

Westfield Gas & Electric Municipal Light Board Regular Meeting Minutes January 5, 2022



Location: Gas & Electric Operations Center, 40 Turnpike Industrial Rd. Conference Room, Westfield, MA

I. Swearing in/Oath of Office of Commissioners- City Clerk, Karen Fanion swearing in of the Municipal Light Board for the 2022-2024 Service Year of Commissioner Kevin M. Kelleher, Commissioner Ray Rivera, Commissioner Dawn Renaudette, Commissioner Francis L. Liptak, Commissioner Joseph B. Mitchell, Commissioner Robert C. Sacco, Commissioner A. Edward Roman.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Call to Order

III. Chairman Roman stated that this meeting of the Municipal Light Board is being electronically recorded in both video and audio by the Municipal Light Board. As stated in the WG+E MLB Video Policy the recording will be available on the WG+E website within one week. Is anyone, other than the Municipal Light Board, recording the meeting and if so state whether it is an audio or video recording and whether the recording is being live streamed. Peter Currier of the Westfield News, who was in attendance remotely, indicated he was not recording.

III. ROLL CALL was taken as follows:

Present: Ward #2 Commissioner, Ray Rivera
 Ward #3 Commissioner, Dawn Renaudette (remote)
 Ward #4 Commissioner, Francis L. Liptak
 Ward #5 Commissioner, Joseph B. Mitchell
 Ward #6 Commissioner, Robert C. Sacco (remote)
 Appointed Commissioner, A. Edward Roman
 Ward #1 Commissioner, Kevin M. Kelleher

Present: 7 Absent: 0

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

V. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR:

On motion by Commissioner Renaudette and seconded by Commissioner Sacco, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To elect Commissioner Roman, Chair of the Municipal Light Board until the January 2023 meeting or until his successor is elected and qualified.

On motion by Commissioner Mitchell and seconded by Commissioner Liptak, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To elect Commissioner Renaudette, Vice Chair of the Municipal Light Board until the January 2023 meeting or until her successor is elected and qualified.

VI. READING OF THE RECORD OF:

On motion by Commissioner Kelleher and seconded by Commissioner Liptak, Commissioner Rivera made a motion to accept, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To accept the minutes of the December 1, 2021, Regular Session Meeting of the Municipal Light Board as presented.

To accept the minutes of the December 1, 2021, Executive Session Meeting of the Municipal Light Board as presented, but not release to the public at this time.

VII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None

VIII. COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED BY GAS AND ELECTRIC:

- a) **Acknowledgement- St. Vincent de Paul Society**- Letter from Kate, President of St. Vincent de Paul Society thanking WG+E employees for the generous donations for the purchase of Turkey's from the North Elm Butcher Block for families on Thanksgiving Day.
- b) **Acknowledgement-Westfield Purple Heart Trail**- Thank you note received from the Westfield Purple Heart Trail for donation received.

- c) **Acknowledgement-The Salvation Army-** Thank you from Laurie Matthews of the Salvation Army in Westfield for the donations of gifts from WG+E employees for 30 children and some families for this holiday season.
- d) **Customer Compliment- 105 Western Avenue-** Customer compliments to Jim Fontaine and Ryan Callan for their work and professionalism while onsite at 105 Western Avenue fixing street lights.
- e) **Customer Compliment- Social Media-** A Facebook shout out from Elli Meyer to the Whip City Fiber team for their efficiency in getting her Wi-Fi running within minutes.
- f) **Customer Compliment- Hosmer Rd, Heath-** Customer, Janis Carr of Hosmer Rd. commends Danny Rios for work well done and his technological expertise on bringing high speed internet to Heath.

IX. REPORTS FROM THE GAS & ELECTRIC:

A. Action Required Items

- a) **Sub-Committee Assignment Review-** The General Manager provided a list of the 2021 MLB Sub-Committee assignments and contact information on the MLB packet. The subcommittees will remain the same except for the change of roles with Commissioner Mitchell now as Chairman of Finance Sub-committee and Commissioner Sacco as the member of Finance. No other changes were made to the Sub-Committee Assignments all Commissioners agreed on the following assignments (with Chair listed first) as follows:

