



WMGLD

P.O. BOX 190 480 North Ave.

Wakefield, MA 01880

Tel. (781) 246-6363 Fax (781) 246-0419

Peter D. Dion, General Manager

John J. Warchol, Chair

Philip Courcy, Secretary

Kenneth J. Chase, Jr.

Jennifer Kallay

Thomas Boettcher

WAKEFIELD MUNICIPAL GAS & LIGHT DEPARTMENT

BOARD OF GAS & LIGHT COMMISSIONERS MEETING

September 4, 2019

MINUTES

IN ATTENDANCE: Commrs, John J. Warchol, Chairman
Phillip Courcy, Secretary
Kenneth J. Chase, Jr.
Jennifer Kallay
Thomas Boettcher

Peter Dion, General Manager, WMGLD

Maureen Mata, Executive Assistant
Mark Cousins, Financial Manager
Sylvia Vaccaro, Office Manager
Joe Collins, Intern

Julie Smith-Galvin, Town Council Liaison
Rob Darnell, Sustainable Wakefield Committee

PLACE: WMGLD Conference Room, 480 North Avenue

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Warchol called meeting to order at 6:31 P.M. and informed the Board the meeting is recorded and that we have a sign in sheet for the members of the public.

Chair Remarks: Chair Warchol acknowledged Rob Darnell from Sustainable Wakefield as a member of the public in attendance. He also recognized recently retired Assistant General Manager, Gene Sullivan for his many years of service to Wakefield Municipal

Gas & Light Department and the town of Wakefield and to congratulate him on his retirement.

Commissioner Remarks: Commissioner Kallay also wanted to congratulate Commissioner Ken Chase, for receiving an award at the NEPPA conference for his many years of service. General Manager, Pete Dion stated that there will also be an article in the Wakefield Item about Commissioner Chase's many years of service.

Town Liaison Comments: Julie Smith-Galvin thanked the Board for WMGLD's participation in the EV Charging Station discussion with the town. She said she is hearing all overwhelmingly positive feedback and will be bringing this before Town Council on September 24, 2019.

Public Comments: None

Secretary's Report: No

General Manager Report:

General Manager, Pete Dion stated the auditors will be coming in this month. Mark Cousins, Finance and Customer Service Manager, reported that the auditors will be in the third week of September. He explained that the final numbers will not be available until the first of the year, because we must wait on the Town to complete their audit first so their numbers can be consolidated into ours.

Commissioner Boettcher inquired where revenue earned or saved from the battery and peakers is being tracked. Mark stated that it is currently shown in the purchase power and netted out but will be called out separately and available after the fiscal year is complete. Pete Dion stated that the numbers would be approximately one million dollars higher if not for the battery and generators included.

Comm. Warchol asked if the MMWEC numbers are quantifiable?

Mark said that these are pure numbers that MMWEC does bill WMGLD. Now the numbers are netted out but going forward they will be split out.

Comm. Warchol asked if these should be added to the dashboard. He would like to have numbers, since there was an article published in the Wakefield Item about the moratorium. It would be helpful to have what we buy from Sprague versus LNG.

General Manager, Pete Dion, gave the example of our average winter day is 5000 but peak is 7000 so we have to cover that 2000. The incremental difference from the base day gets incrementally more expensive. Basically, the more the peak separates from the average the more expensive the gas becomes and our peak is all driven by heat load.

Approval of Minutes:

Approval of minutes from the July 17, 2019 was before the Board for approval. Chairman Warchol and Commissioner Kallay offered minor corrections.

A motion to approve the minutes of the July 17, 2019 meeting with the proposed edits was made by Commissioner Courcy and seconded by Commissioner Kallay.

Vote: the motion was approved unanimously

Old Business:

Energy Efficiency Program Discussion

Joe Collins, WMGLD Intern, presented the Board with a graph depicting avg KWHs saved versus \$'s spent on all the appliances that are eligible for rebates. Comm Warchol suggested an extensive look at the current appliances that we offer rebates for and the KWH savings and perhaps tweaking the eligible appliances or dollar amount rebated. All agreed that this warrants a closer evaluation. It was also noted that going forward WMGLD will collect data on appliances that are being replaced and this will assist in quantifying future analytics.

Funding for the proposed new program would come from eliminating the 30-cent conservation rate and replace it with an energy conservation charge on a cents per kwh basis. The rate would be set by the Board and the recommend initial level would be \$0.001 cents per kwh. This would generate approximately \$80,000 for residential programs and approximately \$100,000.00 for the creation of commercial and industrial programs. The new Commercial program would be based on the MMWEC GO program.

General Manager, Pete Dion stated that the proposed new program of is one of the most aggressive programs for Municipals in the state.

Discussion ensued about Wi-Fi thermostats and the potential for a load management program in the future. There was further discussion about requiring mandatory energy audits for any single family wanting to be added to our gas waiting list, as well as, anyone interested in heat pumps or split systems. Comm. Kallay inquired about the effectiveness of our audits and it was agreed that it warrants a further look to see if there are different tiers of audits we may offer.

