

RIVERPORT ELECTRIC LIGHT COMMISSION

Minutes of November 12, 2025 Meeting at 9:00 am

The Commission met at 9:00 am at Riverport Community Centre, 79 Lower LaHave Road, Riverport, Nova Scotia B0J 2W0.

Attendance:

Commission Members	Staff
David Maxwell, Chair	Dylan Heide, ToMB CAO
Merrill Zinck, Treasurer	Phil Lawson, Manager of Electric Utility
Bernie Roycroft, Commissioner	Clare Blyth, Recording Secretary

Regrets:

Commission Members	Staff
Arleigh Robar, Commissioner	Ashley Yeadon-Wentzell, Finance. Mgr.

A. CALL TO ORDER

David Maxwell called the meeting to order at 9:02 am.

B. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Agenda for the meeting was unanimously approved with the addition of 'Payment of Debts' to G3 under New Business.

C. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – OCTOBER 15, 2025

Minutes of the October 15, 2025 meeting were approved.

D. PRESENTATIONS

1. Draft 2023-2024 Financial Statements

Michelle Laird from Belliveau Veinotte presented the independent auditor's report including draft audited financial statements for 2023-2024. A letter identifying matters of interest to management was discussed.

Final report will be sent to Chair, David Maxwell for signature. Once finalised, the audit for 2024-2025 will begin. The Commission agreed to defer a public meeting until both audits are completed.

A motion by Treasurer Merrill Zinck, seconded by Commissioner Bernie Roycroft, "THAT the 2023-2024 audited financial statements be approved as circulated."

Motion carried.

A motion by Treasurer Merrill Zinck, seconded by Commissioner Bernie Roycroft, "THAT the 2024-2025 financial audit of RELC by Belliveau Veinotte commence as directly."

Motion carried.

E. REPORTS

E1. Operations Report

Phil Lawson presented the monthly Operations Report. Members discussed the report and addressed questions to staff.

An analysis of lines located close to homes will be undertaken in January 2026.

Work on new lines at Hell Point will hopefully be completed by the end of the year. This work will be postponed if outages occur.

New (spare) transformers will not arrive until next year.

Around 200 meters have been swapped out with basic meters this year. The use of smart meters is forthcoming.

E2. Finance Report

ToMB CAO, Dylan Heide presented the Financial Report in Finance Manager, Ashley Yeadon-Wentzell's absence. Members discussed and addressed questions to staff.

The auditors have CRA access but Town staff are still locked out.

Treasurer Merrill Zinck is to provide personal details to get access to CRA.

Customer Aged Summary and outstanding accounts were discussed. Those up for disconnection were highlighted and would need to pay balance prior to reconnection.

Utility staff to distribute disconnection notices to doors of those affected or the Commission will approach the customer. This is subject to TOMB finance providing further information as to any previous communication with a resident concerning their outstanding bill. Phil Lawson, Utility Manager will investigate authorized use of load limiters for some situations where a continuous balance is kept.

Finance Manager Ashley Yeadon-Wentzell to provide Commission

with procedures followed thus far relating to outstanding invoices for those identified for disconnection.

a. Eastlink Services

The Commission agreed that internet access is only required at the pole yard with a high download speed and that a phone line is not required at the old office. The alarm was not discussed.

The Eastlink email address is also no longer being used and should be closed.

The Commission noted that they do not get a chance to review bank reconciliations before signing cheques on behalf of RELC. Treasurer, Merrill Zinck asked for quarterly statements to be prepared in this regard to provide oversight to the Commission. The Treasurer also asked to review invoices prior to being entered into the General Ledger.

The Commission also noted that they have an old NSPI bill that needs to be paid.

CAO Dylan Heide will follow up with Finance Manager, Ashley Yeadon-Wentzell regarding bank reconciliations, invoice entries and payment of NSPI bill.

F. OLD BUSINESS

F1. NSPI Cost of Power Analysis

There is currently no update on the NSPI Cost of Power Analysis. Looking at strategies to reduce the peak demand charge is on the agenda at the upcoming Maritime Municipal Electric Utility Alliance meeting in December. This meeting will be attended by CAO Dylan Heide.

F2. Communications with Ratepayers (Standing Item)

The monthly newsletter and meeting minutes continue to be uploaded to the RELC website.

Once finalized, approved and audited 2023-2024 financial statements will be put on the website and the RELC engagement portal. There will also be a Facebook post.

Customers will also be informed of an upcoming AGM that will take place prior to March 31st 2026. At this meeting, the audited statements from 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 will be presented.

F3. Legislative Sub-Committee Update

There is no update from the Legislative Sub-Committee other than that reflected in the November newsletter.

The Commission agreed to ask the Legislative Sub-Committee to provide an update of their research at the next regular meeting. This information can then be shared with the residents.

Additionally, Town staff met with Steven Drahos and Paul Bradley to discuss RELC finances. There are some outstanding questions that the Town need to provide to them.

G. NEW BUSINESS

G1. Policies Review

The old draft RELC policy manual was previously shared with the Commission. It is not known whether these policies were ever approved. The Commission felt that guidelines rather than policy are preferable apropos arrears. This allows for a more flexible decision-making process.

It was agreed that where RELC and Town of Mahone Bay policies relate to the same subject matter, then the existing Town policy can apply.

A draft set of guidelines relating to arrears will be brought to the December meeting

G2. Upcoming Rate Applications – Flow Through and GRA

The Town of Mahone Bay and the Commission are still working toward a General Rate Application (GRA) once the 2024-2025 audit is complete. It was, however, noted that a higher service charge of \$16.93 endorsed during the last GRA was not applied. GRA will be left as a standing item on the agenda as accounting progress is made and the Commission is kept informed of the progress of the second audit.

Finance Manager, Ashley Yeadon-Wentzell to explore cost estimates for the GRA that may be incurred this fiscal year.

The new NSPI rate increase is likely not to be effective until the end of January 2026. The RELC flowthrough will be applied concurrently.

G3. Payment of Debts

RELC owes the Town approximately \$333,000. The Commission presented options to pay down their Town of Mahone Bay debt in the immediate term, in order to step away from the pressure of long term financing. These include:

- Using accumulated monies that are set aside for paying delayed NSPI

invoices

- There is an unverified amount of \$90,000 that the Town owes to RELC. Since the Town took over RELC finances, 'RELC' has not been invoicing the Town for line items such as Utility Truck maintenance, dumpsters etc.
- Working on this basis, RELC debt to the Town could be reduced to \$57,000

The Town noted the following:

- Be aware that RELC has only just received service related invoices from AREA that apply to the previous fiscal year, and there may yet be more outstanding.
- Back Up Top Up credits can be taken into account

CAO Dylan Heide will bring more information to the December meeting where a formal decision can be made.

H. CLOSED SESSION

I. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting will take place on December 17th 2025.

J. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:04pm.