

WMGLD  
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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**

**April 8, 2025**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Comms., 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  
Jeff Morris, IT Manager  
Joe Collins, Business Analyst  
Olivia Hayes, Business Analyst  
Vinnie McMahon, Senior System Engineer  
Abder Chlih, System Engineer  
Sylvia Vaccaro, Minute Secretary

**PLACE:**

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

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Commr. Daly called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and advised the meeting was being recorded.

**CHAIR REMARKS:**

None

**COMMISSIONERS REMARKS:**

Commr. Kallay noted that at the recent meeting of the Massachusetts Light Commissioners Association (MLCA) there were two presentations. The first was about the Clean Heat Standard. The representatives from State walked through the key elements of the policy and answered questions. The second was about water source heat pump technology that has better peak shifting capabilities. Commr. Warchol inquired how many other municipal Commissions have submitted letters to the State about their opposition to the Clean Heat Standard. Pete stated that 13 municipal Commissions have written letters. Commr. Kallay noted that the next MLCA meetings will be held on April 24 and May 29, 2025.

## **TOWN COUNCIL LIASON:**

Not present.

## **Public Comments**

None

## **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Approval of March 4, 2025, minutes was before the Board for approval. Commr. Daly provided an additional edit.

**A motion** to accept the March 4, 2025, minutes as amended was made by Commr. Boettcher and seconded by Commr. Prifti.

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

**Electric Department Annual Report** – Vinnie McMahon, Senior System Engineer and Abder Chlih, System Engineer. Paul Redmond was not able to join the meeting due to a family issue.

Vinnie reviewed both the completed and ongoing projects for the electric division with the Board.

## **2024 Engineering and Substations Review**

- Burns Sub soil remediation Completed – Work on the park will be completed this Spring
- Solar on 480 North Ave – Complete
- Beebe Sub Relay Upgrade – Complete
- Circuit 1380 UG feeder replacement – 35% complete
- 115kV line traps installed at Beebe Sub
- Load balanced 13.8kV circuits
- Energy Park engineering and site clearing – Complete
- 200 Quannapowitt Pkwy – 50% complete

## **2024 Construction Review**

- Installed 800' of conduit on Hemlock Rd
- Upgraded 1/3 of Circuit 1380
- Aging pole replacement program and Hurricane Preparation
- Added Reclosers and switches
- Continued Open Wire Secondary Replacements Transformer Load Management

### **Energy Park – 2025 Objectives**

- Conduit/foundations will be installed winter 2025
- Battery storage system to be online by June 1st
- Generator equipment delivery Q3/Q4 2025
- Underground cable installation to both schools may start in Q4 2025

### **Installing two solar arrays**

- 450 kW - WMHS
- 360 kW - NEMT spring
- Plans are nearly complete and will go out for bid in May.
- Construction intended for summer 2026
- In-depth coordination required with the school's construction and architecture teams to ensure the schools are truly solar-ready

### **Hemlock Rd Reconductor**

- Install 1500' of 477mcm spacer cable from Farm St to the Energy Park
- A second feed will be installed later, likely in late 2025 or 2026
- Install temporary recloser for battery storage system (BESS) protection  
Increased cable size will accommodate the demand created by the BESS and the two new schools

### **Kimball Lane Fiber Optic Upgrade**

- State Electric installed fiber through Lynnfield with Peabody Light's permission Greatly increased reliability and security for our critical gas substation
- Managing our own fiber optic records now – not reliant on contractor
- Plan to apply for a grant to build out our system physically and move to an enterprise fiber management software

### **Beebe Substation Upgrades**

- Upgraded transformer protection in 2024 in preparation for growing DER connected to Beebe Sub

- In 2025, we are updating the load tap changer controls to allow for remote 5% voltage reduction
- This spring, we will swap circuits 0007 and 0012 to help spread out our future DER between Bus 1 and Bus 2.

## **200 Quannapowitt Pkwy**

- 440 Apartment units, all electric with heat pumps and EV chargers
- Conduit installation nearly complete
- Cable scheduled to be installed spring 2025
- This includes OH to UG conversion of Quannapowitt Parkway on the Lowell St side

## **Lowell St Reconductor**

- Install 2400' of 477mcm spacer cable to replace older existing cable
- Temporarily moved all customers on this section to another feeder
- Result will be increased utilization of an underloaded circuit from Beebe to feed 200 Quannapowitt Parkway (expected load of 2MW)

## **ArcGIS Electric Vehicle Charger & Heat Pump Layers-** Abder Chlih, System Engineer

Abder explained to the Board that EVs and heat pumps have been integrated into the GIS system, to better manage load and plan for future demand.

Tracks adoption of electric vehicle chargers in Wakefield

- Perform analysis to manage increasing load/demand
- Check capacity to add additional EV chargers or heat pumps to existing transformers
- Helps identify quickly growing areas for electric vehicle

Analysis Example

- This crib Has 4 EV chargers
- 37.5 kVA (156.25A)
- 1/o secondary cable (260 A)

Essential Gas Pipe Network Data Management in ArcGIS Safety is a top priority for our gas utility, so we ensure our assets are up to date.

