



Westfield Gas & Electric Municipal Light Board Regular Meeting Minutes January 2, 2019



whip city fiber

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

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

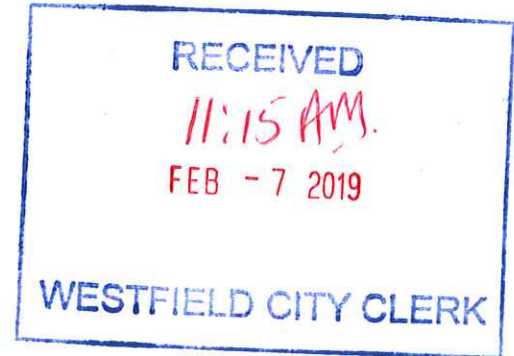
I. Call to Order

II. ROLL CALL was taken as follows:

Present: Ward #1 Commissioner, Kevin M. Kelleher
Ward #2 Commissioner, Ray Rivera
Ward #3 Commissioner, Jane C. Wensley
Ward #4 Commissioner, Francis L. Liptak
Ward #5 Commissioner, Thomas P. Flaherty
Ward #6 Commissioner, Robert C. Sacco
Appointed Commissioner, A. Edward Roman

Absent:

Present: 7 Absent: 0



III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

IV. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR:

Nominations were open for Chair. On motion by Commissioner Flaherty, seconded by Commissioner Wensley to nominate Ray Rivera as Chairman of the MLB. On motion by Commissioner Kelleher, seconded by Commissioner Roman to nominate Robert Sacco as Chairman of the MLB. No other nominations were received and nominations were closed. On the basis of the following roll call vote,

Liptak	"Sacco"
Flaherty	"Rivera"
Sacco	"Sacco"
Roman	"Sacco"
Kelleher	"Sacco"
Rivera	"Rivera"
Wensley	"Rivera"

it was

VOTED: To elect Commissioner Robert C. Sacco Chairman of the Municipal Light Board until the January 2020 meeting or until his successor is elected and qualified.

Discussion was held concerning the current by-laws which do not provide for a Vice Chairman position. Chairman Sacco suggested that the MLB should review the by-laws in the future as to the current positions provided within. In the interim, it was decided to elect a Chair Pro Tem for those times the Chairman is absent.

On motion by Commissioner Kelleher, seconded by Commissioner Roman, it was unanimously

VOTED: To elect Commissioner Rivera, Chairman Pro Tem of the Municipal Light Board when the Chairman is absent until the January 2020 meeting or until his successor is elected and qualified.

V. READING OF THE RECORD:

On motion by Commissioner Rivera, seconded by Commissioner Liptak, with Commissioner Flaherty abstaining from the vote, it was unanimously:

VOTED: To accept the minutes of the December 5, 2018 Regular Session Meeting as presented.

To accept the minutes of the December 5, 2018 Executive Session Meeting as presented, but not release to the public at this time.

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None

VII. COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED BY GAS AND ELECTRIC:

- a) **Acknowledgement – Boy Scouts Troop 821** – Note thanking WG+E for its support of Troop 821 Westfield, Massachusetts.
- b) **Acknowledgement - Domus, Inc** - Letter from Ann Lentini, Executive Director, thanking WG+E for its financial donation to Domus Inc's House Holiday Wagon Rides which raises funds for an Educational Scholarship Fund to assist residents of Our House to attend college.
- c) **Acknowledgement – Junior Achievement of Western Massachusetts** – Letter from Jennifer A. Connolly, President and Nicole Denette, SMC Committee Chair, thanking

WG+E for its donation to 13th Annual JA Stock Market Competition which allowed students from Westfield High School to participate in the event.

- d) **Acknowledgement – Westfield Foundation for Education** – Letter from Laura Taylor, Lindsay Panis and Mary Zaydel thanking WG+E for its generous donation to the Pocketbook Bingo event, which raises funds to distribute grants for projects within the City's schools.
- e) **Acknowledgement – The YMCA of Greater Westfield** – Letter from Andrea Allard, CEO, thanking WG+E for its donation to YMCA Greater Westfield's 6th Annual Cycle-a-thon that took place November 3, 2018.
- f) **Customer Compliment – Amelia Park** – E-mail from Brian P. Barnes, Executive Director, thanking WG+E for the service and commitment of WG+E's team at the rink and, in particular, commending Mike Mastroianni, Tom Davis and Lisa Stowe.
- g) **Customer Compliment – Facebook post** - A Facebook post from Lesley Weber Lambert, thanking WG+E for the worker who diligently worked to restore her heat at 8:30 p.m. The Manager noted the employee was Kyle Beluzo.

