

MMWEC Site Solar Project Reaches Commercial Operation

The MMWEC/Master Sergeant Alexander Cotton Memorial Solar Project, a 6.9 megawatt (MW) project located on MMWEC's Ludlow campus, has achieved commercial operation.

The project, located on a 30-acre parcel, achieved commercial operation on March 1, 2024 after meeting all required ISO New England and engineering, procurement and construction contract requirements. It is named in honor of Master Sergeant Alexander Cotton, a long-serving member of the 439th Airlift Wing at neighboring Westover Air Reserve Base, in appreciation of his dedication and service, and in recognition of the long history between MMWEC and Westover.

The project generated over 1,000 megawatt hours/month (MWh) of carbon-free power in March and April, and is on pace to generate an estimated 13,800 MWh/year. These projections are in line with solar photovoltaic system models created during initial project engineering. It is expected to produce enough energy to power over 1,500 homes. The project generates Massachusetts Class I Renewable Energy Credits (RECs) and Massachusetts Clean Peak RECs, and will



MMWEC Solar Project

displace nearly 13,220,400 pounds of carbon emissions from Massachusetts power plants per year, based on current ISO New England average emissions data.

The milestone represents nearly four years of planning, contracting, design, engineering and construction, which began in the summer of 2020. Several MMWEC member utilities expressed their desire to expand solar generation within their power portfolios through asset ownership, while recognizing

their own limitations on land use within their distribution territories to develop new solar.

"Municipal utilities have a key advantage in managing their power portfolios through asset ownership," said MMWEC CEO Ronald C. DeCurzio. "MMWEC is pleased to be able to facilitate asset ownership through joint action for member utilities."

The municipal utilities located in Wakefield, Mansfield, Marblehead, Ipswich, Peabody and Boylston participate in the project. The MMWEC/Master Sergeant Alexander Cotton Memorial Solar Project is operated and maintained by MMWEC and EDF Renewables under a five-year warranty and support agreement. ∞

MMWEC Annual Conference: Myth or Reality? Planning for Uncertainty

The Commonwealth's not-for-profit, consumer-owned municipal light plants (MLPs) are planning today for a decarbonized tomorrow in a time of uncertainty, as evidenced by the Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company's (MMWEC) 2024 annual conference. The conference, entitled "Myth or Reality? Planning for Uncertainty," was held May 1-2 at the Sheraton Springfield.

The conference offered MLP managers, staff, commissioners, and industry experts the opportunity to learn more about MMWEC programs, initiatives, projects and technologies designed to guide the MLPs toward electrification and decarbonization.

The first day of the conference featured an in-depth look at how the transition to a decarbonized grid by 2050 may take place, with the understanding that the level of electrification is highly dependent on consumer behavior. Guest speakers included Greg Calcari of MPower Innovations, discussing data convergence for better system management; Melissa Chan of Fermata Energy, discussing electric vehicle to grid technology;

and Saad Saleem of Guidehouse, providing updates on the federal Department of Energy's Cold Climate Heat Pump Technology Challenge.

The evening's keynote speaker was Sen. John Velis, who represents the state's Hampden and Hampshire districts, and serves as the legislature's Municipal Light Plant Legislative Caucus Senate chair.

The second day of the conference featured presentations on retail analytics, MMWEC project updates and the revamped MMWEC Member/Project Participant



Dr. Melissa Chan

Kevin Kelly Retires from GELD

After 21 years at Groton Electric Light Department (GELD) and in the public power industry, longtime Manager Kevin Kelly has retired.

After studying aerospace engineering, Kelly was self-employed for 12 years prior to joining GELD in 2003 as an office administrator. He worked his way up the ladder to assistant manager in 2006 before taking over as manager when former GELD Manager Doris Chojnowski retired in 2008. During his reign as manager, Kelly also furthered his education by earning a master's degree in Power Systems Management from Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

Despite being a smaller utility, GELD is an innovator in the public power field thanks to several projects and initiatives completed under Kelly's leadership. Before he began his position at GELD, all of the utility's electric meters were read manually. He spearheaded the effort to start two-way communication for reading meters. He then utilized a geographic information system (GIS) process as part of the installation of GELD's first advanced metering infrastructure meters starting in 2005. Under Kelly's direction, GELD undertook extensive data collection in preparation for the development of a GIS mapping tool and an overlay was created with the town mapping to add all of GELD's assets.

