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Peter D. Dion, General Manager

Sharon Daly, Chair  
Thomas Boettcher,  
Secretary  
Jennifer Kallay  
Elton Prifti  
John J. Warchol

**WAKEFIELD MUNICIPAL GAS & LIGHT DEPARTMENT**  
**BOARD OF GAS & LIGHT COMMISSIONERS MEETING**

**January 22, 2025**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Commrs., Chair Sharon Daly  
Thomas Boettcher, Secretary  
Jennifer Kallay  
Elton Prifti  
Jack Warchol

Peter Dion, General Manager  
Mark Cousins, Finance Manager  
Dave Polson, Engineering and Operations Manager  
Joe Collins, Business Analyst - Energy Services  
Olivia Hayes, Business Analyst

**PLACE:**

**480 North Ave., Wakefield, MA**  
**& ZOOM MEETING**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Commr. Daly called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm and advised the meeting was being recorded.

**CHAIR REMARKS:**

Commr. Daly requested an update on the status of paving and runoff issues on Chestnut St. and Whitmore that were raised at last month's Board meeting by two homeowners on those streets. Pete explained that the service for the first customer was completed, and the temporary patch was placed. Once all the services were installed on the street, the permanent paving was completed. He also mentioned that the driveway runoff issues for the second customer were cleaned up, however the customer is going to continue to have these issues not

due to any of the work that WMGLD did, but because of the way the water runs off the street and funnels into his driveway. Jimmy Brown did speak to the customer about this, and Joe Conway has been made aware of this issue. Commr. Daly asked Pete if he had any takeaways from January 10, 2025, meeting with the Massachusetts EEA and DOER. Pete stated that the presentation was well received. He explained that one slide in the presentation had come from a meeting MMWEC and ENE had with the State about the Clean Heat Standard showing that Wakefield had no heat pumps installed. This information was taken from the MAP (Municipal Action Plan). It was not clear to us what data they wanted when our MAP was prepared. Pete explained that we have asked the State to make sure they tell us exactly what information they require. This meeting resulted in an excellent conversation with Martha Grover, Policy Lead for Building Decarbonization, EEA (Energy and Environmental Affairs). She did acknowledge this issue and stated that going forward her staff will clarify the information requested.

Pete explained that Representative Jeff Roy, Chairman of the Joint Committee of Telecommunications Utilities and Energy (TUE) sent a letter to Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) explaining that the Large Building Energy Reporting regulation is an issue for municipal light plants (MLPs) concerning local control and the MLP's business model, but that the municipals would work with them to give them the information they want. This letter was ignored by DOER and the draft regulation will be issued. Pete said there will be one more effort to talk to the administration during a meeting with Rebecca Tepper, the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs and inform them that the MLPs support the long term goals and will try to provide the data they want, but the MLPs will fight for local control.

## **COMMISSIONERS REMARKS:**

Commr. Kallay mentioned that she does not think the letter from Joe Sollecito, President of MEAM to the Hingham Municipal. Light Plant addressed her concerns on how commission boards are not being informed in advance of what is happening at MEAM. She noted that many Commissioners have jobs and are not able to attend MEAM meetings in person, making the ability to utilize Zoom meetings necessary. Pete stated that the only time MEAM will provide Zoom links is due to the inclement weather. Commr. Daly suggested extending an invitation to Joe Sollecito to attend WMGLD's next Board meeting via Zoom to discuss this issue further.

Olivia Hayes updated the Board on the website focus group that was held on January 16, 2025. The eight participants represented a diverse demographic. The takeaways revolved around clarifying and presenting information in an easier and more intuitive way.

Commr. Prifti informed the Board that he received a request from National Grid to meet with WMGLD staff and learn more about the Energy Park. He thanked Pete

for hosting the January 8, 2025, meeting with National Grid. Everyone was impressed with what Wakefield is doing and their strategic vision. Commr. Kallay provided an update on a heat pump rate design that was recently proposed by Unitil and approved by the Department of Public Utilities. She provided the link to a website explaining the design, for further review and discussion by WMGLD and Commissioners.

## **TOWN COUNCIL LIASON:**

Not present.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

None.

## **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Approval of December 12, 2024, minutes was before the Board for approval. Commr Kallay provided additional edits.

**A motion** to accept the December 12, 2024, minutes as amended was made by Commr. Boettcher and seconded by Commr. Prifti.

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

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

### **Project Updates**

#### **Energy Park**

Dave Polson stated that progress continues even with cold and snowy weather conditions. He noted that the first structure has been set in place with a few manholes scheduled to be set next week. The battery vendor will be on site next week and is utilizing the same vendor for some site work that WMGLD is using. The site vendor will be working on both sites at the same time. Our goal is to have the battery in operation for June 1, 2025.

#### **Main Replacement Projects**

Pete mentioned that WMGLD was awarded two federal grants for gas main upgrades and \$486,000 is still expected from the first grant. However, there are some concerns over the Trump Administration Executive Orders (EO) earlier this week, in particular, the Unleashing American Energy EO to pause the disbursement of funds under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). Joe Collins will submit

the current invoices for reimbursement this week and see if they will process payment as they had previously. The second grant award for \$1.4 million is still in the preliminary stages of award negotiation and WMGLD does not yet have a signed contract. Joe is meeting with the grant specialist tomorrow and will see what impact the EO may have on the grants.

## **Clean Heat Standard and Decarbonization Clearinghouse**

The Board discussed the idea of submitting a joint letter with its comments on the Clean Heat Standard regulation. Pete noted that if the Board is going to craft a letter it should be around the larger issue of local control and should cover all the draft regulations. He said that the big issue is the state is trying to attack the MLP business model, and the legislators need to understand the MLPs position. Pete stated that this Board should voice their concern about the bigger picture of losing local control, protecting the MLP model and the impact this regulation will have on our customers. Discussion ensued. Commissioners Daly and Warchol will draft a letter and send it out to the Board for review.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### **Commercial Time of Use EV Rates – Discussion**

Pete stated that this would be an optional rate for commercial customers with fleet, workplace, or commercial charging. Joe Collins provided a summary of the proposed Commercial Time of Use EV rate. He noted that data from the head of the lake fast-chargers was used as a model. He presented different scenarios based on the potential customer response to this rate and the potential savings and losses for WMGLD. The goal is for this rate to be revenue neutral. He explained that customer education is a key part of this rate for the commercial customers. Pete said the goal would be to design a rate to give us flexibility so the Board would be able to vote to change the charges on- and off-peak without having to have another public rate hearing. Joe will reach out to other MLPs and survey what they are doing and get back with more information. The Board discussed different rate structures for fleet charging and decided to revisit this topic at the next Board meeting. WMGLD offered to bring a recommendation around fleet charging rates to that meeting.

## **Any other matter not reasonably anticipated by the Board.**

Pete mentioned that a subcommittee needs to be formed to establish goals for this year and review last year's performance. Commr. Prifti and Commr. Kallay volunteered. Pete said he will send out the forms to the subcommittee for this year's goals and stated that staff will be working on the results from 2024.

## **Executive Session if necessary**

**A motion** to exit public session to go into Executive session for the sole purpose of discussing Collective Bargaining and returning to public session to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner Warchol and seconded by Commr. Boettcher. A roll call vote was taken.

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

### **Adjournment**

**A motion** to adjourn was made at 9:30 pm by Commr. Warchol and seconded by Commr. Prifti.

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