

Meeting Date: March 21, 2011

TOWN OF BELMONT  
MUNICIPAL LIGHT BOARD AND MUNICIPAL LIGHT ADVISORY BOARD  
TOWN HALL SELECTMEN'S MEETING ROOM  
MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2011 AT 6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting of the Municipal Light Advisory Board and the Light Board was called to order by Ralph Jones at 6:30 p.m. at the Belmont Town Hall Selectmen's Board Room.

---

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ashley Brown, MLAB Chair

Mark Paolillo, LB

Bob Forrester, MLAB

Jim Palmer, BMLD General Manager

Gretchen McClain, MLAB

Patricia Diorio, MLAB

Tim McCarthy, MLAB

Angelo Firenze, LB

Ralph Jones, LB

---

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

There were no minutes to be approved for the Board.

---

OUTSIDE CONSULTANT ROLE:

Angelo stated that the consultant John Kilgo was hired to help the Board understand more about the 115KV project. He was hired by Angelo to advise the three selectmen however, it was never presented or approved by the MLAB Board. He felt that hiring John Kilgo would only benefit The Light Board. From

Firenze's perspective he is relatively inexpensive and can provide value to the Selectmen to help them work with the MLAB and Jim Palmer.

Ralph Jones's concern was the strain it has caused Jim Palmer and the BMLD. He stated that most Managers' don't have the time imposed by the consultant and the demands he was asking for.

Paolillo stated that it was a mistake not consulting with the Advisory Board first before hiring John Kilgo. It should have been a joint decision. Initially, they supported the idea of the consultant mainly to get an independent point of view. Paolillo welcomed the opportunity for a consultant because it is not in his background to have knowledge about a 115KV project. He stated that in his contract Kilgo outlined three items. Those items were the 115KV project, the governance structure, and the long term benefit of the BMLD to the resident's. Paolillo stated if it was possible to redefine that outline and do a new contract. The resident's might welcome an objective, independent point of view. The intent was not to burden Palmer with more demands. By redefining the scope and having Kilgo tell Palmer what exactly he will need from him, without being over burdened with constant emails and requests at the same time Palmer is trying to run the Light Department.

Jim Palmer agreed with Paolillo and stated that communication is very important especially when making decisions like this because it affects others. Palmer stated that the Belmont Light Department is going through reorganization and as any reorganizations go they can be very sensitive. He stated as manager of the Light Department he should have been consulted first. Palmer would have then stated what was going on at the Light Department during that time and the reasons why no one was prepared to have a consultant hired. Palmer stated that the employees at the Light Department have gone through a lot in the past six months. Now that he has been appointed as manager there is still transition going on. Other outside consultants have recently come in to the BMLD to interview employees, along with Palmer. The interviewing process was performed to have a better understanding of the needs of the BMLD. Therefore, Palmer stated that bringing on more consultants to do the same thing and asking the same questions is very stressful for the employees.

Firenze stated Kilgo's demands were due to him trying to get familiar with the Light Department as part of his contract. Firenze stated that Kilgo should be given copies of reports and findings he is looking for. Palmer stated that is exactly what was done.

Paolillo states that this is clearly a burden issue with the consultant. He agrees with Jim Palmer that they should have gone to Jim first, to get his opinion on the issue. Palmer adds that the timeframe when all this began was back during a lot of turmoil. Angelo states that Kilgo was simply hired to inform the Board as to what they need to know. He said that the eight board members present have not done a good job in the past running the Light Department. Ashley Brown stated that is because the Board with all the expertise has no authority, and the Board with all the authority has no expertise.

Palmer stated that the people he works with are some of the top in the industry. He will get whoever and whatever is needed to make the Board comfortable about what is going on. He said that they should talk to Jim Harrington from Mott MacDonald, Jim finds him to be the best in that field.

Angelo stated if the three selectmen are comfortable with John Kilgo, why can't Jim Palmer be? Jim states that the correspondence he has received from Kilgo was inappropriate, and you don't start off a relationship like that. Palmer felt like he was being deposed when he read what Kilgo was sending him. Palmer asked does the Board want him to run the light department or not, because that is what it comes down to.

Firenze then stated to terminate Kilgo. If the Light Board and the Director of the Light Department does not have faith in the Light Board to make decisions like this then terminate the contract. Palmer stated that it is not a faith issue, and Firenze said that is exactly what it is. Palmer stated that it was a timing issue. The Board voted to terminate the contract with John Kilgo.

---

#### GOVERNANCE ISSUE:

It was discussed to give one Board for Jim Palmer to report to instead of the current two Boards in place. Paolillo would support letting the Light Board interact with the Manager to run it. Firenze disagreed with that option. Jones

proposed for an April town meeting and agreed that the governance will be discussed at a later time.

---

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned by Ralph Jones at 7:05 p.m.