

1887 to 1899

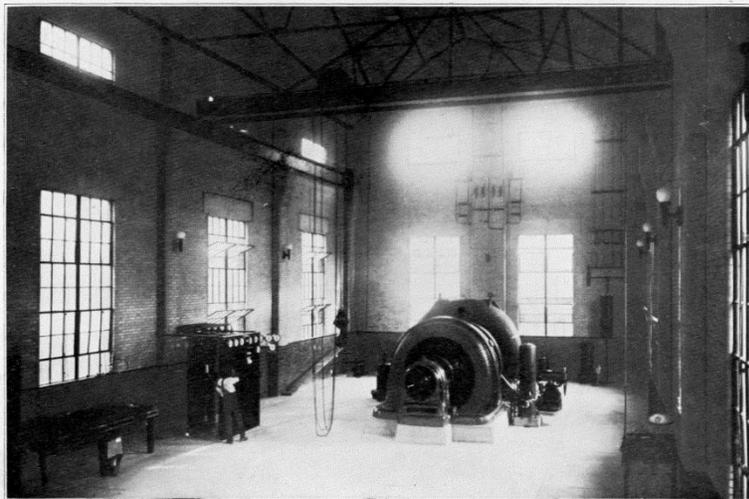
- In 1887, a few local citizens of Marquette, F. O. Clark, James Russell and Mayor Timothy Nester began discussing ideas for the creation of a Lighting Plant. Edison Electric Lighting Co. and others offered franchises to the City but the Council comprised of J.M. Longyear, J.M. Wilkinson, James Russell, C.E. Moore, W.H. Green and Mayor Clark were determined to operate their own Lighting Plant.
- After an Act was passed by the State in 1889, the Common Council was empowered to purchase lands, build generating stations, etc. for the purpose of furnishing electricity to its citizens. The Commission purchased a parcel of 400 hundred acres for \$10,000 and invested \$40,000 for the equipment.
- There were many naysayers who thought the plan was doomed to fail, but on November 23, 1889 at exactly 6:00 p.m., Mayor F.O. Clark was the first person to flip the switch that put the city aglow with light from approximately 70 arc lamps. For the first time, Marquette was illuminated and the Queen City's First Hydro Plant named the Collinsville Power Plant was put into operation.
- In March of 1890, electricity was available for private homes. It did not take long for the demand for electricity to exceed the 37½ KW generator and in 1891, another generator of 75 KW capacity replaced it.
- In April 1897, another bill from the State Legislature was passed to create a Light and Power Commission and gave it the power to raise money by the issuance of bonds. The first Light and Power Commission comprised of J. M. Wilkinson, James Russell, H. J. Payne, Frank Pendill and J.J. Connolly. After an election was held and it was approved to issue bonds in the amount of \$35,000, the Commission immediately proceeded to build the Hoist Dam.
- Also, in 1897, due to the continued demand for electricity, the Light and Power Commission purchased for \$10,000 a 300 KW generator. During this time, customers increased from 127 to 257 customers in the year 1898 and the arc street lamps increased from 79 to 83 in 1899.
- From the beginning of operations and up until 1899, there were three superintendents at the plant: J.H. Moore, F. G. Fitzpatrick and R.A. Willson.
- On April 15, 1899, Charles Retaillic became the superintendent, earning \$100 a month and worked at the Power Plant until his death on May 22, 1940.
- In June of 1899, the Commission entered in an agreement with J.M. Longyear for the use of the Silver Lake reservoir.

