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Peter D. Dion, General Manager



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

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

January 14, 2026

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 Tully, 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 6:30 pm. He advised the meeting was being recorded

Members of the Public

Not present

Town Council Liaison

Not present

CHAIR REMARKS: Commr. Boettcher acknowledged that Commr. Warchol is not running for reelection as a Commissioner this April. He thanked him for his 20 years of dedicated service and stated that his industry experience and Massachusetts DPU (Department of Public Utilities) knowledge will be sorely missed. The entire Board expressed their appreciation for Commr. Warchol and his service. They also stated anyone who is listening that may be interested in becoming a commissioner can reach out and ask any questions they may have. Commr. Warchol noted that he has enjoyed working with all of Commissioners over the years.

COMMISSIONERS REMARKS: Commr. Prifti commented on a picture in the Wakefield Daily Item of a worker not wearing required safety gear during a pole replacement. He also noted that he has seen WMGLD personnel are not wearing their seatbelts. Both Pete and Dave said that they will address these safety issues with the employees. Commr. Daly congratulated staff on the Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act Grant that was awarded for the microgrid at the Energy Park. She also said that she is interested in attending the Massachusetts Municipal Association, Connect 351 conference. She noted that the agenda for Friday appears to be the best day to attend. Pete said that he plans to attend if possible. Commr. Daly inquired if Jeff Morris, IT Manager, had received a call back from Dragos, the cybersecurity company. Pete said that he was not sure but will follow up with Jeff.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Approval of December 18, 2025, minutes was before the Board for approval.

A motion to approve the December 18, 2025, minutes as presented in the Board book was made by Commr. Kallay and seconded by Commr. Prifti.

Vote: The motion was approved 4-0.

Commr. Warchol abstained as he was not in attendance for this meeting.

Old Business

Project Updates

Energy Park

Pete stated that most of the work being completed now is in the switch gear building in terms of programming and logic design for the microgrid. He said the two power supply devices have worked independently during peak situations. He stated that two S&C switches were expected to be delivered in March, however one is going to be a little late, while the other is going to be delayed considerably. We will have one five position switch and will need to have a work around for the second one if it is delayed beyond the beginning of May. Dave and Vinnie are now working on an alternative.

Pete provided a brief status update on the new heat pump rate. There are 800 (new service customers) on the rate and anticipate approximately another 200 when all the apartments at The Basin complex are occupied. To date, 92 customers have signed up via the online form. Of those, 67 are on Rate B and 25 are on Rate A.

New Business

Discussion on Employee Handbook Policies and Procedures

Commr. Boettcher explained that if there are any changes or items to discuss that has an impact on collective bargaining than we would need to table that discussion and have that in Executive session. Anything that has an impact on an employee covered by these contracts will need to be discussed in Executive session. Commr. Boettcher noted this came about due to a Step II grievance and some confusion about the process and whether the grievance process and related forms should be defined and included in the Employee Handbook. Pete noted that grievance processes are outlined in the contracts and do not belong in the Employee Handbook. Commr. Boettcher stated that the process - instructions or reference to the process be included in the handbook, and the location of the grievance form.

Commr. Boettcher also mentioned the Emergency Information Procedure. It states that if Commissioners and or the Manager have information that he or she feels should be immediately made public they need to contact the Manager stating why it is considered not to be an emergency. He suggested that the word not be omitted as it is not correct. He also suggested making the title Chairman gender neutral. Pete explained that the policies were created some time ago and refreshed when the handbook was created two contracts ago. The Board discussed the need for an index, page numbers and organization of sections. Pete said that staff will take the Board's feedback and provide an edited version for review and revision at the February Board meeting. He noted that if they have any additional feedback in the next week, to forward to him, so it may be included in the edits.

WMGLD Board Bylaws

Commr. Daly opened the discussion as to whether the Board felt a need for bylaws or a charter. She stated that WMGLD Counsel, Mike McCarthy, had produced a memo that referred to Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 164 as to the responsibilities of the Board versus Management during the recent Step II grievance hearing. She felt for transparency it may be beneficial for customers as well as employees to understand the Board's responsibilities. Commr. Boettcher referred to a video that MMWEC produced a while ago about the responsibilities of Board members of an MLP (Municipal Light Plant) in accordance with Mass General Law, Chapter 164. Discussion ensued and it was decided that the Board will review the video and determine if it would be

beneficial to link the YouTube video to the Commissioner's page on WMGLD's website.

Warwick Battery

Commr. Boettcher explained that there is a battery in Warwick, NY that has had a couple of fires in recent years and inquired what the difference was between that battery and what WMGLD has and any differences in technologies. Dave explained that WMGLD has two batteries and they are different designs from the Warwick, NY battery. He noted that both incidents in Warwick were caused by water infiltration. There was a storm that occurred just before the leak, so it was implied that it was an external leak. There may have been a lot of issues regarding how the unit was maintained. The battery design at Beebe is a little bit closer to the one at Warwick but is not the same manufacturer. He said the manufacturer of the Warwick battery went out of business. The Energy Park battery has a different design, a modular design with a different fire suppression system. He explained that we are putting a firewall between the Beebe battery and the main building. Dave said that WMGLD's batteries and the fire alarm system are inspected twice a year.

Specialized Energy Code Data

Commr. Boettcher stated that the town of Wakefield passed the Specialized Energy Code in November of 2023 and it went into effect on July 1, 2024. So, any new building permit pulled after July 1, 2024, is subject to this code. He inquired if there was an update on any new electrical services after this date. Pete said WMGLD has only installed 5 new gas services since 2024, 3 of those had permits prior to the new code, so there have only been 2 houses that have had gas with new construction. One is still under construction and the other in his opinion does not qualify. Pete noted that WMGLD's interpretation of the policy and the town's differ and that the WMGLD is actively discussing those differences with the town. The only exceptions to the code are limitations to a solar installation or a passive home certification. He continued to say that WMGLD is not the authority enforcing the code. Pete said we work very closely with the Building Inspector and have a very good relationship. Commr. Boettcher noted that the Town Council requested an update on the code at an upcoming meeting. Commr. Kallay requested notification when the meeting is scheduled, in case commissioners wanted to listen in.

Any other matter not reasonably anticipated by the Chair.

Commr. Daly referenced Article 28 which states a change in working conditions, but it does not state what a change in working conditions is and thought it would be helpful to include a definition or illustrative examples. Pete stated that we could make a note to include it in discussion for improvement so next year at this time we can look at it in time for negotiations. Pete said that if there is a change in job specs or work roles mid contract cycle like when we

renegotiated the gas service job specifications due to two senior people retiring, we completed it with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that was later adopted into the next contract. He recommended waiting until the next contract to update the language.

Executive Session if necessary

A motion to enter into Executive Session for the approval of minutes for 11/14, 11/25, and 12/5 and then exit from Executive session for the sole purpose of closing the public meeting was made at 8:14pm by Commr. Warchol and seconded by Commr. Prifti.

Roll Call Vote:

Commr. Warchol	Aye	Commr. Prifti	Aye
Commr. Daly	Aye	Commr. Kallay	Aye
Commr. Boettcher	Aye		

Vote: The motion was approved unanimously 5-0.

A motion to come out of Executive session was made by Commr. Warchol at 8:22 pm and seconded by Commr. Prifti.

Vote: The motion was approved unanimously 5-0.

A motion to adjourn open session was made by Commr. Kallay at 8:23 pm and seconded by Commr. Daly.