<u>Finance:</u>	Mitchell, Sacco, Roman
<u>Rates:</u>	Kelleher, Rivera, Roman
<u>Human Resources:</u>	Renaudette, Liptak, Roman
<u>Technology:</u>	Liptak, Mitchell, Roman
- b) **Trustees of OPEB Trust-** General Manager stated to the members of the Board that Commissioner Roman was elected as the Trustee of the Westfield Gas + Electric Post Employment Benefits Trust Liability Fund to serve until the first Wednesday in January 2022
 Now that we have reached that date a new vote is necessary. After discussion, on the motion made by Commissioner Sacco, seconded by Commissioner Mitchell it was unanimously:

VOTED: (1) that the Municipal Light Board of the Westfield Gas & Electric Light Department at its February 19, 2009 meeting authorized the establishment of a Westfield Gas & Electric Post Employment Benefits Trust Liability Fund under M.G.L. c. 32B, §20; and

(2) that Commissioner Roman is elected as the Municipal Light Board's representative on the Board of Trustees, to serve until the first Wednesday in January 2025, or until a successor is elected and qualified.

- c) **2022 WCF Expansion- Telecom Superintendent: Operations-** Christopher LaVertu, Telecom Superintendent of Operations gave a power presentation to the Board on the 2022 Whip City Fiber Expansion and the plan of what Fiber Service Areas are selected for expansion from discussion with the General Manager, Director of Operations and Operations team. The presentation included the Westfield Expansion Cost Breakdown the General Manager mentioned to the Board his anticipated goal is to have the total build out by quarter one of 2025. The Commissioners thanked Mr. LaVertu for the information and his presentation.
- d) **Quarterly Power Line Publication-**The General Manager gave a brief overview of the Quarterly Power Line Publication.
- e) **Recorded MLB Meeting Views Quarterly Report-** The General Manager noted a quick summary of the MLB video views on the WG+E website.
- f) **Quarterly Release of Executive Session Minutes-** The General Manager reported that the Open Meeting Law requires that the public body, or its chair or designee, shall at reasonable intervals, review the minutes of executive sessions to determine if the provisions of this subsection warrant continued non-disclosure. Since that time, discussion occurred with regard to releasing the minutes of Executive Session meetings in redacted form to ensure the confidentiality of sensitive issues. The last quarterly review for release of Executive Session Minutes occurred at the September 8, 2021, meeting of the MLB. The MLB was presented with the minutes that the General Manager recommended be released at this time.

After review of the minutes to be released by the MLB, on motion by Commissioner Rivera and seconded by Commissioner Mitchell, it was unanimously:

VOTED: that the Westfield Gas + Electric Municipal Light Board determines that the following portions of the Executive Session minutes may be released to the public:

July 7, 2021-Item a) Competitive Business Update
(Whip City Fiber)

That the General Manager is hereby authorized and directed to take any actions he deems necessary or advisable to carry out the purposes of this vote in compliance with M.G.L.c 30A §22.

- g) **Network Management Report-** Director of Information Technology gave a brief overview of the Network Management Report which provides background and performance measurements regarding the reliability of the WG+E network within and between WG+E owned facilities.
- h) **Telecom Reliability Report-** Director of Information Technology informed the Board of the level of network uptime of Internet and data communication services for Commercial & Industrial, Municipal Hilltown and WG+E customers. Overall in 2021, the network operated properly 99.095% of the required time, downtime was a result of a fiber cut in Heath that resulted in 5 Hilltown's being down for 19 hours.
- i) **Quarterly Gas and Electric Rates Comparison-** Director of Finance and Energy Supply gave a quarterly update on gas and electric rates comparison to the Board.
- j) **Monthly Financial Report-** Director of Finance and Energy Supply was pleased with the performance of the financials in 2021 ended in a positive, a major factor is due to the mild weather in the winter months 2021 net income is very close to ten million dollars. Commissioner Sacco asked if there is a limit how much to defer. The General Manager stated in one year it's limited to what's available to be able to defer. The General Manager gave kudos to the Energy Supply team for the efforts. Commissioner Rivera gave compliments to the Finance for their hard work.

B. Informational Items

- a) **Utility Issues** – Report was presented and accepted.
The General Manager announced to the Board, Energy New England have partnered with Vineyard Wind, which was rewarded a large wind project in December, through the WG+E partnership with Energy New England, WG+E will have access to a portion of this project which will aide in our renewable and non-emitting goal for 2030. This wind project will be online in the year of 2027-2028 will assist towards meeting that goal.
- b) **Utility News-** as presented.
- c) **Utility Courses Update** – as presented.