VIII. REPORTS FROM THE GAS & ELECTRIC:

A. Action Required Items

- a) **Monthly Lost Time Report.** Manager Contrino reported that, during the month of December 2018, there were no injuries resulting in lost time. The lineman noted in October entry remains on light duty at the time of the report. Commissioner Liptak inquired as to what a lineman would be doing on light duty. The Manager indicated depending on the lineman's medical restrictions he could be performing inspections, doing dig safe or, if he is restricted from going in the field, then he would be provided some clerical duties.
- b) **Sub-Committee Assignments.** The Manager provided a list of the 2018 MLB Sub-Committee assignments and contact information for each commissioner and City Council liaison. With the elections of the Chair and election of Commissioner Flaherty to the Ward 5 seat, it was deemed appropriate to visit subcommittee assignments as well. Commissioner Flaherty indicated during his previous tenure on the MLB he was a member of all the subcommittees and he wished to repeat that obligation. Commissioner Wensley indicated that she also wished to be a member of all the subcommittees. The Chairman, after receiving input from the other Commissioners, agreed that the assignments (with Chair listed first) be as follows:

<u>Rates:</u>	Liptak, Rivera, Wensley, Flaherty
<u>Finance:</u>	Roman, Sacco, Rivera, Wensley, Flaherty
<u>Human Resources:</u>	Kelleher, Rivera, Wensley, Flaherty
<u>Technology:</u>	Sacco, Liptak, Wensley, Flaherty

The Manager also noted that at the MLB meeting of January 6, 2016, 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 2019. Now that we have reached that date a new vote is necessary. After discussion, on motion by Commissioner Flaherty, seconded by Commissioner Liptak, 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 2022, or until a successor is elected and qualified.

- c) **Quarterly Powerline Publication.** The Manager provided a copy of the Powerline Newsletter which is being forwarded to customers in their January bills. The Powerline provided information on programs available to customers that are experiencing financial hardships. The Manager's letter introduced the Manager to WG+E's customers reflecting on his years of service the WG+E. The letter reported on the Whip City Fiber initiative that allowed WG+E to begin a roll out of high speed internet to Westfield residences and businesses. The letter also discussed the tragic events in Merrimack Valley and its impact on those homeowners and business, as well as the regulatory challenges facing the industry as a result of the incident. It also informed readers that WG+E 2018/19 winter rates are forecasted to remain steady. Finally, the overall 2018 rate comparisons showing WG+E's rates are lower than others in the area were presented as well as the winter projections of electric/gas rates vs. electric/heating oil rates. Commissioner Roman commented that Management is doing a good job with respect to rates. However, he noted that it is not publicized enough. The Manager indicated he agreed that WG&E could do a better job at publicizing the great rates provided by WG&E. Commissioner Roman also inquired as to if a customer does not receive a physical bill how do they receive a copy of the Powerline. The Manager indicated it gets emailed to them, if WG&E has a current email address, and it is also on WG+E's website.
- d) **Network Management Report.** Manager Contrino reported that WG+E's Information Systems department is responsible for providing a high level of network uptime performance between and within WG+E facilities. In 2018, the network was operating properly 99.68% of the time during regular business hours. Since this report was originally generated, this is the first reported network outage that occurred during normal business hours and which occurred in August of 2018. One of their network core routers failed and DHCP routing also failed to engage to the backup core router. The entire outage lasted approximately 5 hours.
- e) **Telecom Reliability Report** The Manager reported that the IT Department is also responsible for providing network uptime for internet and data communication services for commercial and industrial customers, the City of Westfield, and WG+E residential

customers. During 2018 the network operated 98.77% of the required time. Downtime was a result of a network core switch failure in August and normal routine maintenance and naturally occurring break/fix incidents. The IT Department has an aggressive inspection and maintenance program as well as redundant systems in support of critical infrastructure. The Manager indicated uptime percentage was based on a 24-hour per day uptime requirement and routine maintenance which affects service is normally scheduled to be completed between midnight and 6:00 am. Chairman Sacco inquired if maintenance was counted as an outage. The Manager indicated it does because the telecommunication network is not available to customers for that period of time.