1900 to 1909

- During this time, the Collinsville Power Plant still operated both day and night except the daily half hour cut-offs at noon and no electricity during the day on Sundays. On Sept 11, 1901, the utility discontinued the flat rate system and adopted a meter system in which they installed 425-watt meters. In 1903, electric rates for private users were 5 to 7 cents a kilowatt.
- On August 7, 1903, there was a major flood at the Hoist River Dam that wiped out 55 ft. of the main flume (penstock), while damaging 100 ft. of the flume's foundation. Repairs continued until 1906.
- In 1903, N. M. Kaufman offered to the Light and Power Commission the leasehold for 5 acres of property in exchange initially for 87 years of free electric power for the Marquette Valley Milling (U.P. Brewing Co.). After some time, the Light and Power Commission decided to purchase 14 feet from the U.P. Brewing Co. and charged the U.P. Brewing Company an annual electric rate of \$720 a year.
- In 1904, demand was such that an additional 550 KW generator was installed (at this time, it was thought this sufficient for at least 20 years).
- The utility installed, in 1905, 125 new alternating current 2,000 candlepower lights replacing the old D.C. arc lamps and installed 18 A.C. lamps in the downtown circuit. The following year, the Department of Light and Power installed 20-30 lamps on Dock. No. 5 for the Duluth South Shore & Atlantic rail line.
- By 1906, the utility provided electricity for 767 residential customers, 325 commercial customers, 50 power motors, 160 AC arc lamps and 260 flat irons (1st portable electrical appliance).
- At the end of 1907, the Marquette County Savings Bank purchased and installed an elevator from Kaestner & Co., in their downtown building and then in 1908, had the whole building electrically wired.
- By March 1909, transformers were installed at the power station that reduced the lack of electricity during transmission and the number of residential customers grew to 1,213 accounts, commercial customers grew to 379 accounts, and 706 flat irons were in use.
- Because of the growth of the utility and the surplus earnings, the commission reduced the rates from 7 cents to 5 cents per KWH and street lamps monthly rate was reduced from \$6.25 to \$5.00 per month.
- During this decade, many repairs were made and upgrades done to keep up with the growing demand. Because of the growing demand and costs to repair aging and worn equipment, the Commission employed a Hydraulic Engineer to advise them. He recommended the building of a new powerhouse at the foot of the falls, estimating the cost including work on dam and canal, one pipe, wheel and generator at \$97,444. To keep up with the demand of power, the old lower dam was rebuilt with concrete.

1910 to 1919

- Marquette's first X-ray machine was installed in 1910 at the St. Mary's Hospital.
- Again, the capacity of the generators was reached and plans were formulated to increase the capacity of the plant. Power outages due to the dry spell of 1910 had emptied the Silver Lake reserve and the Light and Power Commission began to consider alternative, uninterrupted methods.
- In order to conserve and stabilize the water flow, an agreement was made with J.M. Longyear to further increase the storage capacity of Silver Lake. A stipulation in the agreement was the Light and Power Commission had to build a concrete dam at Silver Lake. In 1911, plans were drawn for a concrete dam to be built immediately below the wooden dam that was constructed in 1897. The Silver Lake Dam was designed and built for \$20,341.61. The dam was completed on June 12, 1912 and in order to meet demand, a 1200 KW generator was installed in the No. 1 Power house.
- In 1911, utility installed tungsten lights in the County Courthouse. The lights were installed in the Courtroom, Judge's rooms, and the Post Office. And in the case of electrical shortage, Marquette's Dept. of Light and Power connected Cleveland Cliffs Power Co. to Marquette's Water Dept. This required a "Scott's connection" that transmitted Cleveland Cliff's 3 phase power to Marquette's 2-phase power.
- The first Light and Power vehicle was purchased in 1916 for the sum total of \$465.
- In 1919, construction began for Hydro No. 2 Plant also along the Dead River with \$100,000 worth of bonds issued for its construction. The plant was completed in 1920 for \$185,588.13 and was put into operation on September 1, 1920.



Interior of Hydro-Electric Generating Station Number Two, completed and put into operation September 1, 1920. Installed capacity, 2000 K. V. A. Floor area of adequate size for installation of a second generator when additional power is required.

