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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**

**September 3, 2025**

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Commrs., Chair Thomas Boettcher  
Jennifer Kallay, Secretary (participating remotely)  
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 meeting to order at 6:38 pm. He also advised the meeting was being recorded.

**TOWN COUNCIL LIASON:**

Not present

**Public Comments**

None

## CHAIR REMARKS:

Commr. Boettcher commented that he and Commr. Daly attended the Northeast Public Power Association's (NEPPA) annual conference in Burlington, VT last month and said that the collaboration was valuable and informative. He noted that the Massachusetts Light Commissioners Association will meet on the following dates regarding the following topics: September 25<sup>th</sup> (state of solar), October 23<sup>rd</sup> (NEPOOL), and December 4<sup>th</sup> (cybersecurity).

## COMMISSIONERS REMARKS:

Commr. Warchol requested an update on Commr. Boettcher's and Commr. Kallay's inquiry to the State Ethics Commission about a possible conflict of interest concerning the proposed heat pump rate because of his heat pump ownership. Commr. Boettcher clarified that he did disclose this information to the Wakefield Town Clerk. Commr. Kallay said that WMGLD's legal counsel clarified that this disclosure needed to be through Wakefield's Town Clerk and not the State's Ethics Commission. She stated that she also filed a disclosure with the Town Clerk. Commr. Prifti said that he met with Pete about the Wakefield Coop Board and changes were made to the Bylaws which were shared electronically with the Commissioners. Pete mentioned that Ron Decurzio is a member of this Board and will be retiring this month. The new CEO of MMWEC, Tom Barry, will replace Ron Decurzio as representative to the Coop Board.

## SECRETARY'S REPORT

Approval of July 15, 2025, was minutes before the Board for approval.

**A motion** to accept the July 15, 2025, minutes as amended this evening was made by Commr. Daly and seconded by Commr. Prifti.

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

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

## Old Business

### Project Updates

### Energy Park

Pete said that paving binder was completed on the access road this week in anticipation of the generator and switch gear building being delivered next week. So, by the end of next week all major equipment will be on site. We will just be waiting for two S&C switches. Dave and Vinnie have been evaluating temporary alternative options in case there is a delay in receiving the

switches. We are still on schedule for the connection requirements for early next year. The Northeast Metro Tech is still scheduled to open a year from now and Wakefield High School is currently on track to open in January of 2027.

## **WMGLD Website Update**

Pete said the new website has been up for about two weeks. There were minor issues with uploading the Board Meeting dates but it has been resolved. Olivia noted that other small issues have also been resolved and the online forms are working for both the customers and staff. Overall, she stated that the launch went very well. Commr. Boettcher extended his thanks to staff for this great undertaking and said that the results speak for themselves.

## **Board Discussion of Heat Pump Rate**

Pete explained that customers that have heat pumps and still have fossil fuel present a challenge when establishing a seasonal heat pump rate because their usage on the heat pump side is very variable. Heat pump customers that still have gas will end up contributing to our peak gas day, but they will not be paying for gas the whole year to cover it. Discussion ensued about the proposed rate below:

### **Proposed Seasonal Heat Pump Rate**

#### **Two-Tiered Approach:**

- *All-Electric customer*
    - \$0.03 per kWh discount on the distribution charge during the heating season (November-April)
  - *Keeping fossil fuel*
    - \$0.015 per kWh discount on the distribution charge during heating season (November-April)
- 
- If customer is a gas customer, residential gas rate will be switched to Domestic Gas Rate A (Non heat)
  - Delivery charge is \$0.20 higher than Domestic Gas Rate B
  - Customers receiving all-electric seasonal rate must verify the absence of fossil fuel

Staff will bring a draft tariff to the October Board meeting for review and discussion. It will be decided at that time if a public hearing on the new rate will be scheduled later in October or at the November Board meeting. The new rate could potentially start with the first billing group in December. Pete mentioned that with the Board's approval he would like to move December's Board meeting from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup>. All agreed.

## **Midyear Goals and Objectives Update**

Pete mentioned that there will be safety training for the entire staff. Olivia is researching potential candidates to conduct active shooter training. Commr. Boettcher mentioned that under motor vehicle accidents the department is tracking higher than in previous years. Pete mentioned that one was not the fault of the WMGLD employee. Commr. Daly inquired if there were ever employee safety issues with shut offs when meters are located inside. Mark explained that staff will call for a police detail if they deem it necessary. Pete stated that we can disconnect at the pole. Pete mentioned that the cash on hand number by the end of the fiscal year will be at 1.92 instead of 3.0 due to the Board's decision not to finance the Energy Park project in two parts to save on finance charges. He said by the end of the calendar year the cash on hand number will be where it needs to be. Commr. Boettcher thanked Pete for sponsoring the EV Showcase event. As a result of this showcase, a customer inquired if WMGLD had a list of recommended electricians that install a second meter for EV time of use rate. Olivia is compiling a list of electricians that have installed these meters in town however, this list does not imply that they are recommended by WMGLD.

## **New Business**

### **Potential for New BESS Project**

Pete explained that Lightshift approached WMGLD to see if there was an interest in in doing a second battery project with them. He noted that one of our criteria would be that it would have to be in the Wallace substation part of town. He said that one site that would require minimal approvals would be the yard that we own on Salem Street. This commercially zoned location would meet the physical requirements. A noise study would be conducted even though WMGLD believe the highway noise would negate any noise from the battery. A preliminary site layout is the first step in this process. Pete stated that the business model would be a shared savings project like the Energy Park. WMGLD capital outlay would be the site work but the rest of the project would be shared savings model where we are not outlaying capital but we are getting over 50% of the savings. Commr. Boettcher inquired if we would be able to negotiate with Lightshift. Dave noted that they may get some arbitrage out of it. They participate in ISO-NE's frequency regulation market, which helps them fund the project, so it might impact WMGLD in a different way. Commr. Prifti asked if there was any concern in the loss of this lay down area. Pete said that the area will be cleaned and underutilized areas will now be utilized.

### **NEPPA Annual Conference Review and Discussion**

Commr. Daly noted that there were several informative sessions and noted there was a great presentation about Cybersecurity by Dragos. Nick Lawler

from Littleton Electric Light & Water spoke about their security breach. She noted the bad actors were able to penetrate their IT system, but they could not penetrate the operational system or install any ransomware. Commr. Boettcher noted that many of these bad actors are state sponsored and want to infiltrate and disrupt the operation versus taking up ransomware payment. He said that Dragos offers some free services for smaller utilities like WMGLD with annual revenues under \$100 million. Pete explained that Jeff Morris has been trying to reach Dragos since the Littleton incident six months ago but they have not been responsive. Commr. Daly gave Pete contact information for the presenter from Dragos. Commr. Daly shared that there was a legislative update by lobbyist McGuire Whitney about the solar tax credits which expire at the end of the year. She noted that the eligibility test to qualify for those credits was loosened and we may be able to qualify for credits for the solar installations at the high schools. She said there was also discussion about grant funding and the possibility of the termination of existing grants and awards. Pete said that Joe, Raven, and Sara have been proceeding on the path with the second gas project. Mark said that the U.S. Department of Transportation is coming out at the end of the month to audit the first gas project. Commr. Daly also said that McGuire Whitney explained that most products coming from Canada and Mexico are exempt from the 10% tariff, including hydroelectric power. Pete said that the relationship with HydroQuebec is tenuous at best.

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

**A motion** to adjourn was made by Commr. Warchol at 9:03 pm and seconded by Commr. Prifti

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

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