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Communicating rate increases is topic of recent workshop

The NEPPA Public Communications Committee recently hosted a roundtable discussion on "Communicating the Reality of Rate Increases" at the Kennebunk Inn in Kennebunk, Maine.

Sharon Staz, general manager and treasurer of the Kennebunk Light and Power District, welcomed participants and then turned the program over to facilitators Steve Kaminski, vice-president of power resources at the New Hampshire Electric Cooperative and Ruth Slater, energy advisor at Braintree Electric Light

Michael Sheehan at the NRECA Annual Meeting, the plan includes timed and targeted outreach and education elements for all NHEC employees and members. The plan focuses on three points: Reasons for the increasing price of electricity, what NHEC is doing about higher costs and what customers can do to lower their electric bills. It involves newsletter articles, presentations to all employees, public access cable programming, "straight talk" wallet cards, and key accounts visits and presentations.

Ray Gosney, NHEC's vice president of member solutions passed out folders with many of the materials that are being used in this plan, as well as a DVD of the Sheehan presentation.

Slater followed Kaminski with some valuable tips on helping customers take control. She reviewed a standard elec-



Ruth Slater (standing) gets input from Laurie Cavagnaro and Priscilla Gottwald of Reading Municipal Light Department on communicating with customers regarding rate increases.

Steve Kaminski shares NHEC's power supply strategy.

Department.

Kaminski led a discussion on wholesale electricity and retail rates and reviewed the major pieces of supply procurement including risks and costs and how it all translates into rate setting. He also talked about the NHEC's approach to large rate increases through a plan called, "Straight Talk about the Cost of Electricity."

Based on a presentation by



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Executive Director's Report

New England: New Century, New Market

by Patrick Hyland



At NEPPA's annual conference in August, respected author and journalist Neal Peirce spoke on the topic of New England's future, and why the region is losing population, jobs and young talent to other areas of the country. In addition to our well-deserved reputation for parochialism and mistrust of outsiders, he highlighted some fundamental economic and political factors that work against us: high taxes driven by a multiplicity of government agencies; high health care costs driven by an aging population and a large medical industry; high energy costs owing to the lack of indigenous fuels in our region, along with active citizen opposition to new power plants and transmission lines; and very high housing costs due to limited land area for new development.

To this list of reasons to move out of New England, a new one will soon be added, in the form of a brand new experiment in the electric utility industry. Beginning in December, electric consumers (that is, everyone) will be asked to dig deeper into their wallets to begin the "tran-

sition" to yet another new market administered by ISO-New England. This market, which will be known as the "forward capacity market," is just the latest in a long list of creations which have been hatched by the proponents of electric restructuring. The theory, which is all we have right now, is that the price of electric capacity can be set several years in advance, through competitive bidding, so that generators can be assured of a revenue stream, thus triggering new investments to capture this future income. While it sounds reasonable on paper, the real proof will not occur until the bidding begins in 2008, and the prices are set for 2010. Only then will we be able to see whether pre-set prices begin to attract new investments in the region's power generation business.

In the meantime, we face the need to keep a lot of old generators in business, so that the lights stay on. To accomplish this, a "transition period" of at least three years has been agreed to, during which

Continued on next page

Staff

Patrick Hyland
executive director
phyland@neppa.org

Kris Nicolas
administrative director
knicolas@neppa.org

Mary Harrington
communications director
mharrington@neppa.org

Sheila Boone
administrative secretary
sboone@neppa.org

David Fabrizio
safety director
dfabrizius@neppa.org

Lori O'Donoghue
training & events coordinator
lodonoghue@neppa.org

Board of Directors

Ted Garille
president
Pascoag, R.I.

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first vice-president
Mansfield, Mass.

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Belmont, Mass.

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Hingham, Mass.

Eric C. Werner
Hardwick, Vt.

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tel: 508.482.5906
fax: 508.482.0932
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The Northeast Public Power Association is an organization representing and serving consumer-owned electric utilities in New England.

