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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**

**February 8, 2023**

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

Peter Dion, General Manager, WMGLD

Mark Cousins, Finance Manager  
Dave Polson, Engineering and Operations Manager  
Joe Collins, Business Analyst- Energy Services  
Vinnie McMahon, Senior System Engineer  
Paul Redmond, Electric Superintendent  
Sylvia Vaccaro, Minute Secretary

Matt Ide, MMWEC

**PLACE: ZOOM MEETING**

#### **CALL TO ORDER:**

Commr. Prifti acting as Chair due to Commr. Kallay being unable to attend in person called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

#### **CHAIR REMARKS:**

Commr. Prifti extended his thanks to the WMGLD team for not only their response to last weekend's cold spell issues, but for their readiness and keeping the community safe.

#### **COMMISSIONER REMARKS:**

Commr. Warchol mentioned that a neighbor in his building informed him that IOU's (Investor-Owned Utilities) will perform energy audits not only for individual condos, but also for the entire building. He inquired if WMGLD would perform an audit of this type. Commr. Warchol stated that he called Next Zero to inquire if a whole building audit is available to WMGLD customers and is waiting to hear back from Next Zero. Pete explained that the Condo Association would be eligible under the Commercial GO Program. Commr. Warchol stated that he will wait to hear from Next Zero and report back to the Board. Commr. Courcy thanked Commr. Boettcher for his work in helping test WMGLD's new customer portal. Commr. Boettcher stated that he will bring forth a statement of support for the Energy Park, with a request the Environmental Sustainability Committee vote on the statement.

#### **TOWN COUNCIL LIASON:**

Not present.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Not present.

#### **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Approval of the December 7, 2022, minutes, including Commr. Kallay's edits was before the Board for approval.

**A motion** to approve the December 7, 2022, as amended with Commr. Kallay's edits was made by Commr. Boettcher and seconded by Commr. Warchol.

<b>Roll Call Vote:</b>	Commr. Boettcher	Aye
	Commr. Courcy	Aye
	Commr. Kallay	Aye
	Commr. Warchol	Aye
	Commr. Prifti	Aye

**Vote:** The motion was approved unanimously 5-0.

**A motion** to approve the January 11, 2023, as amended including edits by Commr. Prifti and Commr. Warchol was made by Commr. Boettcher and seconded by Commr. Warchol.

<b>Roll Call Vote:</b>	Commr. Boettcher	Aye
	Commr. Courcy	Aye
	Commr. Kallay	Aye
	Commr. Warchol	Aye
	Commr. Prifti	Aye

**Vote:** The motion was approved unanimously 5-0.

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

## Project Updates

Pete advised the Board that the Home Rule Petition for the Energy Park was filed with the State and a docket number has been assigned. He also stated that WMGLD provided a draft of the Alternatives Analysis to the State and are awaiting their feedback. The State requested WMGLD to be the first to utilize their new online mechanism for submission. Pete expects this to be submitted soon. He noted that WMGLD requested the Conservation Committee to take a vote on the Energy Park, however, to date they have not done so, and he has not received a response from them. Both Attys. Mullen and McCarthy have advised WMGLD to continue forward with submitting the Home Rule Petition. Commr. Boettcher inquired if the lead times to order the equipment in time for the Energy Park are getting closer. Pete stated that the specifications for the generator, switch gear and transformer are being prepared now, but with long lead times the window is closing in quickly. He said that we will order some equipment that does not have large cancellation penalties. Pete mentioned that the State Energy Office has been receptive of this project and expressed great interest. He also noted that the towns of Belmont and Middleton are interested in this type of project for their towns.

### Presentation on Electric Distribution System

Vinnie McMahon, Senior System Engineer and Paul Redmond, Electric Superintendent, provided the Board with a review of the 2022 Project Calendar and an overview of the 2023-2024 Project Calendar.

Vinnie noted that the following 2022 projects as completed:

- Burns substation decommissioning.
- The first phase of the Water St 13.8kV circuit extension
- EV chargers at 480 North Ave

He also noted that the following 2022 projects are ongoing:

- Pole replacement program
- North Ave Relocation Project - will be complete in the next two weeks

### The 2023 -2024 Projects

#### *North Ave. Pole Relocation Project*

Paul noted the North Ave pole relocation project began last fall. The Town requested that the poles be moved to make way for a wider sidewalk and bike path. The Town received a grant which stipulated

that the work be complete by June 30, 2023. The work began in 2022 and the WMGLD portion of the work is almost complete. WMGLD will receive \$100,000.00 from the grant for its portion of the work.

