

**Chicopee Municipal Lighting Board**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**Thursday, April 20, 2023**

Chairman Pasternak called a regular meeting of the Chicopee Municipal Lighting Board to order at 4:04 PM on Thursday, April 20, 2023

Present for this meeting were Commissioner Carl E. Sittard, Commissioner Joseph F. Pasternak, III, Commissioner Daniel J. Mashia and General Manager and Clerk of the Board James M. Lisowski.

Commissioner Sittard made a motion to accept the minutes of the March 29, 2023 meeting as presented. Commissioner Pasternak seconded the motion. Discussion: None; Motion was passed 3 to 0.

Commissioner Sittard made a motion to concur with the payment of **Warrant #E041423** dated 4/10/2023 in the amount of \$481,785.75; **Warrant #E041423** dated 4/10/2023 in the amount of \$191,178.31; **Warrant #E042123** dated 4/13/2023 in the amount of \$244,442.02 and **Warrant #E042123** dated 4/18/2023 in the amount of \$4,233,577.74

Commissioner Mashia seconded the motion. Discussion: None; Motion was passed 3 to 0.

Commissioner Sittard made a motion to pay **Bills and Customer Refunds** in the amount of **\$64,862.69**. Commissioner Pasternak seconded the motion. Discussion: None; Motion was passed 3 to 0.

Commissioner Mashia made a motion to **Write-off the Uncollectibles** in the amount of **\$32,173.32** for accounts dating back to Q1 2022 (1 Year lag). Commissioner Sittard seconded the motion. Discussion: The General Manager informed the Board \$10,873.71 is related to 2 accident jobs from 2019 and 2020 that we (and our attorney) have exhausted all reasonable efforts to collect on. The amount for this quarter is the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest total since the start of 2019. The Commissioners asked if we could look into the benefit of engaging a collection agency and ability to report to a credit reporting agency; Motion was passed 3 to 0.

### **DELINQUENCY REPORT**

The General Manager provided an update to the Board on the level of our delinquencies as of mid-April. The Mass DPU extended the winter disconnect moratorium until April 1<sup>st</sup> and CEL officially started the collection/disconnect process on April 3<sup>rd</sup>. As of the date of this report, there are a total 756 accounts totaling \$857,079. Of these totals, 143 (~20%) are protected accounts (elderly, serious illness and baby), totaling approx. \$316,000 (~40%). In the first 2+ weeks following the lifting of the moratorium, the # of delinquent accounts have been reduced by 65, dollar amount reduced by \$55,000 and the number of payment plans has increased from 50 to 180. The numbers are approximately 50-60% higher than they were this time last year. This can be attributed to several factors including the economy and the increase in the rates and the resulting higher bills. We currently process approx. 160 disconnects per week, so the full impact of our efforts will not be seen until the end of May. We focus on the higher amounts initially (>\$1,000 – Qty of ~200) and then turn our attention to the accounts with lower balances. Approximately 75% of the totals (# and \$) are for renters/tenants, further justifying the deposit increases we implemented recently. We also recently learned that benefit levels for fuel assistance were increased and we should see some additional funds coming from VOC for this past heating season – amount TBD.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

- Crossroads Fiber Update: The General Manager informed the Board that we currently have 68 FSA's open and approximately 3,250 active customers. There are 5 FSA's under construction and we have identified the next 6 FSA's to be constructed this Spring and Summer. We have 5 additional FSA's designed and in the construction hopper and an additional 3-4 under design. We will need an additional 3-4 designed for 2023. There are 176 customers in the queue who have signed an application for service. We have added a Sertex survey crew to supplement CEL personnel to try and reduce the timeframe from application to installation – goal is to keep the time from submission of application to installation under 30 days. We are in the process of hiring a 4<sup>th</sup> telecom technician and a 2<sup>nd</sup> CSR/Scheduler/Dispatcher – hope to have both on board in May.

The General Manager recommended that the Board go into executive session for the purpose of approving the Executive Session minutes of the March meeting and discussing sensitive personnel and financial information regarding the selection of the new General Manager and return to Regular Session after conclusion. The motion was seconded on the basis of a roll call vote as follows:

Pasternak	Aye
Sittard	Aye
Mashia	Aye

The motion was passed 3 to 0.

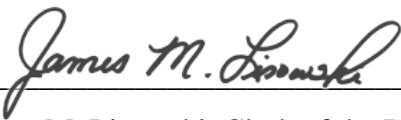
Commissioner Pasternak made a motion at 6:28 PM to adjourn from Executive Session and enter into Regular Session. The motion was seconded on the basis of a roll call vote as follows:

Pasternak	Aye
Sittard	Aye
Mashia	Aye

The motion was passed 3 to 0.

The Board authorized the General Manager to negotiate a contract with their selected candidate for the new General with the financial guardrails as identified in the Executive Session. The General Manager will present to the Board the contract for execution at the May meeting.

Commissioner Sittard made a motion to adjourn at 6:30 pm. Commissioner Mashia seconded the motion. Discussion: None; Motion was passed 3 to 0.

  
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James M. Lisowski, Clerk of the Board

Approved: May 31, 2023