Garille is new NEPPA president



Theodore G. Garille, general manager of the Pascoag (R.I.) Utility District, was elected NEPPA president during NEPPA's 2006 Annual Conference in Plymouth, Mass. He has been at the Pascoag utility since 1996 and has an extensive background in utility management that dates back to 1965 when he left the Army and joined Southern California Edison as a delivery boy. During his 16-year career at Southern California he served in several capacities including transmission and distribution, employee services, customer service and billing, municipal and media relations, and construction maintenance and operation. Shortly after joining Pascoag, he was contacted by Pat Hyland about participation in NEPPA activities.

"At first, I was reluctant to get involved," he said, "but soon realized that NEPPA was not only an invaluable resource for safety and training, but also much more."

Garille joined the Board in 1997 and says that really opened up his eyes to the real workings of NEPPA.

"I was a neophyte to public power but quickly learned that there isn't a more dedicated group of individuals anywhere.

There is strength in numbers, and pulling together despite disagreements spells success."

Collective action is particularly important in the legislative field, he added.

After attending a legislative rally in Washington, D.C., Garille said that he realized that since Pascoag is the only public power entity in Rhode Island, he had the responsibility of establishing and maintaining relationships with Rhode Island legislators.

Besides being active in legislative affairs, Garille serves on the Annual Conference Committee, the Executive Committee and he is chair of the Nominating Committee. He said he is looking forward to the implementation of a new strategic plan that is in process and firmly believes that NEPPA is at a crossroads with generational differences presenting one of the biggest challenges ahead. "Things that used to work may not work as well in the future," he said.

Garille urges NEPPA members to be supportive of the organization and be part of the process.

"Don't wait to be called. Remember, NEPPA exists to serve you."

New Century New Market

Continued from page 2

generators (and demand-side resources that qualify) will receive guaranteed capacity payments, ranging from \$3.05 to \$4.10 per kW-month. It is these payments that will begin in December, and they are big. The estimated cost for the payments throughout the region is nearly \$5 billion (that's billion) over the three-year period. Simply put, it is a transfer of wealth from consumers to suppliers on a grand scale, and a very large pill to swallow for New England consumers who already pay the highest electric rates in the country (excluding Hawaii).

It can be hoped that the great experiment is a success; that the forward capacity market works like a charm, and that knowing the price of electricity three years in advance does the trick for new investments. Since none of this has been yet demonstrated, all we can do is hope.

In the meantime, power generators in New England want to express their thanks to all of us, and to wish us all a happy and healthy transition period. We should be thankful to be on the cutting edge of social change and business innovation. Long live the markets!

Rate Increases

Continued from page 1

tric bill and explained how the costs are broken out, and how to use appliance usage checklists and bill usage history of customers to determine electricity costs of customers.

After lunch, part of the Sheehan DVD was shown and roundtable participants shared some experiences and ideas. Pam Irwin of Danvers Electric Division described the steps taken to produce programs with their local cable access station to inform customers about their electric

rates. Sharon Staz shared with the group the devastating impact on her utility of a sudden, large rate increase without proper warning, and what they are doing to build back the good will of their customers.

As space was limited for this event, NEPPA is considering holding this roundtable again in another location if there is enough interest. Please email sboone@neppa.org if you would be interested in attending this program.

What's NEPPA Shop Talk?

NEPPA is striving to be the leading research and information source for public power utilities in the Northeast. As part of this endeavor, we have installed a new feature on the NEPPA web site which enables members to ask questions and share information with other northeast public power officials on matters of common interest. It can be accessed by clicking on the *Shop Talk* button on the home page of www.neppa.org.

NEPPA *On Line*

NEPPA :: Shop Talk

A discussion of the needs of public power by public power

If you have questions you've wanted to ask of the NEPPA membership at large, contact the NEPPA office (call 508-482-5906 or email sboone@neppa.org). An interactive dialogue will be developed on-line and will be available to any NEPPA member.

