

**Chicopee Municipal Lighting Board**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**Wednesday, March 19, 2025**

Chairman Pasternak called a regular meeting of the Chicopee Municipal Lighting Board to order at 2:13 PM on Monday, February 24, 2025.

**Present:**

- Chairman Joseph F. Pasternak, III
- Commissioner Daniel T. Maciolek
- Commissioner Daniel J. Mashia
- General Manager and Clerk of the Board, Daniel R. Faille

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**Approval of Minutes**

Commissioner Mashia made a motion to accept the minutes of the February 24, 2025, meeting as presented. Commissioner Maciolek seconded the motion. **Discussion:** None. **Vote:** Motion passed 3 to 0.

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**Financial Approvals**

Commissioner Maciolek made a motion to concur with the payment of the following warrants: *Warrant #E022825 dated 2/24/2025 in the amount of \$3,078,651.81; Warrant #E022825 dated 2/20/2025 in the amount of \$245,244.97; Warrant #E030725 dated 3/3/2025 in the amount of \$31,884.39; Warrant #E030725 dated 2/27/2025 in the amount of \$303,276.75; Warrant #E031425 dated 3/10/2025 in the amount of \$43,512.06; Warrant #E031425 dated 3/6/2025 in the amount of \$306,011.88; Warrant #E032125 dated 3/17/2025 in the amount of \$907,969.75 and Warrant #E032125 dated 3/13/2025 in the amount of \$413,539.25.*

Commissioner Mashia seconded the motion. **Discussion:** None. **Vote:** Motion passed 3 to 0.

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Commissioner Mashia made a motion to approve the payment of Bills and Customer Refunds in the amount of \$137,264.92. Commissioner Maciolek seconded the motion. **Discussion:** None. **Vote:** Motion passed 3 to 0.

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**Bid Approval for Diesel Tank Installation – CEL Bid #25-0516**

**Background**

- CEL received two bids for **Bid #25-0516** on **February 27, 2025:**
  - Lemelin Environmental Services: **\$152,455** (Lowest Bidder)
  - SRS Petroleum Services: **\$186,450**
- Tighe & Bond's cost estimate: **\$210,000**
- **Evaluation Findings:**
  - Lemelin's bid is complete, compliant, and competitive.

- 21 years in business with a positive track record on similar projects.
- **Recommendation:**
  - Tighe & Bond recommends awarding the contract to Lemelin, pending receipt of Performance and Payment Bonds and certificate of insurance.

### **Motion for Board Approval**

A motion was made by Commissioner Mashia seconded by Commissioner Maciolek, to award the Diesel Tank Installation contract (CEL Bid #25-0516) to Lemelin Environmental Services for \$152,455, contingent upon receipt of the required Performance and Payment Bonds and certificate of insurance.

**Discussion:** None.

**Vote:** Motion passed 3 to 0.

**Document:** *T&B\_Award\_Letter.pdf*

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### **Crossroads Fiber’s Participation in Chicopee’s Digital Equity Plan**

On March 20, 2025, the City of Chicopee’s Digital Equity Working Group (DEWG) will hold its first meeting to begin addressing digital access challenges in the community. This initiative, led by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) and funded by the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI), aims to improve internet availability, affordability, and digital literacy for residents.

As a key internet provider in Chicopee, Crossroads Fiber will participate in this process to stay engaged with city-led efforts and represent the needs of both customers and the utility. While the plan is still in its early stages, our involvement ensures that municipal discussions around digital equity consider the existing infrastructure, financial realities, and strategic goals of Crossroads Fiber.

At this time, participation in the DEWG is focused on staying informed and providing input where appropriate. No commitments or program changes are being proposed. Further updates will be provided as the plan develops.

No board vote is required. **Document:** *PVPC City of Chicopee Digital Equity Plan, Draft #3B – 2/5/25*

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### **Legislative Updates**

The General Manager presented the following legislative updates to the board:

#### ***Tariff Update & Potential Impact on CEL Rates***

Recent developments in U.S.-Canada trade relations have introduced new tariffs that may affect electricity imports from Canada. These changes could have significant implications for Chicopee Electric Light (CEL) and its customers.

#### ***Current Tariff Landscape***

On March 4, 2025, the U.S. implemented a 25% tariff on most Canadian goods and a 10% tariff specifically on energy imports, including electricity. In retaliation, Ontario imposed a 25%

surcharge on electricity exports to U.S. states such as Michigan, Minnesota, and New York. Although Ontario later suspended this surcharge, the situation remains fluid and could impact electricity markets in the region.

