



WMGLD
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Peter D. Dion, General Manager

Jennifer Kallay , Chair
Elton Prifti, Secretary
Thomas Boettcher
Philip Courcy
John J. Warchol

WAKEFIELD MUNICIPAL GAS & LIGHT DEPARTMENT

BOARD OF GAS & LIGHT COMMISSIONERS MEETING

September 7, 2022

IN ATTENDANCE: Commrs., Chair Jennifer Kallay
Elton Prifti, Secretary
Thomas Boettcher
Phil Courcy
Jack Warchol

Peter Dion, General Manager, WMGLD

Dave Polson, Engineering and Operations Manager
Mark Cousins, Finance Manager
Vinnie McMahon, Senior Engineer
Joe Collins, Business Analyst- Energy Services
Sylvia Vaccaro, Office Manager

PLACE: ZOOM MEETING

CALL TO ORDER:

Commr. Kallay called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and informed the Board the meeting is being recorded.

CHAIR REMARKS:

Commr. Kallay commented that the second solar installation on the Water Department building on Broadway has been completed since the July Board meeting. WMGLD staff is working on the reporting features. She mentioned that the recently passed Inflation Reduction Act on August 16, 2022, will have implications for WMGLD in the future. She also noted that she is interested to hear comments from the Commissioners that recently attended the Annual Northeast Public Power Association (NEPPA) conference held in August. Commr. Kallay stated that the Green Communities application was submitted.

COMMISSIONER REMARKS:

Commr. Boettcher stated that both he and Commr. Courcy attended the NEPPA conference. He noted that there were a lot of great sessions around the accelerating pace of new technologies, business models, and evolving customer demand, while highlighting the challenges and implications for municipalities like ours and outlining potential strategies to help in coping with the everchanging landscape. Some of the technology updates for Massachusetts include the Commonwealth Fusion System being developed out at Devens, and wind and battery systems (including long duration battery systems that are air and iron as well as energy efficiency and demand response systems). He said that they also received hot off the press updates on the landmark legislation on both federal and state levels that will accelerate the transition process to 100 percent clean energy targets. He noted that he is happy to go into depth either here or offline.

Commr. Courcy explained that Pete asked him to reach out to the Friends of Lake Quannapowitt to discuss the two EV chargers that will be installed at the head of the lake as part of the grant that WMGLD received and to discuss how WMGLD will service the new complex to be built at 200-400 Quannapowitt Parkway. He noted that he originally met with Karen Faler and Bill Conley, who suggested that he attend their Board meeting last night, to discuss these two items. He noted that there were no real issues about the electrical service but the FOLQ did ultimately have questions as to how the area will be landscaped. Commr. Courcy explained that WMGLD will work with the Town on these issues. Commr. Warchol thanked Commr. Courcy for attending the Friends of Lake Quannapowitt Board meeting and was pleased that WMGLD was proactive in addressing any potential concerns.

TOWN COUNCIL LIASON COMMENTS:

Mike McLane introduced himself to the Board as the new Town Council liaison. He stated that he understands that energy is a hot topic right now and said that he will provide comments on the available ARPA funds, when discussed later tonight. He expressed his interest in WMGLD's Low Income Proposals for Energy Efficiency

Incentive Programs. Pete invited Mike to reach out to him, so he can arrange a tour of WMGLD for him.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: No comments

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Approval of the minutes included in the Board book from the July 13, 2022, meeting was before the Board for approval. Commrs. Boettcher, Kallay, and Warchol provided edits to incorporate into the minutes.

A motion was made by Commr. Courcy to approve the July 13, 2022, minutes as amended and seconded by Commr. Boettcher.

Roll Call Vote:	Commr. Courcy	Aye
	Commr. Boettcher	Aye
	Commr. Kallay	Aye
	Commr. Prifti	Aye
	Commr. Warchol	Aye

The motion was approved unanimously 5-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Project Updates