NEPPA is also exploring how to make available business practices, standards and policies for members and the development of web-based inventories of equipment and resources for member's use. Member input is welcome. Please e-mail your suggestions and ideas for new and innovative strategies for communicating with its members to phyland@neppa.org.

Letters

AvCom, Inc.

Dear Directors:

Thank you very much for making AvCom your Outstanding Associate Member for 2006. All of us at AvCom are very grateful for the honor you have bestowed upon us.

In our ten years of business it has been our pleasure to serve the municipal and co-operative electric and gas utilities throughout New England. We look forward to many years of continued service to all of our customers and friends.

NEPPA is a great organization that fills an important need in our industry. It is a great forum for both the members and associates. The staff that Pat has assembled is among the best I have seen in my twenty-five years serving the utility industry.

Again, thank you for this recognition. I look forward to working with you in the future.

Yours truly,

Fred Avila , President

Safety & Training Update

Lineworkers demonstrate skills at Apprentice Rodeo

Participants at NEPPA's apprentice training classes had an opportunity to compete in the NEPPA Apprentice Rodeo held recently at the Pascoag Training Field. There were five events and the classes were broken into 17 teams. The three individual events were the Bucksqueeze Speed Climb, Pole Top Rescue and Retractable Speed Climb. Two member team events included Cutout/Changeout and Insulator Changeout from a Baker Board. The winners are:

Individual Events

Bucksqueeze Speed Climb

(first) Mark Jones – *Taunton*

(second) Brendon McDonough – *Wakefield*

(third) Jim Rosato – *Danvers*

Pole Top Rescue

(first) Mike Manning – *Mansfield*

(second) Jim Rosato – *Danvers*

(third) Brendon McDonough – *Wakefield*

Retractable Speed Climb

(tied for first) Mike Manning – *Mansfield*, Jim Rosato – *Danvers*

(second) Mark Jones – *Taunton*

(third) Brendon McDonough – *Wakefield*



Team Events

Cutout/Changeout

(first) Brendon McDonough – *Wakefield*, Mark Jones – *Taunton*

(second) Mike Audyatis – *Taunton*, Carl Martin – *Taunton*

(third) Scott Hopkins – *Taunton*, Greg Galacia – *Chicopee*

Insulator Changeout

(first) Brendon McDonough – *Wakefield*, Mark Jones – *Taunton*

(second) Matthew Lyon – *Groton (Conn.)*, Andrew Blankenship – *Groton (Conn.)*

(third) Anthony Fahie – *Hingham*, Christopher Wenzell – *Chicopee*



Photos by Lori O'Donoghue

Around New England

Rapid growth in Stowe, Vt. intensifies the need for the construction of high voltage line



Construction is in progress at the development of a large residential community on Mt. Mansfield in Stowe, Vt.

One of the biggest challenges facing the Town of Stowe Electric Department is the need to increase transmission capacity into the valley. The utility, along with the Vermont Electric Company and Green Mountain Power, was granted a Certificate of Public Good by the Vermont Public Service Board to build a 115 line and rebuild a 34.5 line which will substantially increase transmission capacity in the region.

Stowe has long been a tourist town with a large ski resort with snow making capabilities and is growing rapidly. AIG, Inc., a development company, is building a resort village on Mt. Mansfield and Stowe has committed 2.5 megawatts of power to the project. The development consists of a new base lodge, luxury condominiums and a golf course. The project is expected to be completed in 2008.

Public Power Week is October 1-7, 2006

This will be a special year - public power's 20th anniversary of celebrating the unique characteristics of public power. Utilities across New England and across the nation will be giving away free gifts and holding open houses and other events that promote:

- Not-for-profit community ownership
- Local control
- Low rates
- Top-notch customer service
- Public accountability

What did your utility do during Public Power Week? Share your ideas with other public power utilities by sending photos of your events to News Line. Contact Mary Harrington at mharrington@neppa.org or (508) 482-5906. Deadline is October 20.



