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Shrewsbury Municipal Electric Company, MMWEC Host Ribbon-Cutting for Solar Array

Shrewsbury, MA – June 29, 2018 – Shrewsbury Electric and Cable Operations (SELCO) and the Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (MMWEC) cut the ribbon today on a new community solar array constructed on a capped and closed portion of the Shrewsbury landfill.

The project represents a new model for the use of MMWEC’s tax-exempt financing authority that enables consumer-owned, municipal utilities like SELCO to invest in clean energy projects.

State and local officials, including Matthew Beaton, Secretary of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, and Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito, attended today’s ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The 3.8 megawatt solar array, located on Hartford Turnpike, will produce over four million kilowatt hours of clean, renewable energy annually, or enough to power over 400 single family homes. The array occupies over 12 acres on top of the landfill cap, and includes approximately 12,000 individual solar panels. During the period of the lease, it will be owned by MMWEC, the joint action agency for municipal utilities in Massachusetts and leased to SELCO, which will operate and maintain the array. When the lease period expires, SELCO will be the sole owner and operator of the array. Construction took four months to complete. It became fully operational earlier this month.

Through virtual net metering and using SELCO’s advanced energy metering system, 100 percent of the output of this array will be offered to individual customers of SELCO through an optional community-shared solar program. The completion of this solar project will allow SELCO to supply over 40 percent of its energy to customers from renewable and carbon-free sources.

“The project aligns perfectly with SELCO’s long standing mission of providing reliable power and the best price,” says Michael Hale, General Manager of SELCO. “The clean power attributes further add to our strategy of diversifying our energy source portfolio while maintaining our mission.” Hale further added that, “without the tremendous support of MMWEC, this project wouldn’t have happened.”

The unique lease arrangement between MMWEC and SELCO came about after the project fell through twice with the original private developers over the period of three years and the public bidding solicitations. MMWEC was able to assume ownership of the project and provide financing through its loan lease program. Through MMWEC’s expedited procurement and project development processes, MMWEC was able to meet the construction and economic timetables to enable SELCO to take advantage of the financial benefits of the project.

“Congratulations to SELCO and MMWEC for cutting the ribbon on this project, which will provide the community and residents with needed renewable energy resources,” said Lt. Governor Karyn Polito.

“This is a true partnership between MMWEC and SELCO,” says Matthew Ide, MMWEC Executive Director of Energy & Financial Markets. “It’s a demonstration of our ability as a joint action agency to act quickly and provide the capital and engineering expertise to our members to meet their needs and objectives.”

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