1920 to 1929

- In the early 1920's, the demand of electric current continued to grow at such a high rate every year, the City decided put in a second 2000 KVA generating unit in the new power station in 1923.
- In 1922, Cleveland-Cliffs Iron Co. began the construction of a reservoir dam on the Dead River, what is now known as the "Hoist Dam". This allowed a more reliable and continuous flow of water during the summer months without the need to withdraw from the Silver Lake Reservoir.
- In 1922, the utility generated 7,616,700 KWH to service 304 electric ranges, 56 two and three burner plates, 50 water heaters and serviced The Hotel Marquette, Masonic Hall and St. Mary's Hospital. Power Station No. 1 was disconnected and put on stand-by in case of emergency or when minor repairs or adjustments were made.
- On account of the shortage of water in Sept 1923, the generating plant was obliged to shut down from 12-5 am each morning to conserve on water from the Silver Lake Reservoir. Big users were forewarned of possible outages due to shortages. It was also recommended to minimalize or use their own power.
- Also in 1923, a joint pole line agreement was entered between Marquette's Department of Light and Power and Michigan's Bell Telephone Co. where each paid the other a certain rental fee "for the privilege of attaching wires to the poles." The payment specifications were finalized in 1924.
- In Oct of 1923, water was transferred from Silver Lake Reservoir to CCI's [Cleveland Cliff's Iron Co.] Hoist Reservoir. This enabled a more accurate prediction of how much water would be used during the "dark hours", and would also prevent the water from turning into snow/ice as it came down the river from the Silver Lake Reservoir during the winter months.
- To increase power output for the city of Marquette, developments for the early construction of Hydro Dam No. 3 at the Powder Mill site began in 1923. From January 1 to April 15, 1924, the large users of power were taken off our circuits because of the lack of sufficient water to produce power and the utility had to shut down the generating plant 33 hours in January, 61 hours in February and 102 hours in March. Hydro Dam No. 3 was completed and put into operation on Nov. 29, 1924.
- In 1925 because the rainfall had been the lowest since 1875, the Department of Light and Power decided to convert to diesel power, contracting for the delivery of a 1250 H.P. Diesel engine. Pfeffer Construction Co. of Duluth was contracted to build the building to house the PowerStation and in September, another order was placed to purchase a second Diesel engine. The first engine went on line on November 24, 1925 and the second unit was put into service on January 20, 1926.
- First traffic light system was installed in 1927, at each of the four corners of Front and Washington and at Third and Washington Streets.

1930 to 1939

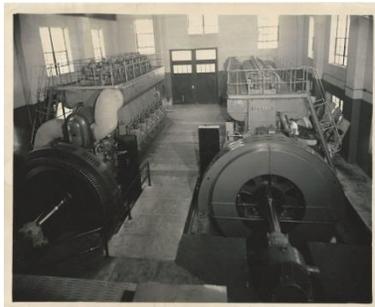
- In 1930, the Penstock for No. 2 Power Station was replaced at a cost of \$13,116.08 as it has been in use since 1897 (33 years) and was “leaking badly”. A new Light and Power garage & storeroom was completed on Baraga Ave which housed the meter department, the clothes washer and electric range repair department, company automobiles, transformers and misc. material. The old service building on Front Street was updated for the newly organized Chamber of Commerce.
- On Jan 1, 1930, the City Commission resolved to add the “maintenance and development of Presque Isle and the swimming pool as one of the functions of the Department of Light and Power.” In 1932, two buildings were constructed at the Park; a concession stand and a building to house the animals, from the zoo, during the winter months. Also, in 1932, the City added Shiras Park (“Picnic Rocks”) and in 1933, Lakeside Park to Light and Power’s maintenance work duties.
- An interconnection transmission line was built in 1931, between the Cliffs Power & Light Co. at the McClure Generating Station and Marquette’s Dept. of Light and Power. In 1933, “Two wooden bridges at No. 1 and No. 2 plants” were replaced with concrete and steel. Due to the postponement of customer payments, the bridges were constructed in 1933 to provide work to Light and Power customers so they could pay their electric bills. “On account of the large number of our customers who were delinquent in their accounts owing to lack of work, we thought it desirable to build the bridges this year, allowing our people to work out their lighting bills. This plan worked out to the satisfaction of ourselves as well as our people.” (Annual Report, 1933)
- In 1931, 275 concrete boulevard light posts were installed on various streets in the city at a total cost of \$19,500.50 or \$70.91 per light post. Between 1932 and 1935, an additional 128 concrete boulevard light posts were installed at a total cost of \$11,712.46.
- On Jan 1, 1934 the City designated the Department of Public Works as the “maintenance, supervision and development” of all public parks except Tourist Park. The Light and Power transitioned control of Shiras and Lakeside Park over to the Public Works Department.
- In 1939, the rebuilding of the penstocks took place. The work consisted of building a wood penstock, 90 inches inside diameter and 4,162 feet long from No. 2 Dam to the surge tank, and building two 78 inches inside diameter steel penstocks, each 400 feet long from the surge tank to No. 2 power house. The wooden penstock was made of California Redwood staves purchased from Pacific Tank and Pipe Company of Oakland, CA and the steel penstocks from the Lakeside Bridge and Steel Company of Milwaukee, WI. During construction, power was maintained by the two diesel engines at the Diesel Plant, the Powder Mill Plant and power purchased from the McClure Plant of CCI Power & Light Co.
- On September 3, 1939, lightening from a severe thunderstorm destroyed the stator of 1,000 KW Generator in No.1 Plant. It was repaired by General Electric Company’s Customer Service Department for \$5,400 and was functional by December 3.