- i. Northeast Tech/Wakefield HS Energy Park
 - i. Pete stated the financials will be reviewed in Executive Session tonight. He said the next step in this process is the request for the easement which needs to be on the warrant for the November Town Meeting. Pete noted that he has received a draft from WMGLD attorney, Mike McCarthy and is in the process of reviewing the document and will share it with the Board. Pete and staff will present the Energy Park Project to Town Council at their second September Board Meeting. This will allow time to procure an updated rendering from the architect. Commr. Kallay stated that she will be happy to attend this meeting.
- ii. 4KV Project – Burns Substation
 - i. Pete explained that the Burns substation was de-energized this morning. Vinnie McMahon discussed that during the last few years there was a lot of underground cable work and a couple of

large, planned outages at night to make this happen. He explained that WMGLD is very close to putting it on the two new circuits so the West Side of town will be on three circuits instead of two and the Greenwood side of town will be on two circuits instead of one. This will help with general reliability and load balancing. Pete noted that the conversion work on the 4kv has also retired our greatest liability from a distribution perspective. Commr. Warchol inquired as to what will be left on that land as well as the size of that land. Pete noted that there will be a couple of switches and reclosures, but he wants to keep that land for future potential technologies. Vinnie mentioned that the land is approximately 70ft. X 120ft.

2. Electric Vehicle Programs- Vinnie McMahon and Joe Collins

- i. Pete mentioned that new construction for multi- families will be required to have separate meters for EVs and we would strongly suggest this for single families. Vinnie noted that Massachusetts has the 12th most electric vehicle registrations in the country and the state has committed to 750,000 electric vehicles by 2030. WMGLD will see an impact in transformer loads and will continue to monitor and address as necessary.. He noted WMGLD could see a significant impact on a circuit, if a fleet were converted to electric, such as the Post Office. He stated that in the future with additional electric cars WMGLD's peak load maybe in the winter because batteries deplete faster in the winter. Joe Collins reviewed WMGLD's current EV charging program. Customers receive a free charger, when signing a 3- year charging agreement allowing WMGLD to curtail their charging during peak demand or emergency events. He noted that WMGLD would like to require these customers to move to the Connected Homes program once the 3-year charging agreement has expired. This would allow the customer to receive a \$10 a month incentive for every month they participate in peak and emergency events while in the Connected Homes program. J

Joe also introduced a new EV Charging Program which would implement Time-Of-Use rates. The proposed rate would be

- \$0.05 per kWh reduction off the energy charge for off-peak charging

- 500% increase of per kWh energy charge for on-peak charging (\$0.454 per kWh using current energy charge)
- Customers would sign up for a 3-Year minimum for using this rate structure

WMGLD would provide incentives totaling \$1,000 to \$1,250 in value:

- For customers who have a Level 2 Charger: \$1,000 incentive towards a new EV charger meter
- For customers who do not already have a Level 2 Charger: one free Level 2 Charger (\$650 value) and a \$600 incentive towards a new EV charger meter, for a total of \$1,250"

This program will offer customers a 6-year payback based on 2,656 kWh annual average for home EV charger usage. (Lincoln Electric Case Study 2022) Joe noted the benefits of a separate EV Charger Meter Program to include customer savings on monthly energy bill, a cost of \$0.03 per mile charging cost with the new rate (\$0.14 per mile for ICE with current gas prices), supports WMGLD load management and monitoring, WMGLD avoiding transmission and capacity costs through peak reduction, and easily accessible charging data.

Joe also mentioned that WMGLD has entered into a consulting agreement with Voltrek to assist small multi-families to tailor a best solution for their specific needs. The new rate structure will also apply to these small multi-families. A discussion ensued as to the best way to enhance WMGLD's current EV Charging Program. Pete will share the new rate spreadsheet with the Board for their review. Commr. Courcy thanked Vinnie and Joe for their presentation.

3. Board meeting agenda and format

Pete incorporated the agenda discussion points for the next few months. He also said that there was discussion as to when we will meet in person again. Commr. Kallay stated that it is important to maintain the virtual presentation, so others may be able to participate remotely. Pete said that his one concern is that our Board meetings come right after the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. He commented that in the past two years there has been a spike in COVID after these Holidays. Commr. Boettcher asked if there was guidance for the Board for hybrid meetings. Pete commented that the State has extended the suspension

of the meeting rules due to COVID until next year. Commr. Kallay also said that there may be some exceptions for WMGLD staff to attend remotely. It was decided that the October Board meeting will be held in person. Pete noted that the January Board meeting was postponed to January 11th, so that may be fine to have in person.

NEW BUSINESS

1. ARPA Funds – Proposal for Low Income Energy Efficiency Incentive Program

Pete mentioned that the Town said there are additional ARPA funds available and is interested to see ideas as to how those funds could be used based on certain guidelines. Pete noted that Commr. Kallay requested that we develop proposals for these funds. Mark Cousins stated that WMGLD will be funding part of the incentives in addition to the ARPA funds. Joe Collins said that the program is designed to target those customers economically affected by COVID-19. This targeted relief is designed to assist homeowners and renters.