### *Load Shed Program*

Vinnie explained that there is a threat to shed load due to the limited gas supply in the area on extremely cold days. WMGLD has a full plan in place in the event ISO New England calls for a reduction in load. He said that he has developed a SCADA screen that shows the total system load plan, so if ISO calls for a reduction, we are able to identify which circuits we are able to utilize to shed the load required in the mandated ten-minute timeframe. He noted that tabletop exercises were successfully conducted with the new tools that he and Jeff created. Pete explained that all Substation personnel has been trained, so if load needs to be shed staff can execute this immediately.

### *Beebe Substation Upgrade*

Vinnie stated that at the Beebe substation there will be an upgrade to the transformer protection to prevent tripping due to reverse power flow from the battery storage system. The upgrade will also allow us to rearrange circuits and better allocate our system's loads between Beebe and Wallace substations. He also said that this will also improve the auto transfer scheme and 125V battery system, and make Beebe similar to Wallace's setup. We are also adding remote control and SCADA display to voltage reduction and tap changer controls. He noted the project is well underway, but there have been delays due to long lead times obtaining equipment.

### *Solar Project - 480 North Ave*

Vinnie mentioned that there have been recent discussions with Ameresco, the installer, for the solar project at 480 North Ave. Over 228kW of solar will be installed on the roof. The Community Solar project will consist of 120kW and 108kW will be for the building load. There will be separate metering systems and the EV chargers will also be integrated. Pete stated that the transformer that feeds 480 North Ave. was upgraded to accommodate the project.

### *Water St Extension Phase 2*

Paul explained that the Water St. Extension project will replace old 4.16kV circuit by extending 13.8 kV circuit W32 from Wallace substation. Vinnie noted that the whole purpose isn't just to do away with old 4.16kV but also to tie a second circuit into Wakefield Ave. substation from Wallace. Right now, Wakefield Ave. is only fed by

Beebe and our long-term goal is to feed the whole town from Wallace if needed.

### *2022-2025 Pole Replacement Program*

Paul mentioned that WMGLD conducted pole inspections in 2020 that revealed many poles in need of replacement. Verizon has been replacing poles at our request and to date has replaced 110 poles. WMGLD is replacing poles based on inspection results and quickly transferring poles set by Verizon to eliminate double poles.

### *Energy Park*

Vinnie explained that he is working on the specifications for the generator and switchgear for the Energy Park. The lead times are long, so we are looking to go out to bid quickly. Commr. Prifti inquired if these items could be used elsewhere if the Energy Park does materialize. Vinnie stated that the transformers could be used for the new high school. The generator is a different issue. Dave stated that with the generator there is some flexibility. If the generator is cancelled during production, someone else could take our production slot, so there may not be a penalty. Commr. Prifti asked if there is a delay in procuring the generator would the Energy Park be able to operate without it. Pete noted in that case we would bring in a rental generator. Pete explained that the town's Inspectional Services granted approval for the battery to be life safety contingent upon having the generator as a backup.

### *Meter/CT Inspections*

Vinnie said that WMGLD will begin conducting meter/CT inspections, starting with the top 50 commercial/industrial customers. Meter and billing system data will be compared and confirmed to assure accuracy. He stated that once the top 50 are complete, then all meters will be inspected in Wakefield thru 2023-2024. Pete noted that for years we manually read meters, before we migrated to drive by meter reading system and eventually graduated to remote read meters. Commr. Kallay inquired as to the lifetime of meters and how often we have checked the meters. Pete said that the life expectancy is at least 15 years or more and that it has been a little while since we have manually inspected the meters. Vinnie stated that ITRON meters are extremely reliable, and we have never had any issues with them. Pete said this inspection is to verify that the meter seals are intact and the meter sockets are in good condition. Commr. Boettcher mentioned that the WMGLD employee performing these inspections should be easily identifiable and display proper identification to alleviate customer concerns. Dave said that we will be proactive in notifying our customers about the upcoming inspections thru various methods. Dave mentioned that Vinnie will create an inspection form and it will be incorporated into the

integrated software program we have, so we will be able to have historical data moving forward. Commr. Boettcher asked how a theft of service situation would be addressed. Dave stated that we would first have to be able to prove it. We would then notify the customer about the issue and try to resolve it with them. If we are not able to resolve the issue the service would be disconnected and then we would have to take the necessary next legal steps. Pete said in the case of a bad meter socket we would inform the customer and allow them a period of time to correct the problem. If the problem was not corrected, we would notify the wire inspector and disconnect the service. If there was an immediate safety concern, we make it safe and allow them time to correct the issue and if not corrected we would notify the wire inspector and disconnect the service.

### *Preston St. Conversion*

Paul stated that in 2019, Preston St. was put on 13.8- to 4.0kV step down transformers as part of the McGrail Substation renovation project. This year we are extending 13.8kV lines from circuit W30(Wallace Substation) down Preston St. and will replace 14 transformers creating a tie to Circuit W32. The pole requests have already been submitted to Verizon.