1940 to 1949

- In 1940, a new 'rural' extension was built of about 3 ½ miles to Lawson, in Skandia Township. Eighteen new customers were obtained by this extension. Part of the labor was derived from customer volunteers and the poles and part of the labor was furnished by the customers themselves.
- Mr. Charles Retallic who was the superintendent of the Department of Light and Power since 1899, died on May 22, 1940. Mr. Henry LaFountain was acting production superintendent and Mr. James Bullock was the acting distribution superintendent until C. L. Mosher became the new superintendent the following year, on Feb 17, 1941.
- Multiple efforts were conducted in 1941 to change the entire system from two to three-phase power in order to save copper wire and to use three phase motors, which was becoming the standard. During the early part of 1942, the improvements were made in order to serve Negaunee Township.
- In 1942, The War Production Board placed a restriction on the building of new homes, the purchasing of electric ranges and connecting new customers. Gasoline rationing caused many filling stations to go out of business. And from the Annual Report that year, "The war has made it necessary to have guards continually on duty at the dams, plants and along the penstocks."
- An inter-connection line was established between the utility and the power plant of Cliffs-Dow Co. for the purpose of purchasing excess power when needed, to replace diesel power because of the high diesel costs.
- In 1943, the War Production Board restricted all domesticated sales of electric appliances that included refrigerators and flat irons. There were no public Christmas decorations that year to preserve on vital war materials that included tungsten and brass that were used in light bulbs.
- In 1945, 2,065 meters were changed from a two to one meter system, which enabled MBLP employees to read only one meter instead of two. 502 meters were not converted to this system due to the exorbitant amount of wiring it would require to do so "since in many instances one of these meters is in the basement while the other is in the attic."
- In 1946, the Branzhaf Lumber Co. constructed a new sawmill northwest of Marquette city that required a connection of 400 horsepower. This sawmill increased the utility's revenue by 13.7% that year. A new 3,000-horse power diesel engine was purchased and was installed on Sept 29, 1947. The diesel plant now consisted of three engines.
- Reliance on diesel power to satisfy customers have narrowed the margins of profit as expenses of running diesel power was six times more expensive than hydropower. Water levels in 1949 were the lowest since 1925, as a result, a fourth 2,800-diesel power engine was installed and put into service in February of 1949.

1950 to 1959

- The gross revenues for the department increased 5.6 percent over 1949 and the total customers served were 6,741.
- In 1950, it was decided to move the power lines and transformers along Washington Street to the rear of the business buildings to improve the appearance of the downtown district and to make room to install modern street lamps.
- The department continued rapid progression of replacing 2 with 3 phase power lines that were more efficient in transmitting electricity. A large number of small distribution transformers were installed in the rural areas and a large number of line transformers were installed in the North side of the city.
- In 1951, work began to repair the cracks and large holes in the concrete structures of the dams that supplied the city's hydro plants. The plan was set up to be spread over several years with the first year working to repair the worst of the leaks. Also in 1951, there were many improvements made which included adding and installing new transformers, increasing wire spacing, and changing insulators and primary wires from two to three-phase.
- Because of the increased demand, coupled with decreased hydro power, using more expensive diesel power and purchasing power from Cliffs Power and Light Company, it is estimated that additional plant capacity will again be required by the end of 1955.
- By 1956, the Dept. of Light and Power was the city's largest department with 60 employees, had the largest budget and contributed almost ½ of the total revenue received by the City.
- Due to the increased demand of electricity and a power shortage problem in the fall of 1955, the first of three diesel dual-feed engines was installed at the Diesel Plant and put into operation on May 6, 1957.
- During 1957, the distribution department built line extensions of five miles within the city and approximately 6 ½ miles of lines were built to serve rural customers.
- During this decade, demand increased from 26,100,000 kwhs sold in 1950 to 50,843,000 kwhs sold in 1960, demand for electric current nearly doubled in ten years. It was said "Electricity today is no longer a luxury but an essential of life and is required for the health and safety of our community."