With access to a plethora of information, Kelly strategized how best to utilize that data to help the light department and its customers cut costs and manage demand. He thought that instead of having the light department be responsible for managing demand at peak hours, he could save more demand by putting that responsibility on his customers by implementing time of use (TOU) rates to encourage customers to use less energy during peak hours by giving them a financial incentive. GELD started a pilot TOU rate program 15 years ago which morphed into what was known as the "4/40 rate program" in 2019. After several years of program tweaks, with voluntary



Kevin Kelly cuts the cake at his retirement celebration

participation and education, the TOU rate program became exclusive in October 2023.

Kelly said during his time as manager of GELD, he is most proud of implementing TOU rates because of the success of the initiative.

His leadership skills extend past the bounds of GELD. Kelly served on the MMWEC Board of Directors from 2011-2024 and as the Audit Committee chairman from 2012-2024. He also served as moderator of the NYPA Recipients Committee from 2009 to 2019, joined the NYPA Executive Committee in 2008, and was chairman of the Executive Committee through 2019.

Kelly was also recently recognized by MMWEC at its 2024 annual conference with the James E. Baker Service award, which recognizes public power managers for their dedication and service to the public power industry.

When asked what advice he would give to his successor Jonathan Patterson, Kelly said the best management style is a simple one.

"Keep it simple and communicate, communicate, communicate," Kelly says. "If Jon hires well and trains well, GELD is going to be in great shape for decades to come."

GELD Business Manager Tammi Lemire says Kelly's leadership and personality will be missed.

"Kevin has always been willing to be on the cutting edge of new technologies his whole career at GELD," Lemire says. "From adding GELD's asset layers to the Town's GIS system, to the first in Massachusetts AMI system, to exclusive residential time of use rates – he has never shied away from innovative projects. We will all miss his 'Top of the morning to ya' greetings and his goofy laugh."

Kelly said he plans to travel and ski more during his retirement and he looks back fondly at his time at GELD.

"It's been a pleasure and a lot of fun working with my whole peer group, municipal managers, and MMWEC," Kelly says. "In my 21 years at GELD, the clock never dragged." ∞

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website.

MMWEC recognized a municipal light plant and two individuals with awards at the conference.

The Wakefield Municipal Gas and Light Department received the 2024 Francis H. King Leadership Award, named in honor of one of the founders of MMWEC. This award recognizes exceptional leadership and dedication to public power joint action, demonstrated by a long-term commitment to the ideals of public power and the philosophy of MMWEC.

Longtime Ashburnham Municipal Light Plant Commissioner Richard Ahlin received the 2024 Philip W. Sweeney Public Service Award, named in honor of the former director of MMWEC and chairman of the Marblehead Municipal Light

Board. This award recognizes exceptional service to the public or in the public arena that advances the goals of public power.

Retiring Groton Electric Light Department General Manager Kevin Kelly received the James E. Baker Service Award, which recognizes distinguished service to the MMWEC organization. ∞

MA Senator John Velis addresses the MMWEC Annual Conference



APPA Recognizes Eight MMWEC Members

Eight MMWEC Member municipal light departments have recently been recognized by the American Public Power Association (APPA) for excellence in operational practices.

Holyoke Gas & Electric (HG&E), Mansfield Municipal Electric Department (MMED), and Wakefield Municipal Gas & Light Department (WMGLD) earned the RP3 designation from APPA, Shrewsbury Electric & Cable Operations (SELCO) and Sterling Municipal Light Department (SMLD) were honored with the APPA Safety Award of Excellence, and Ashburnham Municipal Light Plant, MMED, Marblehead Municipal Light Department, SELCO, South Hadley Electric Light Department, and SMLD received the Certificate of Excellence in Reliability.

