable
- Alchemist II – DC Fast Charger (2<sup>nd</sup> Generation Technology): Operable

J. Pratt recommended decommissioning the Alchemist I charger and relocating the Alchemist II charger. J. Pratt apprised the Board of Commissioners that SED is currently working with the Town of Stowe and the Stowe Energy Committee to find a suitable location for the relocation of the Alchemist II charger.

J. Pratt also notified the Board of Commissioners that the Town & Country is currently under renovation and that their parking lot is no longer available to host SED's EV

charger. J. Pratt recommended relocating this Level 2 charger to Stowe Electric's property on Moscow Rd.

The Board of Commissioners voiced support of SED's presented plan for the three EV chargers.

### **Open Meeting Law Changes:**

J. Pratt summarized the Open Meeting Law changes that took effect on July 1, 2024: physical location for meetings, recording requirements, training requirements and the Open Meeting Law Violation Notice.

J. Pratt informed L. Lackey that under the recent changes, beginning January 1, 2025, all chairs of legislative bodies will need to take an annual Open Meeting Law training developed by the Secretary of State.

J. Pratt also familiarized the Board of Commissioners with the Open Meeting Law Violation Notice and informed the Board of Commissioners that both the Town of Stowe and SED posted this information to their websites on July 1, 2024, in compliance with the new regulations.

The Board of Commissioners and staff also discussed the recording requirement for all local non-advisory public bodies which now requires that non-advisory bodies record all meetings in audio or video form and post the recording for at least 30 days following the approval or posting of the official minutes for the meeting. The Board of Commissioners and staff discussed preference for audio or video recording (video was determined as the preferred format), as well as outlining a clear policy for the timeframe on how long a video would be available for viewing on SED's website.

### **General Manager Highlights:**

J. Pratt notified the Board of Commissioners that SED has partnered with the Agritech Institute for Small Farms to use goats to graze the underbrush along a one-mile portion of the sub transmission line that serves Mountain Rd and that the goal of the project is to improve reliability through the removal of substantial vegetation growth in an off-road area with rough terrain that our crews would have difficulty clearing. J. Pratt informed the Board of Commissioners that once the goats have sufficiently cleared the underbrush, navigating the terrain will be easier for our Tree Crew to complete removal of larger growth along that section of line.

The Board of Commissioners and J. Pratt discussed the logistics of the project, as well as the cost/benefit analysis.

J. Pratt also discussed NextEra's Outback Acres Solar project and informed the Board of Commissioners that NextEra has decided that the project is not economically viable.

J. Pratt and the Board of Commissioners discussed the termination of the project and its' impact on SED's Renewable Energy Credits (RECs), the need for an analysis by Energy New England (ENE) to determine impact to power supply costs and REC needs, potential payout due to dissolution of the contract, alternative projects, as well as the various options available to SED in order to meet Vermont's Renewable Energy Standard (RES).

The Board of Commissioners and J. Pratt agreed to further discuss the Outback Acres Solar project and the input of ENE at the August Commission meeting.

Under General Manager Highlights, J. Pratt also provided the Board of Commissioners with an update on the Hydro Project, July 2024 Flood Impacts, personnel, tax sale utility liens, and cyber security training.

### **Other Business:**

L. Lackey presented questions to staff relating to SED's recent audit. The Board of Commissioners and staff discussed the Audit Engagement Letter, segregation of duties, and the notification of audit errors to the appropriate personnel, as well as the Board of Commissioners.

SED staff and the Board of Commissioners decided that follow-up to the discussion would be addressed via the Auditor's Inquiry Document.

The Board of Commissioners and staff also discussed the progress of the tariff study being conducted by Power Line Models (PLM) and how the results of that study will be used to evaluate and update other SED tariffs and filings.

SED staff and the Board of Commissioners discussed changing the scheduled Commission meeting dates for August, September, and October due to scheduling conflicts. The new dates agreed upon for up-coming Board of Commissioners meeting are:

- August 30, 2024, at 8:30 am
- September 24, 2024, at 8:30 am
- October 16, 2024, at 8:30 am

There being no further business, S. Teachout moved to adjourn the meeting and M. Gilkey seconded. All were in favor, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:55 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Amber Ives*

Amber Ives

Clerk of the Board