1960 to 1969

- New expansion of power lines were installed to provide for new Department of Light and Power customers, which included the Cliffs Ridge Ski area on County Road 553 in 1960. The total customers being served by the utility is 8,012 customers.
- Marquette's City Commission approved on October 8, 1962 the construction and installation of a steam power generating plant. On Jan 14, 1963, the City approved the sale of \$3.7 million of revenue bonds to finance the construction and on November 9, 1964, the ground was broken for the start of construction of the new steam generating plant.
- On November 3, 1964, the voters of the City approved a charter change to establish a Board of Light and Power to manage and operate as a municipal electric utility. The City Commission appointed James R. Smith, Leo W. Bruce and Theodore A. Veiht to serve on the first Marquette Board of Light and Power and they in turn appointed Joseph Fine and Richard Sonderegger to the two remaining positions. At their first meeting, held on April 25, 1965, the Board hired Thomas Moore as the first Executive Director of the Marquette Board of Light and Power.
- On May 6, 1965, the Board of Light and Power announced the new steam generating plant would be called the "Shiras Steam Plant" in honor of George Shiras III, one of Marquette's Distinguished Citizens.
- On February 21, 1967, the Shiras Unit 1 began producing electricity and a total of 20,100,000 KWH's were generated by June 30, 1967. This year, the utility accomplished many of its goals. Shiras Steam Plant was dedicated on August 19, 1967, a new main feeder line from the Steam Plant to the Water Works was completed and 19 new mercury vapor lights were installed along the 300 and 400 blocks of West Washington St.
- In 1968 as demand increased, a report by Lutz, Daily and Brain, Consulting Engineers recommended the installation of a second steam-generating unit to be installed at the Shiras Steam Plant with a capacity of 22,840 KW, as the predicted demand by 1970 would reach 24,000 KW. Fiscal year ending June 30, 1969, was a year of growth, sales were \$2,176,000.00 which was an increase of 7.1 percent, which was the highest ever for the utility.
- In 1969, the Board of Light and Power purchased a new line truck, which replaced an old 1948-line truck that was worn out and obsolete.
- Also in 1969, the utility continued its goal of converting over to three phase the entire downtown area which would provide reliable and improved service to this area. The Board of Light and Power installed 59 Post Top Mercury Vapor Lights on Third Street to improve the lightening in this area.
- On September 1, 1969, Wilbert W. Wiitala became the Executive Director and held that position until his death on December 18, 1984.

1970 to 1979

- In 1970, the demand increased 11.3% in kilowatt hours used, the highest increase in 15 years. The number of customers increased by 204 customers to a total of 9,316 customers served. On March 23, 1970, Revenue Bonds in the amount of \$3,950,000. were sold to pay for the construction of the Shiras Steam Plant's No. 2 Unit. The Board of Light and Power spent \$100,000 on initial construction of Shiras Unit No. 2 that was completed and put into operation on Feb 26, 1972.
- In August of 1971, Hydro Plant No. 1 was taken offline.
- As result of the new Mine Safety Act and increased labor costs, coal suppliers are forced to increase their prices on coal and the Board of Light and Power was then forced to raise their utility rates for the first time in 22 years, which took effect on Mar 15, 1972.
- On July 9, 1973 the "old substation" located behind City Hall was disconnected from service, as the distribution goal of eliminating two-phase power was completed. The Building, which was constructed in 1908, was dismantled in November of that year.
- In 1974, construction begins of a new office-warehouse complex on Wright Street and in April of 1975, the Board of Light and Power moved from the City Hall Building to its current residence on Wright Street.
- In October 1974, construction begins on a tie line between the Shiras Steam Plant and Diesel Plant, including an interconnection with the Upper Peninsula Power Company. When testing the interconnection with the UPPCO on Jan 13, 1976, there was a major power outage for three hours and "a bushing exploded on a breaker in the substation, damaging the transformer and causing a fire in the substation."
- On Feb 9, 1976, the MBLP announces plans for the construction of a third generator in the Shiras Steam Plant, but due to the public's response the MBLP looked for alternative sources for power. The MBLP learned on Dec 27, 1976 that Cleveland Cliffs Lighting Service would have no more excess power to sell the MBLP after 1980. Consulting engineers from Pieffer & Shultz reported on Mar 8, 1977 that the utility might run out of power unless the MBLP installs new generation by 1979.
- On March 24, 1977, the MBLP proposed the construction of a new 43-megawatt steam generator as the third unit for the Shiras Plant, but city voters rejected the bond referendum for its construction on Aug 2, 1977. The Board is forced to restrict new commercial and industrial hookups but will allow residential hook-ups to continue until December 31, 1977 so as to not exceed the generating capacity.
- In January of 1978, city voters approve the steam plant expansion. At the end of 1978, total customers served by the MBLP is up to 13,845 customers and revenues for fiscal year 1978 totaled \$8,468,704.00, which was an increase of 22.6%. In 1979, total revenue was \$10,898,290.00, which was another 28.6% increase.
- On September 7, 1978, the Board approves a five-year contract with the Upper Peninsula Power Company for the purchase of 20 megawatts of power from the new Unit No. 3 at Shiras Steam Plant.