### *200 Quannapowitt Parkway*

Vinnie said that there will be 440 all electric units. There will be a total of 36 EV chargers that will be metered separately. The main building will have 20 chargers and the two other buildings will have 8 each. Dave noted that they will all be level II chargers. Commr. Boettcher mentioned that the developer (BM & B Inc) did receive a grant for a level III charger. Dave stated that he will inquire at his next meeting with them. Commr. Boettcher expressed concern that the developer may not be in compliance with the Stretch Code and the possibly adopted Specialized code concerning the number of EV chargers. Dave said that no one from the Town has followed up the developer about any updates to the Town's requirements. He stated that the developer has only pulled a demolition permit. Commr. Boettcher said that whatever is in place when the developer pulls their building permit, will dictate how many EV chargers they will have to install. WMGLD will ultimately replace the underground feeds from both Lowell St and North Ave. The customer is making a significant contribution the work being done on the Lowell St side. Commr. Warchol stated that 36 EV chargers seem like a small number considering the number of apartments being built and wondered if there is a concern about adding more EV chargers in the future. Dave said that we would have to add additional capacity if more EV chargers are needed in the future.

### *Head of the Lake EV Chargers*

Vinnie stated that the new Level III chargers are installed and up and running at the head of the lake.

## **Electric Vehicle Rate**

Pete stated that after the public hearing last month on the proposed EV Time of Use Rate, one minor change was made to the draft to clarify that there would be one single customer charge for the meter. He said that most comments pertained to incentives being offered for multiple meters and not about the rate itself. He inquired if the Board wanted to entertain a vote on this new rate. Commr. Kallay stated that her takeaway from the hearing was that there were some people that wanted more rate changes and more tiers, while others wanted more stability, so they could understand the economics of the rate. She inquired as to how WMGLD would make updates to the rate, how frequently this would be done, and how these changes would be communicated to the customers. Pete stated that the way the rate was structured enables us to accommodate changes in cost because of the fuel charge component. He stated if the Board wanted a new rate, we could always introduce a new rate and grandfather in anyone already on this rate. Pete confirmed that the peak period for this rate would be from 4 pm- 9 pm. and he does not see this peak time changing for quite a while. He said if approved, the new rate would not go into effect until May 1, 2023, allowing for educational materials and FAQs to be made available to customers as well as any needed adjustments to the billing system.

**A motion** to approve the new Time of Use EV rate was made by Commr. Warchol and seconded by Commr. Boettcher.

<b>Roll Call Vote:</b>	Commr. Boettcher	Aye
	Commr. Courcy	Aye
	Commr. Kallay	Aye
	Commr. Warchol	Aye
	Commr. Prifti	Aye

**Vote:** The motion was approved unanimously 5-0.

## **MEAM Bylaws**

Commr. Kallay noted that last Fall MEAM stated they were planning on updating their bylaws, so a group of Commissioners got together to review the bylaws and offer recommendations. Two Boards voted to submit the group's redlined recommendations to the bylaws to MEAM for review. On January 18, 2023, MEAM held their General Membership Meeting. MEAM passed their version of the updated bylaws by a margin of 25 to 3. She noted that it was disappointing that none of the members voting had even looked at the redlined bylaws that were submitted. She stated that not many of the recommendations were incorporated into the bylaws, but there was some clarification on items. Virtual participation will not be allowed. She expressed concern that Commissioners will not be able to participate in any legislative or

regulatory committees. She noted that it is unclear how commissioners can have their ideas presented to MEAM. She explained that there are concerns as to how communities and commissioners will be informed of State policy initiatives, legislation being filed, as well as letters being sent to the Governor. She stated that it is still unclear how a commissioner will be able to participate at MEAM meetings and if the General Manager is not present, who would represent him/her if a vote is needed. Pete noted that the General Manager will be responsible to submit a commissioner's email list to the Executive Secretary of MEAM so they can be included in communications. He said that any commissioner can participate, but if they are going to represent the Board at the meeting then their Board would have to vote on this. He explained that MEAM did incorporate a change in the proxy process allowing the General Manager to appoint a designee if a vote is required in his absence.

## **2023 Strategic Planning**

Commr. Kallay stated that at the December 2022 Board meeting the Board decided to table this discussion until this meeting. She said that there was previous discussion about looking at a 10-year plan and what direction the Board wanted to pursue. Pete mentioned that WMGLD has contracted with Jon Wortman for conducting training programs for staff. Pete stated that Jon is an excellent facilitator and trainer. He suggested having Jon come to a Board meeting for a brief discussion of strategic planning goals and then come back with a proposal for a facilitated strategic session. The Board agreed that this would be beneficial, so Pete advised that he will reach out to him.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Energy Park Battery**