- Improve and update ArcGIS Pipeline Referencing to extensions and services.
- Keep the gas GIS database current to meet the 60-day DPU requirement

## **Old Business**

### **Project Updates**

### **Energy Park**

Pete explained that the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at the Energy Park is still on schedule to be operational in June. Dave said that the generator and radiator foundation will be completed in June also, with the switchgear foundation being completed in July.

### **Cyber Security - Recent Local Issues – Jeff Morris**

Jeff informed the Board that in 2023 Littleton Light & Water was hacked by a Chinese state sponsored group called Volt Typhoon. This entity was on their system for 300 days. This information was just made public a month ago. Jeff also mentioned that MMWEC was hit with ransomware attack earlier this year. He said that as soon as we found out, we disabled their VPN connection to our system. Once their system was verified as clean we reestablished their connection to our system. Jeff explained that hackers are not looking for simple information any longer. They lie in wait because they are not sure what they have hacked into, so they try to determine what you do and how much you are worth to them. Jeff said that during March, we had 3 company-wide classes on cyber-security. Utility Services of Vermont had already been scheduled to host cyber-security tabletop exercises and they put our policies to the test with only minor tweaks being suggested. Jeff also mentioned that an external vulnerability test was performed, and we did very well due to the fact that our public-facing website is hosted by a third party that specializes in maintaining the security that keeps the bad actors out. The good news is that there is very little information about WMGLD out there on the dark web.

### **Large Building Energy Reporting (LBER) Update**

Pete stated that the original list of 146 large buildings in Wakefield is down to 136, however the data quality has not improved. Olivia Hayes said that a lot of the building owners have not claimed their buildings, so the owners listed are not correct; there are also duplicate data and incorrect square footage. Olivia noted that she joined an info session for public entities through the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) today, but they still did not have answers to a lot of the questions asked. Pete explained that MEAM nominated a committee to directly work with the State including Joe Sollecito, Michel Cloutier and himself to represent the municipalities. They met today to discuss the concerns and provided the representative for the DOER with a red line of the regulations that would be acceptable to the municipal electric departments. He stated that they expressed their concern that the State is taking a law that excludes municipalities and is now trying to make them part of it through regulations. Pete stated that we requested a hold on this requirement pending the revision of this regulation. Pete noted that they discussed their willingness to help the State obtain the data they need, and possible ways to do so, but not through regulations. He said that lead counsel, Ben Dobbs, has all the information, and we are hoping to meet again in the next two weeks. Pete said that the subcommittee made it very clear that we will sue over this issue if we are forced to.

## **Commercial Electric Vehicle Time-of-Use Rate – Discussion**

Joe Collins reviewed the draft tariff for the proposed Commercial Electric Vehicle Time-of-Use (TOU) rate included in the Board book. Rate A (not for resale) is intended for commercial fleet charging. It is similar to WMGLD's residential Electric Vehicle Meter Time-of-Use Rate (EVM-TOU – MDPU No. 81), but it has a different base rate structure (commercial instead of residential). Rate B is (for resale) is intended for public EV charging. Rate B will operate under the Power Rate C (MDPU No. 78) structure with modifications to the Customer Charge, Energy Charge, and Demand Charge. For this rate, the off-peak discount and on-peak premium are related to the Energy Charge defined in Power Rate C. Pete mentioned that there is one landscaper that has an EV fleet that would benefit from this rate. Mark Cousins noted that it is harder to shape and change behavior for on-peak charging for resale. Language in the tariff was left the same to allow for flexibility in the future. Edits to the rate will be made for the next Board meeting and the Board will potentially host the public hearing for the new proposed rate at the June meeting.

## **General Manager 2025 Goals**

Pete reviewed the language for the 2025 goals and modifications were made.

**A motion** to adopt the 2025 goals as amended in tonight's discussion was made by Commr. Warchol and seconded by Commr. Kallay

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

## **New Business**

### **Potential Impact of Tariffs on Energy Supply, Materials and Equipment and Contingency Planning**

Pete shared a presentation from MMWEC meetings on March 17, 2025. The New-England-Independent System Operator (ISO-NE) began collecting a little bit more from us in the March bill. According to our analysis increasing our fuel charge by half a cent would cover ISO-NE's increase for now. Pete mentioned that the situation is changing daily but there have not been any notifications of price increases on Energy Park components. However, it is likely that solar panels could be impacted by tariffs as most solar panels are from China. On the gas side, we have a layering strategy for procuring gas supply, where we buy 25% for the next year and 25% for the following year. Our procurement this year was almost 10% higher than last year's forward price. Last year we budgeted \$7.93, and it came in at \$8.57.

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

**Executive Session if necessary**

**A motion** to go into Executive Session was made by Commr. Boettcher at 9:11pm to discuss labor negotiations and management performance and to come out of Executive Session to inform management staff of findings and to adjourn was seconded by Commr. Prifti.

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

**A motion** to come out of Executive session and back into General session to adjourn was made by Commr. Warchol at 9:22 pm and seconded by Commr. Prifti.

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