1980 to 1989

- In February of 1980, the diesel engines and generators No. 1 and 2 that were installed in 1925 and 1926 are dismantled and removed.
- In January of 1982, UPPCO extends its contract with the MBLP to purchase 20 megawatts from a 5-year contract to a ten-year contract.
- On March 10, 1983, the MBLP tested the Shiras Plant's Unit No. 3. It was put into full operation by the end of March of that year.
- On April 1, 1984, the MBLP reduced their electric rates.
- On May 15, 1984, the MBLP issued revenue bonds worth \$2,000,000 to replace penstock and turbines for Hydro No. 2 Plant. This construction was completed and Unit No 2. came back online in December of 1984.
- In 1985, David E. Hickey takes over the position of Executive Director which he held until his death in 2005.
- On March 25, 1986, the MBLP approves the sale of five diesel engines since they are no longer in use. Hatch & Kirch, Inc. purchased them on November 10, 1987 for \$40,000.
- In 1986, the Board of Light and Power purchased land in Negaunee Township to develop a site for ash disposal from the Shiras Steam Plant. The cost of the ash disposal site and development was approximately \$1,400,000.
- In 1988, work continued on the improvements to the hydro plants, with work being done on No. 3 Hydro Dam and No. 3 Hydro Plant. The total amount spent on the improvements amounted to \$268,000.
- During the summer of 1989, Hydro Plant No. 1, generators and electric equipment was dismantled, while reconstruction work continued on No. 2 & 3 Hydro Plants.
- On November 1, 1989, the MBLP employed 88 full-time and 4 part-time employees.
- In 1989, park lighting was installed at Harlow Park along Washington Street.
- Also in 1989, the MBLP received a "Excellence in Sulfur Dioxide Control Award" from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The MBLP was the first utility in Michigan to receive the award. (Almost 30 years later, the Shiras Steam Plant Unit No. 3 is still one of the cleanest stacks in the nation for SO₂ emission rates.)
- On November 24, 1989, in recognition of the MBLP's 100-year anniversary, lighting was turned on for the first time at Harlow Park with Christmas tree lights.

1990 to 1999

- On October 24, the Energy Policy Act of 1992 was put into commission, signed by George Bush, one of its greatest impending policies was that it allowed outside electric utilities to intrude on locally owned electric companies.
- On January 28, 1992, the Marquette City Commission approved the resolution proposed by Attorney George T. Stevenson for the Board of Light and Power to borrow \$5.5 million for the purchase of the utility's 1992-1993 coal supplies, which is estimated at 119 - 165 million tons to be utilized in the Shiras Plant. Shortly thereafter, it was approved for Marquette Board of Light and Power to approve their bonds internally.
- In the fall of 1993, BLP permanently affixed to the side of the Shiras Steam Plant the Christmas Tree outline that remains to this day. Yvonne Whitman created the design and Dave's Maintenance installed it on the building. Tree is 45 feet high and 35 feet across at the base. Entire display is 50 feet tall and 75 feet across, with a total of 1500 lights. This is the largest one-dimensional lit tree design in the U.P. Tree is lit every year on the Friday after Thanksgiving Day and left on throughout the holidays.
- In October of 1993, BLP Board approved the #4 Plant Substation Improvement Project which cost over \$225,000 to install a larger transformer to improve electrical reliability in the north part of the city.
- Coal from Spring Creek Coal Mine from Venture Fuels in Decker, Montana was tested in Marquette's Shiras Steam Plant in 1994 and was proven far superior to Wisconsin Electric Power Company's coal. The switch to use Venture Fuels' coal was made in October 1994.
- In 1996, the July 4 fireworks were set off at the Shiras Steam Plant, which was approved by the MBLP Board of Directors on Feb 27, 1996.
- Due to the Energy Policy Act of 1992 giving authorized customers to buy power anywhere, in March of 1998, Marquette City Commission considered selling the Board of Light and Power to a private company for \$100 million. Possibly selling to companies such as, SEMCO from Port Huron and/or Wisconsin Electric of Milwaukee whose rates were 10-20% higher than the MBLP.
- On July 5, 1999, a storm came through that impacted approximately 60% of our 9,000 customers. Approximately 95 percent of the customers had their power restored in 4 or 5 hours. The balance of customers had their power restored in 24 hours. A line crew from MJ Electric in Iron Mountain came to assist our crews for day. Storm cleanup continued for several days afterwards.
- In September of 1999, due to the public outcry and organizations like Citizens to Save the MBLP, the City Commission decided to repeal their interest in selling the Board of Light and Power.