The RP3 designation recognizes public power utilities that demonstrate high proficiency across four operational categories: reliability, safety, workforce development, and system improvement. To qualify for the designation, utilities must complete a comprehensive application process to demonstrate growth and excellence across the four operational areas. The applications are reviewed by the APPA 18-member panel and given a score. Applications that receive an 80 percent score or higher are awarded the RP3 designation, which lasts three years.

This year's MMWEC Member honorees are no strangers to the RP3 designation. MMED and WMGLD have each earned the designation four times and HG&E has earned the designation seven times overall. Currently 254 of the nation's more than 2,000 public power utilities hold an RP3 designation.

HG&E Director of Marketing and Communications Kate Sullivan Craven says HG&E plans to reapply for the designation every three years. "The standards evolve every application

period, and HG&E welcomes the challenge of continuously improving processes to adhere to new, and often times more stringent, standards," said Craven. "It's one of the ways that we can ensure we are constantly moving forward."

APPA's Safety Award of Excellence recognizes public power utilities' incident rates and overall state of their safety programs and culture as determined by worker-hours of exposure. SMLD ranked Gold in Group B (15,000 to 29,999 worker-hours of exposure), and SELCO ranked Diamond in Group A (fewer than 15,000 worker-hours of exposure). This is the seventh time SMLD has earned the award and the first time for SELCO.

"Safety is the most important investment for a utility," said Christopher Roy, General Manager of SELCO. "SELCO is honored by this award and even more proud of our crews who do outstanding work every single day with the utmost respect and attention to safety."

Each year, APPA recognizes utilities that subscribe to APPA's eReliability Tracker tool for excellence in reliability determined by comparing the utilities' reliability data from the tracker against national reliability data published by the Energy Information Administration (EIA). To receive the Certificate of Excellence in Reliability, the utility must be in the first quartile of utilities for System Average Interruption Duration Index based on the last five years of the EIA data.

"The Sterling Municipal Light Department uses APPA's eReliability tool for two basic reasons – ease of use and the basic ability to compare our data with similar sized utilities," said SMLD General Manager Matthew Stelmach. "Our crews take great pride in SMLD's reliability statistics and look forward each year to APPA's Annual Benchmarking Report." ∞

New Member/Participant Website Provides Secure, Dynamic Information to Users

MWEC's Information Technology team has unveiled the newly-redesigned member-participant web portal, aimed at providing a secure, dynamic, one-stop-shop for all MMWEC-related customer needs.

More than two years ago, MMWEC embarked on the project with Knectar, an Eastampton, Massachusetts-based website design firm, aimed at developing a site for reporting that is secure, accessible, updatable, and provides self-service to customers. The old member-participant web portal was a home-grown system that was created more than a dozen years ago.

The new site contains all of the data that the old site featured, plus boasts many real-time dynamic reporting features for location marginal price, meter, kilowatt demand and generation data, and other critical power market data. Data related is customized to each individual municipal light plant (MLP) and their power portfolios, meter data and energy efficiency rebates and audits are all accessible from the site. MLP staff can also access MMWEC-created social media content for their use through the site and manage their social media activity through the new portal.

With expanded menu options and a new search feature, the

new website is much easier and quicker to navigate for the user. Data can be easily exported to different formats, including spreadsheets for graphics, modeling, filtering and saving. It uses a customer-friendly, modern platform and multi-factor authentication to ensure that the information provided can be accessed securely. The new site allows for role-based views, meaning MLP users may be provisioned with access customized to their job duties, and provides self-service features. The self-service feature allows users to perform tasks such as request new accounts, password resets, report bugs and make suggestions for improvements.

MMWEC has made enhancements internally to automate processes for uploading documents and reports to the new site. This results in saved administrative time, allowing MMWEC staff to focus on high value member services. "We're really excited to be launching this new platform for our members and project participants," says Carol Martucci, MMWEC's Director of Financial Reporting and Corporate Technology.