Around New England

Reading offers GREEN CHOICE to its customers

Reading Municipal Light Department (RMLD) is offering its customers GREEN CHOICE, a voluntary program that supports electricity production from renewable energy sources. Through this program, customers can support generators that use renewable energy such as wind, solar, hydro, geothermal, biogas and biomass. Customers can choose to buy as many blocks of 100 kilowatt-hours as they wish at \$3 per block.

"Customers have told us that they are concerned about protecting our shared environment," said RMLD's General Manager Vinnie Cameron.

An RMLD Customer Survey conducted in December showed that 69.5% of RMLD customers in Reading, North Reading, Lynnfield and Wilmington would be interested in supporting green or renewable electricity if it were available to them.



RMLD Community Relations Manager Priscilla Gottwald (left) and RMLD Customer Service Manager Laurie Cavagnaro deliver GREEN CHOICE renewable energy material to public libraries in Reading, North Reading, Lynnfield and Wilmington where it is on display, along with books about the environment, energy efficiency, recycling and climate protection.

Customer Service Manager Laurie Cavagnaro anticipates a high interest in customers choosing to support green energy. Through participation in GREEN CHOICE, RMLD customers will guarantee that green energy is added to New England's power grid. Although it is physically impossible to distinguish and deliver energy to specific homes or businesses, by choosing GREEN CHOICE, customers ensure that green energy is delivered to the New England Power grid on their behalf.

"We strongly encourage all customers to consider participating in GREEN CHOICE," said Cameron. "It's an investment in our future."

Connelly retires as WMGLD financial assistant

The Wakefield Municipal Gas and Light Department (WMGLD) honored longtime Financial Assistant William F. "Bill" Connelly at a retirement party in September. Connelly has been with the department for 33 years.

A graduate of Boston University's School of Management, he joined the WMGLD as a clerk in the business office in 1973 and was promoted to assistant office manager in 1977 and financial assistant in 1980.

Bill was elected to the Wakefield School Committee in 1989 and had the distinction of being the first Vietnam Veteran to hold an elected office in the community.

"Bill has been a tremendous asset to the WMGLD since joining us in 1973," WMGLD Manager William Wallace said. "The retirement party was an opportunity for us to honor him for his service to the department, to the community, and to the country."



Connelly

Employment

Employment advertising in News Line is \$30 with a maximum of 50 words or is free to NEPPA members. Deadline for the next issue is October 20.

TOWN OF BELMONT MUNICIPAL LIGHT DEPT FIRST CLASS LINE WORKERS

Belmont Municipal Light Department is accepting applications for two full-time Line Worker openings. Duties include installation, maintenance and repair of underground and overhead primary and secondary distribution systems; and responses to emergencies, including standby duties. Requires a minimum of five years of line worker experience; a high school diploma or equivalent; vocational/technical training, or any equivalent combination providing the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities. Position requires possession of a Massachusetts Commercial Driver's License and High Voltage Line Worker certification. Subject to Federal Drug and Alcohol Testing requirements. The salary range is \$24.26 to \$33.95 per hour. Send resume with references to : humanresources@town.belmont.ma.us or apply at the Human Resources Department, Town Hall, 455 Concord Avenue, Belmont, MA 02478. Positions open until filled.

PEABODY MUNICIPAL LIGHT PLANT FIRST CLASS LINEMAN (TROUBLEMAN)

The Peabody Municipal Light Plant is seeking a 1st class Line Worker (M/F). Responsibilities of this position will include, but not limited to, the construction, maintenance, and repair of the underground and overhead electric distribution system. The candidate must have the ability to work on energized lines up to 23,000 volts. This person shall be required to work variable shifts including evenings and weekends. Must be able to respond to emergency calls within 30 minutes. A complete Job Description is available for viewing on the PMLP website (PMLP.com).

A minimum of two years experience as a Lineman (First Class) is required, and the position is subject to pre-employment and random drug testing, as required by DOT regulations and a CORI and Registry of Motor Vehicles record check. A valid Commercial Drivers License (CDL) is required.