2000 to 2009

- Marquette's Board of Light and Power buried electric lines and cable television lines, the latter from Charter Communications, along East Ridge to East Baraga Ave. and along Lakeshore Boulevard completing the project in November of 2002.
- In February of 2003, due to the possibility that the State of Michigan would require all municipal companies to have renewable energy as part of their utility, MBLP looked at wind energy as a renewable resource.
- In May of 2003, a breach in the Silver Lake Basin caused by the "fuse plug" released 8 billion gallons of water along the Dead River causing \$100 million worth of damage and power outages all across the area. The flood destroyed No. 3 Hydro Plant and Dam. Future plans for the Plant and Dam were tied to reconstruction of the Silver Lake Dam.
- In 2005, after long time Executive Director, Dave Hickey died in office, Kirby D. Juntilla became the Executive Director and held the position until January 1, 2013.
- During 2006, the MBLP completed a Joint Fiber Optic Project with the city. The fiber optic strands were split between the MBLP and the City with MBLP receiving 36 fiber strands and the city receiving 12 stands. In January of 2007, the city commission sold six of their fiber strands to the public schools.
- In 2007, MBLP Board approved the Tourist Park Dam Project to repair the damage caused by the flood and restore the lake.
- In October of 2007, in order for the crosswalk between Washington and Third to be more efficient and safe, the MBLP programmed the lights to be in sync with pedestrian stoplights when the sensor button is pressed.
- In 2007, the City of Marquette approved for the Board of Light and Power to increase their electric rates to an average of 3.5% across the board over a three-year period due to rising cost of infrastructure and maintenance. This was the first rate increase since 1983, BLP did not have a rate increase for 24 years!
- Since 2007, as transformers are replaced, the MBLP has been purchasing ones that are filled with non-toxic, environmentally friendly, biodegradable soy based fluid instead of the petroleum-based coolant. As of 2013, MBLP has a total 841 out of 4,686 transformers using the new technology.
- In 2008, MBLP looks at feasibility of biomass to be used in No. 2 boiler.
- In 2008, the initial permitting for rebuilding the Tourist Park Dam has begun.
- In 2009, the state of Michigan passed a new law called Public Act 295 also known as the "Clean, Renewable and Efficient Energy Act". This law required the MBLP to assist their customers in gaining greater electric energy efficiency through Energy Optimization Programs. Program was created and various incentives were available.

2010 to 2015

- In 2010, MBLP converts Unit No. 2 in order to burn biomass fuel cubes. The MBLP make plans to purchase 60,000 tons of biomass cubes annually from the Renewafuel Plant at the former Sawyer Air Force Base when it opens in December of that year.
- In 2010 and 2011, MBLP partners with the City in Automated Meter Infrastructure Project (AMI). AMI will collect electronic electric/water billing information saving the MBLP more than \$6 million over the next 20 years. The City projects \$1 million in savings.
- On October 10, 2012, Tourist Park Rededication takes place with the Board of Light and Power, City Officials, local dignitaries and the public in attendance. This was a \$4.8 million restoration project and was designed and built by local firms and contractors.
- On January 1, 2013, Paul A. Kitti became the Executive Director of the MBLP.
- In 2013, the MBLP operates three steam turbines, one combustion turbine and two hydroelectric plants serving a total electric demand of 65 megawatts. The MBLP serves over 16,000 residents and businesses and maintains 2,575 streetlights.
- Unit No. 3 Steam Turbine is totally overhauled in the spring of 2013 for the total cost of \$2.6 million.
- After a cost of service study was completed, MBLP approved a rate increase of 8.5 percent for the next three years in order to bring rates up to cost of service. The City Commission confirmed rates on October 28, 2013.
- On November 19, 2013 the tie line circuit breaker (69kv) at #4 Plant was replaced with a SF6 gas circuit breaker for the cost of \$76,000.
- In the spring of 2014, the MBLP celebrates 125 Years in the Utility Business with a community picnic.
- As of October 31, 2014, we were no longer guaranteed (firm) power from the grid when we needed it. We have one tie line to the grid. If Unit 3 was down and there was a problem with the grid, we would have blackouts.
- On September 8, 2015, Board awarded Wartsila a contract to supply three RICE engines at a total delivered “not to exceed” cost of \$31,887,462 (contingent on confirmation of rate increase and satisfactory financing). The next board meeting, Board awarded the engineering services contract to Sargent and Lundy, LLC for a “not to exceed” cost of \$3,290,000.
- On October 26, 2015, Marquette City Commission confirmed the MBLP’s approval of a 30 percent rate increase (to be implemented on October 1, 2016) to fund the new generation project.
- On November 3, 2015, Board executed the Notice of Engagement and Reservation Fee and Engineering Agreement with Wartsila Corporation in the amount of \$2.4 million.