#### *Potential Impact on CEL*

- **Supply Chain Considerations:** While CEL does not directly import electricity from Canada, regional market dynamics influenced by these tariffs could indirectly affect our operations. For instance, increased costs for utilities in neighboring states might lead to shifts in electricity demand and supply, potentially impacting wholesale electricity prices in the broader New England area.
- **Wholesale Electricity Prices:** Tariffs on Canadian electricity imports could lead to higher wholesale electricity prices in New England. This increase would affect CEL's power procurement costs, potentially leading to higher operational expenses.
- **Customer Rates:** If CEL's procurement costs rise due to increased wholesale prices, these costs may need to be passed on to customers in the form of higher electricity rates. The exact impact on customer bills would depend on the extent of the wholesale price increase and CEL's pricing strategies.

The evolving trade situation between the U.S. and Canada presents potential challenges for CEL, particularly concerning procurement costs and customer rates. We will continue to monitor developments closely and assess their impact on our operations and customers. Our commitment remains to provide reliable and affordable electricity to the Chicopee community.

#### *MEAM Statement for MLP support*

As a community-owned, not-for-profit utility, Chicopee Electric Light (CEL) has always prioritized affordability, reliability, and local control. Unlike investor-owned utilities (IOUs), CEL's decisions are made by and for our customers, ensuring that policies and programs reflect the needs of our community—not the interests of corporate shareholders.

However, a series of proposed state regulations threaten to erode our local authority, increase costs for ratepayers, and impose one-size-fits-all mandates that ignore the unique role of Municipal Light Plants (MLPs). These policies include:

- Large Building Reporting mandates, which could expose private business energy usage data and create unnecessary administrative burdens.
- The Clean Heat Standard (CHS), which would penalize MLPs financially if we do not meet arbitrary electrification targets, ultimately raising electric rates for customers.
- The Building Decarbonization Clearinghouse, which would force MLPs to implement costly state-run efficiency programs instead of maintaining our more effective, locally designed initiatives.

CEL, along with other Massachusetts Municipal Electric Association (MEAM) members, opposes these policies not because we oppose clean energy, but because they threaten the financial stability and operational autonomy of our utility. We already invest in smart, cost-effective clean energy solutions, and we strongly believe that MLPs should retain the authority to determine the best path forward for our communities.

The General Manager requested that the Chicopee Municipal Light Board lend their support to this effort.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Commissioner Mashia, seconded by Commissioner Maciolek, and supported by Commissioner Pasternak to approve the prepared statement opposing the Large Building Reporting Mandate, the Clean Heat Standard, and the Building Decarbonization Clearinghouse, and to authorize the General Manager to submit this statement in coordination with MEAM and other MLPs.

**Vote:** All in favor, document signed

**Document:** *2025\_MLP\_Statement.pdf*

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## **Executive Session**

Motion for the Municipal Light Board to enter into executive session pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, § 21(a)(6) for discussing:

1. The potential purchase of an ownership stake in a power plant;
2. Matters related to potential long-term lease negotiations concerning power sales, as discussing these in open session may have a detrimental effect on the public body's negotiating position.
3. For the purpose of approving the minutes from the prior executive session.

The Board will return to open session following the executive session.

Commissioner Maciolek made a motion to enter executive session.

Commissioner Mashia seconded the motion.

## **Roll Call Vote:**

- **Joseph F. Pasternak, III** – Aye
- **Daniel T. Maciolek** – Aye
- **Daniel J. Mashia** – Aye

**Vote:** Motion passed **3 to 0**.

The Board entered executive session at 3:03 PM

The Board returned to open session at 3:31 PM

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## **Regular Session (Resumed)**

**New Business** – The General Manager shared an update from the Accounting Manager, reporting that total revenue for January 2025 exceeded the budget by just under \$400K. However, power costs came in approximately \$1.1M over budget. This shortfall was partially offset by slightly lower operating expenses, increased interest income, and \$266K in investment gains. As a result, the net loss for the month totaled \$244,679, which aligns with expectations for January, as revenue collection is distributed throughout the year.

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## **Adjournment**

Chairman Pasternak made a motion to adjourn at 3:46 PM

Commissioner Maciolek seconded the motion.

**Discussion:** Next meeting tentatively set for April 23, 2025.

**Vote:** Motion passed Motion passed 3 to 0.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daniel R. Faille".

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Daniel R. Faille, Clerk of the Board

Approved: April 23, 2025