

P.O. BOX 190 480 North Ave.  
Wakefield, MA 01880  
Tel. (781) 246-6363 Fax (781)  
246-0419



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**

**April 7, 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  
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 advised the meeting was being recorded

#### **Members of the Public**

None

#### **Town Council Liaison**

Not present

#### **CHAIR REMARKS**

Commr. Boettcher expressed his appreciation to Commr. Warchol for his 21 years of dedicated service on WMGLD Board of Commissioners, noting that his contributions have been invaluable and that he will be greatly missed.

## **COMMISSIONERS REMARKS**

Commr. Kallay stated that there is one candidate running for the WMGLD Light Board in the election scheduled for April 28, 2026.

She provided an update on the Massachusetts Light Commission Association (MLCA) meeting held on March 26, 2026, during which the pool loan mechanism implemented by Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Company (MMWEC) was reviewed. She also noted that the April meeting will include a legislative update on the energy affordability bill that passed the House in February of this year. The May 28 meeting will be Commissioners 101 for new commissioners. June's discussion will be on PURMA.

Commr. Kallay stated that Commr. Warchol's suggestion to include the General Manager's report within the agenda was an excellent idea and requested that it be added going forward.

**A motion** to insert the General Manager's report before Old Business in the agenda was made by Commr. Daly and seconded by Commr. Prifti.

### **Roll Call Vote:**

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

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

## **Secretary's Report**

Approval of March 4, 2026, Minutes before the Board for approval.  
Commr. Kallay provided minor edits.

**A motion** to approve the March 4, 2026, minutes as amended was made by Commr. Daly and seconded by Commr. Prifti.

### **Roll Call Vote:**

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

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

## **General Manager's Report**

Pete noted that accounts receivables are at a peak due to the winter months, as well as the ongoing winter shut-off moratorium period, which is scheduled to end in April. Receivables are expected to begin declining as normal collection activities are reinstated.

Pete met with the Superintendents from both the WMHS and NEMT. Commr. Kallay inquired about what needs and visions were learned from meeting with superintendents from both WMHS and NEMT and if that can be shared with the board so that we can have a more informed discussion moving forward. Pete stressed that both have their own set of visions and needs. He stated that as previously mentioned, WMGLD received a grant that has allowed us to bring on a grad student from Tufts. She is focused specifically on the educational and curriculum development components of the project. The next phase will involve collaboration with curriculum coordinators at both schools to explore how the project can be integrated into existing curriculum frameworks. The current grant supports labor related to curriculum development and coordination efforts. In addition, DEED grant funding remains available to support materials and resources. Nicole is scheduled to present the progress on the curriculum to the board at the June meeting.

### **Old Business**

#### **Project Updates**

##### **A. Energy Park**

Dave explained that the crews are working on cutting over service. He reported that the vendor confirmed a May delivery date for the switchgear, and that a workaround will ensure the schools' commitment date is still met. He reported that LightShift is addressing timing issues with the controller. In the meantime, our crews will focus on pulling cable and making switchgear connections. He added that the next several weeks will involve a great deal of fieldwork. Dave reported that there are no issues at this time, work is progressing as planned, and all involved are focused on meeting commitment dates with vendors and customers.

Commr. Kallay wondered if the microgrid controls for both schools would run in a similar way. Pete stated that it is one microgrid with 2 different controllers. Dave explained that the high school prioritized leveraging system output and was staged accordingly. The vocational school initially chose to operate the system manually but later learned that the high school was leveraging it to support the BMS. As a result, the vocational school is now interested in adopting a similar approach. WMGLD was proactive in installing fiber optics in anticipation of this potential need. Additionally, obtaining an occupancy permit from the fire department requires that the facility have emergency backup in place. It is also

important to note that the high school can act as an emergency heating and cooling center the controls are different for each school.

## **2. 2026 Goals and Objectives**

Pete presented the board with the two revised versions of the document reflecting the updates he made to the scoring and weighting, as requested during the previous meeting.

