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

Peter D. Dion, General Manager

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

July 15, 2025

IN ATTENDANCE:

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

Peter Dion, General Manager
Mark Cousins, Finance Manager
Dave Polson, Engineering and Operations Manager
Joe Collins, Business Analyst
Olivia Hayes, Business Analyst
Sylvia Vaccaro, Minute Secretary

PLACE:

**480 North Ave., Wakefield, MA
& Zoom Meeting**

CALL TO ORDER:

Commr. Boettcher called the public hearing on the EV Commercial Time of Use Rate to order at 6:30 pm and entertained a motion to move directly into the Public Meeting after the hearing. He also advised the meeting was being recorded.

A motion to open the Public Hearing and then move directly into the Public Meeting was made by Commr. Daly and seconded by Commr. Kallay.

Vote: The motion was approved unanimously 5-0.

TOWN COUNCIL LIASON:

Not present

Public Comments

None

Commr. Boettcher called for comments from the public. He noted there were no comments online and no members of the public in attendance. Pete mentioned that the department did reach out to the handful of likely interested customers such as Nouria, Shaws, a landscape company, and the company building the apartments at the head of the lake to inform them about tonight's hearing. They were all very interested in the rate but did not feel the need to attend tonight's hearing. He noted that the apartments at the head of the lake would participate in the rate immediately with expected occupancy starting in August, thereby making them the first customers to sign up for the new rate. Joe Collins explained that there were no changes to the rate that was proposed a few meetings ago. He said that he will be meeting with the personnel for the head of the lake apartments early next week to educate them about the rate and address any questions they may have assuming the rate passes tonight. This meeting will also assist us in developing educational materials for this new rate. Pete mentioned there is a proposed large charging station project on Salem St. near Dunkin Donuts that anticipates about 2 megawatts of load that would be another huge candidate for this rate. Commr. Boettcher suggested moving on to approve the June 4, 2025, minutes to give the public more time to join and comment on the rate.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Approval of June 4, 2025, was minutes before the Board for approval.

A motion to accept the June 4, 2025, minutes as amended this evening was made by Commr. Warchol and seconded by Commr. Kallay.

Vote: The motion was approved unanimously 5-0.

The Board moved back to the public hearing and since there was no public comments. Commr. Boettcher entertained a motion to end the public hearing comment section.

A motion to close the public hearing on the Commercial EV Time of Use rate was made by Commr. Prifti and seconded by Commr. Kallay.

Vote: The motion was approved unanimously 5-0.

Commr. Boettcher entertained a motion to approve the Time of Use Rate for EV Commercial charging labeled MDPU #82 effective July 15, 2025. Commr. Kallay moved the motion and Commr. Prifti seconded.

Vote: The motion was approved unanimously 5-0.

CHAIR REMARKS:

None

COMMISSIONERS REMARKS:

Commr. Warchol inquired if the department had any issues with sanitary code violations in the past few years. Pete said that there may have been one. It is a building code violation and explained that WMGLD assists the Building Inspector by pulling meters to identify which customer is assigned to each meter. Commr. Warchol explained that one of his neighbors called the department and was told that WMGLD could not assist them. Pete said that he will investigate this and speak to staff. Commr. Kallay stated that she had a couple of questions that were raised during her Environmental Sustainability Committee (ESC) meeting. She asked if the department was going to participate in Town Day on Saturday, September 27, 2025. Olivia stated that WMGLD was scheduled for the Farmer's Market that day but will switch dates so they can attend Town Day. Commr. Kallay explained that the EV showcase was moved up to August 24, 2025, because the federal EV incentives will end on September 30, 2025, and she also noted that the federal solar incentives will expire on December 31, 2025. She inquired about when the ribbon cutting would take place at Burns Park. Pete noted that a well must be dug to provide water at the site before any plantings can be done. Commr. Kallay explained that both she and Commr. Boettcher are in the process of submitting disclosure forms to the State Ethics Commission on their involvement in the Heat Pump rate. She noted the reason is for full transparency and to dispel a conflict of interest because they both have heat pumps. She stated that they will probably send the forms to legal counsel for review prior to submission. She will keep the Board posted on the State's feedback. Commr. Daly mentioned the IRA tax credits being phased out for solar, wind and EV rebates and wondered if there were any other impacts that the Board should be concerned about. Commr. Kallay inquired if the high school and Northeast Regional Vocational school projects would be eligible for any federal incentive. Pete stated that in order to be eligible for the federal solar tax incentives for the projects, construction would have to be completed by December 31, 2025. The Galvin school may be eligible for the solar tax incentives, if they are able to complete construction of the project by December 31, 2025. Regarding federal grant incentives, Joe mentioned that the Solar for All program was also impacted. He stated that program had not officially rolled out yet, but WMGLD was not a recipient of that grant. Pete noted that electric and gas infrastructure grants that WMGLD is involved in are moving forward. Pete stated that the department is still proceeding with the second gas grant and a state

grant is in process, but we cannot publicly discuss it right now. Positive feedback was received on the grant we submitted.