2016 to 2020

- The first phase of the Marquette Community Solar Garden is approved on January 27, 2016. Michigan Energy Options was awarded the project to provide community solar services for the development of the garden. It takes over a year and half to complete. The garden is located just west of the MBLP administrative building with 480 panels. Solar garden goes online on September 19, 2017.
- At the March 22, 2016 Board Meeting, Board grant the execution of a ten-year SEMCO Energy Natural Gas Facility and Transportation Agreement for the Marquette Energy Center for a total cost of \$1,956,960.00 over the next ten years. The Facility Agreement includes installation of a new 6 inch-3,000 foot, steel gas line and a new regulating/metering station.
- In April of 2016, bonds were sold with a locked in rate of 2.977% for 20 years. This rate was significantly lower than expected which gave a projected savings of \$4.3 million over the life of the loan.
- On April 26, 2016, Board awarded CR Meyers the contract to supply the pre-engineering Engine Hall building for the firm price of \$925,342.39 including delivery FOB to the MEC site.
- On June 14, 2016, BLP has a Groundbreaking Ceremony to commemorate the beginning of construction on the \$65 million new Marquette Energy Center project. More than 70 state and local dignitaries, community leaders and community members joined in the celebration.
- Board awarded the Civil General Work Contract (CGWC) to Miron Construction Co., Inc. for the sum of \$3,917,719.00 on June 28, 2016.
- On August 30, 2016, the Board awarded the General Work Contract (GWC) to Miron Construction Co., for the sum of \$13,467,604.
- In the Fall of 2016, the MBLP and the City of Marquette were featured in an international magazine called *Twentyfour 7*. This magazine is distributed to over 25,000 people/businesses in 170 countries worldwide. Pictures of Marquette's beautiful Lake Superior were featured on the front and back covers of the magazine and the article was titled *End of the Line*.
- On Wednesday, September 14, 2016, the international ship BBC Mont Blanc arrived in Escanaba from Italy, with the BLP's three Wartsila engines. City of Escanaba had a celebration of the ship because it was the first time, a salt water vessel had docked in Escanaba in over 80 years. Engines are unloaded onto barges for their journey to Marquette.
- A week later the engines arrived in Marquette. In the next few days, they were loaded onto 22 axle trailers and during the night, the engines are slowly moved to the Wright Street location. Roads were temporary closed and hundreds of local residents came out to watch the moving of these huge engines (weighing approximately 370 tons each).

2016 to 2020 (continued)

- Executive Director Paul Kitti retired on July 31, 2017. Tom Carpenter was appointed interim Executive Director.
- In September, 2017, MBLP's Solar Garden goes on line with 480 panels.
- At the Regular Board Meeting on 10/19/17, a Cost Projections Studies by Utility Financial Solutions and Burns and McDonnell was presented. The studies showed by taking Shiras Steam Plant off line, the BLP could save more than \$100 million over 20 years. This began the discussion of what to do with Shiras.
- At the February 13, 2018 Board Meeting, a bid was awarded to Bell Roofing Company to completely re-roof the entire MBLP office building and warehouse in the amount of \$142,000.
- On March 14, 2018, the Board officially appointed Tom Carpenter as the Executive Director.
- On June 8, 2018, Shiras Steam Plant was out of coal and it was taken offline and placed into a layup status until a formal decision is made as to its future.
- In October of 2018, the MBLP had its First Annual 5 K Fun Run to raise funds for the new Generating Change Program that was developed to help assist local families who are unable to pay their utility bills during the winter. MBLP contracted with Salvation Army to administer the program.
- In January of 2019, the Board approved Tom Carpenter, with the assistance of legal counsel to pursue an agreement with INNOVA Global in the amount of \$2.9 million for the purpose of pursuing a staged noise mitigation approach at the MEC.

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Noreen Collins, Executive Assistant