A motion to approve replacing the 30-cents-per-month energy conservation rate with an energy conservation charge assessed on a cents-per-kwh basis was made by Commissioner Kallay and seconded by Commissioner Chase.

Vote: the motion was approved unanimously

Project Updates:

Solar Program

General Manager, Pete Dion explained that the Solar Program is a little over 50 percent committed. WMGLD has not heard from the State of Massachusetts or MMWEC about any further funding. We first need to hear from MMWEC about how other municipals are doing with their commitment. MMWEC has been given leeway

to shuffle money around in the allotment. We are also waiting to hear from the State if our award of \$110,000.00 will increase to our originally requested amount of 150,000.00. The current program end date is scheduled for 07/1/2020. Comm. Boettcher inquired about having another solar forum. General Manager, Pete Dion stated that he was considering having something in October & November, and including it with a roll out an incentive program for split systems, so perhaps it could encompass everything.

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

Commissioner Boettcher stated that comments from Farmer's Markets indicated that people were interested in learning about electric vehicles and with that came the realization of the need for charging stations. Pete Dion noted that the locations for the charging stations will be in highly visible areas throughout town.

National Grid 345kV Project

General Manager, Pete Dion informed the Board that he and his staff are meeting on a weekly basis with the project team including the Police Chief and detail officer along with a PR firm that National Grid has hired. He noted that National Grid has already gone door to door informing those impacted about what is going to be happening. They also have a website and hotline available. We will be eliminating 6 leaks and moving approximately 40 services outside as part of the project. This project will be on going for the next two years. It was also noted that WMGLD will be receiving \$1.5 million dollars in replaced and updated infrastructure. He also stated that this year alone capital contributions between new developments, Waveguide, and the Salem Street project, WMGLD will have received \$2 million dollars in infrastructure improvements from outside parties. Comm. Kallay questioned if these contributions are being tracked. Mark Cousins noted that these are tracked in the 913 account and the work order system. General Manager, Pete Dion said that there is a message on our website referring people to our Facebook page about the traffic patterns.

New Business

2019 Goals and Objectives Update Pete Dion stated that WMGLD is on target for most projects and noted some changes to the capital plan and the goals which were noted in the Board packages.

EV Charging Stations – The stations that were offered to the town will hit capital budget

Electric Group

Improve electric system McGrail Station transformers will not be replaced until next year. They will be purchased this year. For the past 2-3 months the Electric division worked with Waveguide to make improvements to our distribution system, so they could run their own fiber. We were fully compensated by Waveguide in the amount of \$250,000. As a result of this we replaced over 56 sections of open

wire secondary and poles for part of the make ready work for their fiber run

Gas Group

Work has been completed on:

- Park St.
- Bryant St.
- Pearl St.
- These three streets were completed because of cast iron
- Also, completed was Wave Ave.
- White Ave. (between Main & Pleasant) will not be completed
- MOU with DPW has been signed.
- General Manager, Pete Dion stated he had conversations with Joe Conway, DPW Director, as to how to work better as a team to complete paving more efficiently.
- Customer Solar outreach in January and depending on this discussion we can do some further education in the fall including heat pumps and split systems.

Pole Top Solar Pilot Project (Audubon Rd. from Edgewater down and New Salem Commercial district) Proposed Pilot Project would include 20-50 solar pole tops (2x3) The GM noted that Dave Polson, Electrical Engineer is seeking a second vendor because of an issue with the design of proper brackets for the solar panels.

Comm. Kallay inquired about the location of this project and if we need any community check ins on this project? Pete Dion explained that this will be in the commercial section of these streets. Any savings would go to all ratepayers.

Comm. Kallay expressed concerns that we should loop Town Council in on this project. Julie Smith-Galvin will mention this pilot program at Town Council meeting.

Comm. Courcy inquired about installing dead mains. Pete Dion explained that WMGLD was recognized for best practice at last NGA meeting. It is more efficient to hire an outside contractor to lay 6 -8-inch pipe in ground only. WMGLD works on leaks, tie ins and service cut overs in addition to emergent work.

Comm Kallay questioned if MMWEC has approved financing for customer community renewable projects. General Manager, Pete Dion, explained that the pool loan is not approved for that purpose, but Mark Cousins is talking to local banks and vendors to get more information on heat pumps, splits, and third-party lenders.

Comm Kallay inquired if there are any foreseeable items that may push projects out further. General Manager, Pete Dion said that there are projects that we have committed to do throughout. Some are completed and some depend on the actions of the Board. General Manager Dion also stated that the MIT data is rough, and they have

not been very response, so he would rather wait and see what comes out of our plans for our Energy Efficiency Program.

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn was made at 9:15p.m. by Commissioner Boettcher and seconded by Commissioner Courcy.

Vote: Unanimously in favor of adjournment.