Commr. Kallay noted that the change in weighting does not appear to have a significant impact. However, she requested clarification on how many rows are affected by this adjustment, particularly in relation to those eligible for a bonus, as this ultimately drives the overall score. She expressed concern that the current approach may be too broad and emphasized the need for a more targeted framework. Specifically, she stated that it should be clearly defined where performance is not being achieved and where bonus eligibility appropriately applies. She stated that the current method applies uniformly across all rows. This may not be appropriate in all cases. She emphasized that she wants more clarity during mid-year and year end reviews. Pete noted that with respect to the goal, if the objective is simply to complete the action, then completion would warrant a score of four. However, if the action is not only completed but clearly exceeded, that would justify a higher score. For example, consider the heat pump rate- something no other municipal utility in Massachusetts currently offers. Not only was it evaluated and approved, but it was also implemented and successfully adopted by a thousand customers. That level of achievement goes beyond simply completing the action and would merit a score of five. Ultimately, the determination rests with the board's judgement, but there will be instances where the distinction between meeting expectations and exceeding them is clear. Commr. Kallay expressed her concern that if changes are made, we should avoid creating a structure that becomes overly broad or difficult to manage- like expanding to a long list of items that are all treated inconsistently. That would become unwieldy. Pete stated that there is a great deal more than what was presented we've focused on highlighting the most significant items. For example, the \$2.8 million grant and the state award were important to bring forward, which is why we included those along with a few others. Commr. Kallay stated that her perspective is that this ultimately comes down to a trust issue. Pete acknowledged that it is also a trust issue from management's side. He said he wanted to be honest about how the last meeting came across. The focus was heavily on identifying areas to derate, but there was little acknowledgment of where we truly achieved. The department had a strong year - securing a \$2.8 million grant, receiving a state award, progressing the Energy Park and implementing a heat pump rate that others have not done. Those are significant accomplishments. Instead, it felt like the discussion was geared more toward finding ways to reduce the 6% rather than giving a balanced evaluation. Commissioner Warchol stated that the entire performance award is a bonus for exemplary performance and that the Board builds up to a final score by awarding points as they progress through the evaluation. Both Comms. Kallay and Boettcher stated that it was not the

intention of the board to come in and just derate and only comment on the negative. Both the board and management agreed to disagree.

**A motion** to approve the 2026 performance goals as amended, including revisions to the rating and weighting matrix was made by Commr. Daly and seconded by Commr. Prifti.

**Roll Call Vote:**

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

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

**3. Large Load Policy/Rate discussion**

The issue of large spot loads created by data centers is being reviewed at the national level. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has asked regional ISOs how they are managing the wide-ranging impacts. In response, ISO New England surveyed utilities to identify existing and emerging large loads, defining “large loads” as 20 megawatts (MW), with some variability. A key concern for both FERC and ISO is the gap between proposed and actual load. For example, a project may request 25 MW of capacity, but only realizes 12 MW. WMGLD has seen this before when DRT initially proposed a 16 MW project, but ultimately only used about 4 MWs. At this stage, guidance remains in development. Utilities are contributing to a live, collaborative document, but no formal framework has been finalized. This uncertainty remains a primary concern moving forward. Pete noted that if we align with our past practice, new load customers would be required to pay for any required capital investment for system upgrades triggered by large loads and would not be a burden on WMGLD ratepayers.

**New Business**

**1. Discussion of Public Utilities Risk Management Association (PURMA), Insurance, risk analysis, and mitigation.**

Commr. Kallay noted that MLCA is considering organizing a presentation by PURMA for all commissioners. This session would provide a general overview of PURMA’s role, including the types of coverage offered, common issues commissioners encounter, and key risks and considerations they should be aware of. It would not be tailored to any specific utility system. In addition, individual systems have the option to request more customized presentations that address their specific coverage, rights, and any system-specific questions. She inquired whether there is interest in supporting a dedicated WMGLD

presentation from PURMA. Pete mentioned that he, Mark, and Joe met with Nicole, the PURMA representative and compared WMGLD's PURMA and local policies, including auto coverage. With local rates now higher, he said that we plan to move our vehicle coverage to PURMA. She also recommended a few additional policies for consideration. Pete will contact Nicole to schedule a presentation for the board.

## **2. Policy regarding use of Utility Poles for 3rd party surveillance devices**

Commr. Boettcher raised concerns regarding the Flock cameras being installed on utility poles and questioned the potential liability for WMGLD. He suggested it may be beneficial to have legal counsel review the matter and potentially draft a policy outlining guideline and defining the scope of such use.

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

### **Executive Session if necessary**

### **Adjournment**

**A motion** to adjourn was made by Commr. Daly at 8:15 pm and seconded by Commr. Kallay.

### **Roll Call Vote:**

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

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