PMLP offers a competitive benefits package and is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Please send resume to Thomas Moore, Superintendent of Electric Distribution, 201 Warren Street Extension, Peabody, MA 01960.

MMWEC REAL TIME ENERGY TRADER

This position is responsible for developing a strategy for MMWEC's energy needs and supply portfolio, including decisions on how to secure natural gas and fuel oil and bid the Stony Brook Units for the day ahead or real time markets. Develop bid prices for MMWEC's load for the ISO-NE day ahead market and execute bilateral energy purchases for supplying MMWEC load in the ISO Energy Market. Responsible for communicating and coordinating with other internal groups. Background in power and energy trading and/or scheduling, energy markets, energy commodity contract instruments

and bidding protocols with Independent System Operator and knowledge of ISO regulations is preferred. Bachelor's degree in business, economics, finance, or engineering and 2-3 years experience trading in financial or physical power or natural gas or 5 years of job-related experience required. Send resume to Human Resources, Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company, P.O. Box 426, Ludlow, MA 01056. At MMWEC, you'll enjoy a highly competitive salary and a wide range of benefits. An equal opportunity employer, M/F/H/V. Fax – 413-589-9234 e-mail – ceaston@mmwec.org Please visit us on the web at www.mmwec.org

SHREWSBURY ELECTRIC AND CABLE OPERATIONS ASSISTANT ENGINEER –UTILITY SUBSTATIONS:

SELCO is a 65MW municipal electric and cable utility in the Town of Shrewsbury, MA. The position's initial focus is on substation operations, however opportunities exist to learn, grow and contribute across the entire range of the utility's operations.

Responsibilities include: Develop, implement, and perform substation inspection program. Coordinate implementation of substation preventative maintenance program. Write switching procedures for substation and distribution system operations. Train other utility personnel on substation switching and operations. Emergency response required to system disturbance during nights and weekends.

Qualifications: Duties require the equivalent of an Associates Degree in Electrical Engineering and two to four years of related power utility experience including substation protection and control systems. Adept at using a PC and Microsoft Office software.

To Apply: Email cover letter, resume and salary requirements to job2006@townisp.com or mail to General Manager, SELCO
100 Maple Avenue, Shrewsbury, MA 01545.

BARTON VILLAGE ELECTRIC FIRST CLASS LINEMAN

Barton Village Electric located in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont is seeking a first class lineman for its electric department. Compensation is based on union contract with IBEW local 300. Excellent benefit package available. Will be required to obtain a Vermont Commercial Drivers License within 6 months of employment. A pre-employment physical and drug screening will be required. Applications may be requested by calling (802) 525-4747. Verification of first class lineman qualifications will be required.

HINGHAM MUNICIPAL LIGHTING PLANT ELECTRICAL ENGINEER

The Hingham Municipal Lighting Plant is accepting applications for Electrical Engineer. Application with a copy of the job description may be obtained at The Hingham Municipal Light Plant, 222 Central Street, Hingham, MA 02043. Position open until filled. An Equal Opportunity Employer.

Committee Meetings

October 13

Board of Directors
Grand Summit Hotel
Mt. Snow, Vt.
9:00 a.m.

October 13

Public Communications
NEPPA Office
Milford, Mass.
10:30 a.m.

Upcoming Events

October 2 – 4

Public Utility Management Program
Fall Session
New England Center
Durham, N.H.

October 31 – Nov. 2

Crew Leadership
Golden Eagle Resort
Stowe, Vt.

October 6

Communications Skills for Customer
Service Professionals
Shrewsbury Town Hall
Shrewsbury, Mass.

December 8

Annual Membership Meeting
Tournament Players Club Boston
Norton, Mass.

October 8 – 11

APPA Legal Seminar
Hyatt Regency
Cambridge, Mass.

October 17 –19

Crew Leadership
Radisson Hotel
Milford, Mass.