"We will continue to improve and make additions to the site's content and usability as we move forward, in response to customer needs and the evolving utility industry." ∞

SELCO and WMGLD Distribute Trees to Customers

Two MMWEC Member light departments are doing their part in decreasing carbon emissions and reducing climate change. Shrewsbury Electric and Cable Operations (SELCO) and Wakefield Municipal Gas and Light Department both have distributed trees to their customers free of charge to plant in their yards this spring.



WMGLD plants a tree

In honor of the holiday, SELCO held its annual Arbor Day Celebration by giving away 500 trees to SELCO customers. This year, customers had the option to choose between five different types of trees: arrowwood viburnum, fragrant lilac, granny smith apple, paper birch, and scarlet oak. Customers were limited to one tree per household. SELCO also offered its customers a SELCO “Trees and Electricity” brochure to guide them on best planting practices.

Since 2004, SELCO has given away more than 12,000 trees to its customers. Each year, a single tree can sequester an estimated 48 pounds of carbon dioxide as it grows. In total, 12,000 trees collectively have the potential to absorb approximately 261 metric tons of carbon dioxide annually, which equates to taking 57 cars off the road per year.

“The Arbor Day Celebration has been a great way for us to connect with the community as well as contribute to environ-

mental sustainability,” said SELCO General Manager Christopher Roy. “It is an opportunity to showcase our involvement and environmental values, provide education on our programs and rebates, and strengthen our relationship with our customers.”

WMGLD recently kicked off its “A Shade Above” tree planting initiative which runs from spring through fall. Now in its third year, “A Shade Above” allows WMGLD customers to apply to have a tree planted on

their property. Customers are eligible for one low-growing, utility friendly tree.

Applications are reviewed by WMGLD and once approved, the department works with an arborist to determine the type of tree that best fits the customer’s lawn and where it should be planted on the property to maximize shading without interfering with utility wires.

Once a tree type and location is decided, an arborist plants the tree for the WMGLD customers. Fifty trees are available for WMGLD customers on a first-come, first-served basis.

To apply, customers must call the department at 718-246-6363. Applications will be accepted through August 1, 2024. ∞

Directors, Officers Elected to MMWEC Board

Several officers and two directors were elected to new terms at May 2 meetings of the MMWEC membership and Board of Directors.

Peter D. Dion, general manager of the Wakefield Municipal Gas & Light Department, was re-elected by the MMWEC membership to his 16th one-year term as president of MMWEC.

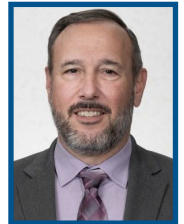
Michael J. Flynn, a gubernatorial appointee and Town of Wilbraham representative to the MMWEC board, was elected by the board to another one-year term as chairman. Flynn has been on the board for 22 years, and has served as chairman since 2014.



Joseph Kowalik

Representatives of MMWEC’s 20 member municipal utilities also voted to elect two directors to the board. They elected Joe Kowalik, general manager of Marblehead Municipal Light Department, to a new three-year term, and Joe Anastasi, general manager of the Peabody Municipal Light Plant, to fulfill the remaining two years of a vacant seat.

Additional MMWEC officers for the coming year, as elected by the board, are Ronald C. DeCurzio, chief executive officer and secretary; Haley Pedruczny, treasurer; Tom Barry, assistant treasurer; Bulkley, Richardson and Gelinias, LLC, general counsel; and Kathryn M. Roy, assistant secretary.



Joseph Anastasi

Other MMWEC directors, elected previously by the membership, are James Lavelle, general manager of the Holyoke Gas & Electric Department; Tara Rondeau, general manager of the Paxton Municipal Light Department; Joseph Sollecito, general manager of Mansfield Municipal Electric Department; and Christopher Roy, general manager of Shrewsbury Electric & Cable Operations. Charmaine White of Springfield is a gubernatorial appointee to the MMWEC board. James Gennette, the representative for the Town of Ludlow, is also on the board. ∞



Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company

MMWEC

A non-profit, public corporation and political subdivision of the Commonwealth
Joint Action and economies of scale for Massachusetts municipal utilities
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