Low-Income homeowners

- Double existing rebates for Heat Pumps and Weatherization/Air sealing improvements ARPA money will be utilized to fund the increase (WMGLD funds the original rebate amount)
- Double existing rebates on Solar Panel installation increasing the total offer from \$1.25 per watt to \$2.50 per Watt ARPA money will be utilized to fund the increase (WMGLD funds the original \$1.25 per watt)
- Offer 0% interest loans (up to 10-year loans) through an approved local bank for large scale Heat Pump, Weatherization/Air Sealing and Solar Panel projects (loan principal of up to \$20,000)
- Increase total rebate cap from \$2,500 to \$5,000

Requirements/ eligibility:

- Eligibility is based on a maximum gross annual income not to exceed 60% of the Estimated State Median income (this measure is standardized and included in other low-income assistance programs)
- Loans will be entered into by the homeowner in the homeowner's name from an approved local bank
- WMGLD will pay the interest portion of the loan through an arrangement with the approved bank
- Customers must be in good standing to take advantage of this program
- Programs will be on a first come first basis until ARPA funds are expended

Enhanced Renter Energy Audit

- Tailored energy audit to renters
- Include non-invasive energy efficient kits with each audit, including LED light bulbs, adhesive door sweeps, foam outlet gaskets, etc.

Requirements/Eligibility:

- All renters have access to the program
- Limit of one kit per customer per year

The total program budget is \$377,500 which can fund any of the above-mentioned areas. Mark Cousins noted that if a WMGLD customer was already receiving fuel assistance (LEO) than they would qualify for this program. If they were not receiving fuel assistance, then we would refer them to LEO, and once approved, they would be able to apply for this program. He also noted that there will be some leeway to shuffle funds between line items depending on demand. Town Liaison, Mike McLane noted that other Town committees and departments will be competing for these funds. If Town Council commits these funds, he believes that the funds will be available between 2022-2023 but will check with Town Manager, Steve Maio. Commr. Kallay mentioned that she would like to see more offerings added for landlords. She also noted that we should partner with the Town to assist us in identifying those low-income people

that may not be receiving fuel assistance. Pete stated that he and his staff will tweak this program and will share with the Board along with Steve Maio and Town Council.

2. Mid-year review of Goals and Objectives

Pete highlighted projects which would not be addressed this year.

Electric

The Community Solar Project is running behind due to contract and supply chain issues.

The two mat transformer replacements are deferred to next year due to the 4kv work, replacing poles on North Ave. for the bike path project, the Energy Park, and the EV Charger Project at the head of the lake.

Gas

We will not be able to convert the customer on Shumway because of Town's paving requests, which delayed the Cedar, Emerson, and Prospect area work that we are currently working. We will communicate this delay with the Shumway customer.

Pete mentioned the Yard Equipment Incentive Program that was added this year has been extremely successful. He commented that Voltrex has been added as a consultant for Electric Vehicle Charging. Customer informational sessions regarding the Energy Park and WMGLD Energy Efficiency Programs will be conducted this year. He stated that supply chain issues have delayed the replacement of some of the department's gas vehicles with new electric vehicles. This and other supply chain issues will be discussed at future board meetings. Mark Cousins noted that the cash on hand issue has been impacted by rising commodity costs. Dave Polson mentioned that the HVAC work at the Beebe substation work will carry over to next year.

Any other matter not anticipated by the Chair

None

A motion to enter Executive Session returning to regular session for the purpose of adjournment was made by Commr. Courcy and seconded by Commr. Boettcher

Roll Call Vote: Commr. Boettcher Aye
 Commr. Courcy Aye
 Commr. Kallay Aye
 Commr. Prifti Aye
 Commr. Warchol Aye

The motion was approved unanimously 5-0.

Executive Session-NEMT Financials and Personnel Conduct Issue

A motion to adjourn was made at 9:55pm by Commr. Prifti and seconded by Commr. Boettcher.

Roll Call Vote: Commr. Boettcher Aye
 Commr. Courcy Aye
 Commr. Kallay Aye
 Commr. Prifti Aye
 Commr. Warchol Aye

The motion was approved unanimously 5-0.