X. OLD BUSINESS:

- a) **Gas Supply Update-Winter 2022-** Senior Quantitative Risk Analyst, gave a recap of the gas supply for the 2021 winter months focusing on the winter months of 2022 through a power point presentation to the Board explaining the energy rates from Westfield Gas + Electric are likely to remain elevated over the next two months due to uncertainty in the market and uncertainty in the energy needs for the rest of the winter months. WG+E to this point, is projected to offer energy prices 10% lower than the state average due largely from the warmer than average temperatures in the month of December, though there is still some uncertainty for the winter, at this time it's dependent upon the remaining eight weeks ahead.

- b) **EV Charging Station Update-** The General Manger reported the underground work is completed for six to seven locations; the charging stations have been ordered. The grant that was awarded in the amount of \$380,521.00 through MassDEP under the MassEVIP PAC program will lower some of the outside costs in these charging stations.

- c) **Elm Sub-Station Transformer Update-** General Manager informed the Board, the transformer has been delivered. Director of Operations added, the mild weather has helped with getting the structure set and the transformer lined up as we head into the month of April 2022.

XI. NEW BUSINESS:

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

On a motion made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Liptak and on the basis of roll call it was:

VOTED: To adjourn the regular meeting of the Municipal Light Board meeting and enter into executive session for the purpose of discussing trade secrets and competitively sensitive information the disclosure of which will adversely affect its ability to conduct business in relation to other entities making, selling or distributing electric power and energy and conduct strategy session and negotiations with nonunion personnel, as noted on the agenda, and reconvene the Regular Session after adjournment from Executive Session.

Rivera	"aye"
Renaudette (remote)	"aye"
Liptak	"aye"
Mitchell	"aye"
Sacco (remote)	"aye"
Roman	"aye"
Kelleher	"aye"

Motion passed 7-0 0-absent

Chairman Roman stated that the Municipal Light Board would be entering into executive session for the purpose of discussing trade secrets and competitively sensitive information the disclosure of which will adversely affect its ability to conduct business in relation to other entities making, selling or distributing electric power and energy and conduct strategy session and negotiations with nonunion personnel, as noted on the agenda, and reconvene the Regular Session after adjournment from Executive Session.


XIII. ADJOURNMENT

On the motion of Commissioner On a motion made by Commissioner Mitchell, seconded by Commissioner Liptak it was unanimously:

VOTED: To adjourn the regular meeting of the Municipal Light Board meeting.
Chairman Roman declared the regular session portion of the meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

A TRUE RECORD.

Attest:



A. Edward Roman, Chairman

Municipal Light Board Executive Session Meeting Minutes —January 5, 2022			
Acknowledgement- St. Vincent de Paul Society			
Acknowledgement- Westfield Purple Heart Trail	Westfield Purple Heart Trail		
Acknowledgement- The Salvation Army	Laurie Matthews		
Customer Compliment- 105 Western Avenue			
Customer Compliment- Social Media			
Customer Compliment- Hosmer Rd, Heath			
Sub-Committee Assignment Review 2021 Revised January 20, 2021			
Quarterly Powerline Publication			
Recorded MLB Meeting Views Quarterly Report	Laura Dorman, Marketing Associate	January 5, 2022	Internal and External Department Communication M1-9.
Quarterly Release of Executive Session Minutes	Thomas P. Flaherty General Manager	January 5, 2022	MLB Meeting Management -RGA-1.2
Network Management Report	John Leary, Director of Information Technology	January 5, 2022	Information Technology Information Technology Reliability IT-3.0
Telecom Reliability Report	John Leary, Director of Information Technology	January 5, 2022	Information Technology Telecommunications Provider Strategy ORB-7.
Monthly Financial Report (November 2021 Financial Report)	Tim Fouche, Accounting Manager	January 5, 2022	Financial Annual & Quarterly Reports F-4.5
Utility Issues	John W. Welch	January 5, 2022	Regulatory & Governmental Affairs Gas/Electric Regulatory Issues, RGA-1.4; RGA1.5
Utility News/Pulse Line	Leanne Cloutier, Executive Administrative Asst.	January 5, 2022	Communications/Customer Service/Community Affairs Media Relations — CCA-1.6
Utility Course Update 2021 Seminars/Woshops	Robin Krok, HR Coordinator/Records Manager	January 5, 2022	Administration and Organization WG+E Training & Development, AO-3.6