Matt Ide of MMWEC joined the group. He stated that early in 2022, MMWEC received calls from their municipal members inquiring about battery storage companies and discovered that there was an opportunity to act jointly to potentially save money for all municipals. MMWEC developed a prototypical site with prototypical specifications to get an apples-to-apples comparison from these companies. He said MMWEC then sent an RFI (Request for Information) out in an informal bid under Chapter 775, which is less stringent than the bid process that municipals have to follow. Nine developers responded giving pricing off the prototypical site and specifications. There were two equipment companies that also respond to the bid. These companies would simply sell the batteries to the municipals. The developers are offering an energy savings contract where the municipal would give them the space and the developer would install the battery. The municipal would connect to the battery and the developer would operate and maintain the battery according to a mutually agreed upon contract. The developer would turn on and discharge the battery during transmission peaks and the annual capacity coincidental peak for the entire system, effectively reducing the load off the grid and reducing the charges for capacity and transmission. The two equipment companies are simply just supplying pricing

for the battery. Municipals could utilize the pool loan program to fund the battery.

Upon reviewing the financial results, the nine developers were narrowed down to three. Matt stated that before MMWEC reached out to these three developers they went out to each member and discussed where they wanted these batteries sited. The three developers then went out to each municipal's site so they would be able to provide a proposal based on the reality of the site. Fourteen municipals participated and the developer reviewed 18 different sites and came back with proposals which were energy savings contracts. Matt stated that MMWEC also looked at if the municipals purchased the batteries and what that would look like. The energy savings contract provided the biggest savings, and it is also easier on the municipal from a risk perspective. The developer is taking the risk by funding the battery, paying for the installation, and operating it. The only way they get paid is if they dispatch the battery which drives down capacity and transmission costs for the municipal. That savings is shared with the developer. Fifty-four percent of anticipated savings will go to WMGLD and then WMGLD would have to pay the developer the equivalent of forty-six percent of the savings, but only if that savings has occurred. Matt noted that this would create more diversification in WMGLD's behind the meter assets. He said that MMWEC is now looking to the 14 municipals to see if there is continued interest and a commitment to engage in these contracts.

Commr. Boettcher inquired as to the terms of the energy savings contract. Matt said that it is 20 years, which is the life expectancy of the battery and at the end of the term the developer is responsible for decommissioning the battery and the contract allows each municipal to negotiate the financial assurance related to decommissioning the battery. He also noted that WMGLD would have to sign an interconnection agreement and would have to fulfill its obligations under the agreement.

Matt said that MMWEC was seeking a vote to authorize Pete to sign an Administrative Services Agreement (ASA) between WMGLD and MMWEC allowing MMWEC to act as an agent to work with the battery developer (Delorean) to finalize the definitive energy savings agreement, site lease and interconnection agreement with the developer which will become the actual binding agreement between WMGLD and the developer. Tonight's vote will just authorize Pete to enter into the ASA so MMWEC can take these next steps to develop these definitive documents and only when Pete is ready to sign the definitive agreement will WMGLD be committed to this project. Commr. Warchol inquired if the final numbers were contingent on all 14 municipals participation and if these final numbers could be shared with the Board. Matt stated that the pricing is binding because the developer signed an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with MMWEC. WMGLD's numbers would stay the same even if other municipals elected not to participate. He said he would share the final numbers in Executive session. He noted that Delorean has agreed to the spilt with WMGLD and it is binding unless islanding is required, or if the site location changed. It would still be Pete's decision if he wanted to move forward. Commr. Kallay asked what would happen if

Delorean ceased operation. Matt commented that there would be an opportunity for the lender to step in and it may also be an opportunity for WMGLD to entertain stepping in to take over on behalf of Delorean if they stepped away. He noted that MMWEC did their due diligence in selecting DeLorean and their supply chain.

**A motion** to authorize the General Manager to enter into an administrative services agreement with MMWEC and to enter into the further agreements with Delorean as described tonight was made by Commr. Warchol and seconded by Commr. Boettcher.

<b>Roll Call Vote:</b>	Commr. Boettcher	Aye
	Commr. Courcy	Aye
	Commr. Kallay	Aye
	Commr. Warchol	Aye
	Commr. Prifti	Aye

**Vote:** The motion was approved unanimously 5-0.

**Goals and Objectives**

Pete noted that he and the subcommittee are wrapping up the review of the 2022 Goals and Objectives. It was discussed and decided that Phil and Jen will continue as the subcommittee. Commr. Kallay requested that commissioners email her or Phil with any comments or suggestions.

**Any other matter not anticipated by the Chair**

None

**A motion** to adjourn was made by Commr. Boettcher and seconded by Commr. Warchol at 7:52 pm.

<b>Roll Call Vote:</b>	Commr. Boettcher	Aye
	Commr. Courcy	Aye
	Commr. Kallay	Aye
	Commr. Warchol	Aye
	Commr. Prifti	Aye

**Vote:** The motion was approved unanimously 5-0.

