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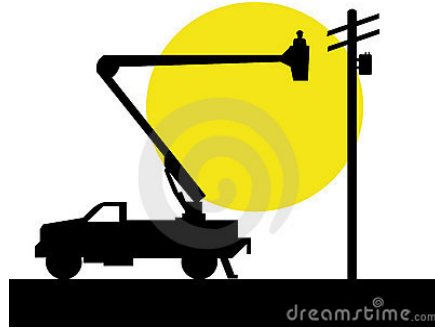
*Tom McAloon*

*Eric Staples*

*Sarah Lane*

# SWAN'S ISLAND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

**January, 2017**



Members with billing questions should contact Karen Griffin at 526-4336 or at <a href="mailto:siecbilling@gmail.com">siecbilling@gmail.com</a>
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<b>Emergency contact #:</b>
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<b>207-479- 0657 and 0658</b>
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**From the Board:** On Thursday, January 12<sup>th</sup>, a Formal Hearing was conducted at the offices of the Maine Public Utilities Commission (MPUC) in Augusta. The Hearing was conducted for the benefit of the three Commissioners who are charged with the responsibility of approving or disapproving the proposed acquisition of the SIEC by Emera Maine. Manager Jeffrey Ellison personally attended as did Board President Ed Schwabe. Tim Schneider, Office of the Maine Public Advocate spoke in favor of the acquisition in an opening statement as did counsel for SIEC and Emera. The three Commissioners questioned all parties regarding the SIEC acquisition costs, which must be borne by Emera, along with the anticipated revenue from SIEC customers paying mainland rates – and the deficit which would have to be absorbed by Emera rate payers.

The legal standard which must be decided by the Commissioners is whether or not the proposed acquisition is “in the public interest”. Clearly, the people of Swan’s Island and Frenchboro – having experienced exceptionally high electricity rates for nearly seven decades - will finally receive lower rates for electricity – and this result is certainly “in the public interest”. But, to achieve this good, the other 160,000 Emera ratepayers would have their rates adjusted upwards, slightly, to enable the former SIEC customers to pay the same rates as everyone else.

So, it is up to the Commissioners to balance the significant benefit of considerably lower rates for a modest number of citizens on Frenchboro and Swan’s Island against a tiny increase in light bills for a very large group of Emera customers on the mainland. They must decide if the large benefit to islanders is in the public interest and outweighs the few extra nickels which must be added to everyone’s monthly bill to bring that about.

MPUC deliberations will continue next week (January 18<sup>th</sup>) and we could know the result at that time.

Members who want to brush up on Emera’s **Terms and Conditions** can find lots of information at [www.emeramaine.com](http://www.emeramaine.com)