Pete said that he, along with MMWEC and ENE, testified for the Joint Telecommunications and Energy Committee about the Affordability bill. He said their argument was that municipalities do not need legislation that will make them more expensive to be more affordable. We are already more affordable, so we are requesting that the municipal light plants be struck from the Affordability bill.

Commr. Boettcher entertained a motion to move General Manager Subcommittee discussion (session G) out of Executive session and put under New Business E2.

A motion to move General Manager Subcommittee discussion (session G or a portion of) out of Executive session and put under New Business E2 was moved by Commr. Warchol and seconded by Commr. Prifti.

Vote: The motion was approved unanimously 5-0.

Old Business

Project Updates

Head of the Lake

This project is moving along quickly with projected occupancy to start in August 2025. Infrastructure work on the north side of the project will be completed in the Fall and we are eliminating all overhead on the other side of the project.

Energy Park

Excavation work for the foundations for the generator and radiator have begun. These foundations will be poured for this next week. The yard will be stoned and then we will be ready for the equipment to be delivered. Dave said the crews will then be working on Hemlock Rd. wrapping up the conduit and cable work before school starts. Pete said the battery has been running well. He said the peak for June was a 102-degree day. He noted that day the load was a little over 52 megawatts, but the system only saw about 41 megawatts because of the two batteries and the two generators. He mentioned that morning and afternoon peaks are very low due to solar and the peaks are now moving to the evening hours between 5pm-8pm.

WMGLD Website Update

WMGLD has been working on upgrading its website for the past several months. A valuable customer focus group was conducted in June to share feedback. Olivia reviewed the updated WMGLD website. A test version of the updated design of the site was provided to the Board. She noted there are

still some small details to work out on mobile devices. The payment portal is now all in one so it will be more user friendly. She stated that she as well as Joe and Jeff will be receiving training so they will be able to update the website. Pete said that the site should go live before the next meeting.

Board Discussion of Heat Pump Rate

Commr. Boettcher inquired if this rate could be approved before the next heating season. Pete said the idea for tonight was to have discussions on the ideas we spoke about at previous Board meetings and decide if we wanted to move forward with this. If so, we will draft a tariff sheet for the September meeting to discuss this matter further. Pete explained that the value of a rate like this would be more consistent with some of the goals that we have established to curb our gas peak. He said that the all electric heat pump apartments would automatically be transferred to this rate. Commr. Boettcher inquired if partial conversions would be able to take advantage of this rate and what the thresholds would be. Pete said that you either have fossil fuel, or you don't. He explained if customers are utilizing their heat pump for 364 days they are not contributing to the gas revenues for 364 days, but on the peak day if they switch back to gas, the costs to the gas rate payers are substantial. He noted that the Clean Heat Standard included incentives for full fossil fuel conversion. A draft will be presented to the Board at the September meeting.

New Business

WMGLD Employee Association and Supervisory Association – Contract Signatures

Mark circulated the Associations' signature pages for the Commissioners to sign. He also provided full contract copies for each Commissioner. He thanked Commr. Boettcher for participating in the process.

General Manager Subcommittee

Commrs. Warchol and Daly said the proposal is to include the General Manager's Wakefield Cooperative compensation of \$29,032 to Pete's base salary of \$216,486, so it becomes pensionable and then apply the 5.4% cost of living adjustment which would total \$258,775 retroactive to January 1, 2025. It was noted there has not been a cost-of-living adjustment to the Coop Compensation since 2014. Commr. Warchol noted that if the Coop compensation is rolled into the base pay then this compensation will need to be eliminated from the Co-op bylaws. Commr. Prifti commented that this will make it simpler and more transparent. Commr. Daly stated that Pete is asking for a 5-year contract instead of a 3-year contract. Pete explained that he plans to stay until at least 2029 and that gives more time to find and groom his replacement. He also noted that this will also allow more

time for the full value of Coop Compensation to be realized in his pension. Discussions ensued.

A motion to appoint Commr. Prifti to the Wakefield Co-op Board replacing Phil Courcy was made by Commr. Warchol and seconded by Commr. Kallay.

Vote: The motion was approved unanimously 5-0.

A motion to accept the General Manager's new contract in writing including an amendment to section 4.2 to utilize the annual year over year CPI Urban of the Northeast was moved by Commr. Daly and seconded by Commr. Kallay.

Vote: The motion was approved unanimously 5-0.

A motion was made by Commr. Warchol to take a vote to express our intent as a Board for the Co-op Board to meet very quickly to eliminate the compensation provision from their bylaws seconded by Commr. Prifti.

Vote: The motion was approved unanimously 5-0.

Any other matter not reasonably anticipated by the Chair.

A motion to adjourn was made by Commr. Warchol at 8:51 pm and seconded by Commr. Prifti

Vote: The motion was approved unanimously 5-0.