- f) **Telecom Construction Report** The Manager reported on the actual telecommunications construction activities during 2018. The WG+E telecommunication infrastructure deployment plan focuses on utilizing the network to increase the efficiencies and reliability of WG+E core functions as a gas and electric utility company. Prior to commencement of the Whip City Fiber buildout in 2015, WG+E had constructed over 100 miles of fiber optic plant. Since then, approximately 245 miles of additional fiber optic cable has been constructed. This infrastructure currently allows over 58 neighborhoods – each roughly 200 to 250 homes and/or businesses - to take advantage of Whip City Fiber's high-speed internet network. Fiber optic cable construction will continue in 2019, although the exact locations and funding options are under evaluation. To date, WG+E's mature network passes nearly 13,500 customers. There are 700 service applications pending and WG+E continues to schedule and install services. So far, overall construction remains on target. The Chairman inquired as to how many homes are passed by the telecom construction. The Manager indicated that we've exceeded our original target of passing 70% of all homes that have electric meters.
- g) **Monthly Financial Reports**. Finance Manager Kline reported that the monthly year-to-date numbers reflect estimated amounts. Through eleven months of 2018, the Gas Division gain exceeds the original budgetary estimate by \$953k, while the Electric Division gain is currently \$167k more than the original forecast. An elevated number of nuclear plant outages and cold temperatures had supported the gas-fired generation burn through mid-December. In December, maintenance and refueling outages around the country had averaged over 7800 MW and kept gas demand elevated. With the early onset of winter in November, ISO-NE reported that coal-fired generation averaged 186 MW during that month, a tenfold increase from the prior year. An extended outage at Millstone Unit II helped support the coal burn. At the Boston city gate, delivered gas prices had averaged over \$7.75/ MMBtu, 75% higher than the prices recorded for the same period in 2017. Warmer than normal weather forecasts for much of January have now placed downward pressure on pricing, and should the existing warming trend sustain itself, prices may well remain below the \$4 mark. The MLB asked Commissioner Roman regarding his review of the financials. He commented that the Department was in good financial standing. He noted the strong financial status even considering larger contributions made to the stabilization accounts during the year.
- h) **Whip City Fiber Minutes**. At the December meeting the MLB discussed releasing the Whip City Fiber Executive Session Minutes that relate to Whip City Fiber and requested

it be placed on this month's agenda for discussion. The Manager indicated that a vast number of minutes over the prior years that discussed Whip City Fiber which will need to be reviewed to determine if they may be released in that the information in those minutes is no longer considered confidential and would not defeat the purpose of the executive session. The Manager proposed in that the customers and public may have more of an interest in recent activity that the review start from December 2018 meeting and work backwards. As they are reviewed bring them forth to either the MLB or if the MLB wishes to designate the Chair or some other Board member who may release the minutes. There was discussion by the Chair and other MLB members with respect to the requirement that executive session minutes be released within a reasonable time after the release of the executive session would not defeat the lawful purposes of the Executive Session. Criteria was being developed as to how to review the year's minutes in order to expedite the process.

- i) **Execute General Manager's Contract.** The General Manager's contract remains to be discussed. Chairman Sacco had circulated a revised draft and the Manager indicated he did not agree with all of the changes and it needed to be negotiated further in the Executive Session portion of the meeting.

B. Informational Items:

- a) **Utility Issues.** Report was presented and accepted.
- b) **Utility News/Pulseline Articles** was presented.
- c) **Utility Courses Update** was presented.

IX. OLD BUSINESS:

- a) **Open Meeting Law Violation Notice.** The MLB received a copy of the letter as filed with the Attorney General's Division of Open Government by Brian Riley of K-P Law on behalf of the MLB. This is the same draft letter that was reviewed and accepted by the MLB at its December meeting. In addition, the Attorney General's office forwarded a letter outlining the procedures to be followed. The Complainant would have until February 6, 2019 to file a formal request from the Attorney General's office to investigate the matter further if he was not satisfied with the response provided by Attorney Riley.

- X. NEW BUSINESS:** The Manager indicated that there had been inquiries as to when the new Operations Manager may be appointed. The Manager indicated that he recently appointed Michael Lee as the Operations Manager, who has been with WG+E's Operations group for nearly 30 years. He also indicated Mike Lee and John Leary, who is the IT Manager, would begin attending MLB meetings in order to provide updates to the MLB.

XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION:

On the motion of Commission Rivera, seconded by Commissioner Liptak and on the basis of a 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 conduct strategy session and negotiations with nonunion personnel, as noted on the agenda, and to reconvene the Regular Session after adjournment from Executive Session.

Liptak	"aye"
Flaherty	"aye"
Sacco	"aye"
Roman	"aye"
Kelleher	"aye"
Rivera	"aye"
Wensley	"aye"

Motion passed 7-0. 0 absent

Chairman Sacco 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 would reconvene the Regular Session after adjournment from Executive Session.

The meeting recessed at 7:33 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 9:51 p.m. following the Executive Session.

The MLB indicated it had completed negotiations with the General Manager as to the provisions of his employment contract. Attorney Welch was requested to finalize the agreement consistent with the negotiations and have it ready for signature on January 3, 2019.

On the motion by Commissioner Flaherty, seconded by Commissioner Liptak, it was unanimously:

VOTED: that the Westfield Gas & Electric Municipal Light Board enters into a three year employment agreement with Anthony J. Contrino as negotiated with the salary as set at the December 5, 2018 MLB meeting.

XII. ADJOURNMENT


On the motion of Commissioner Liptak, seconded by Commissioner Wensley it was unanimously:

VOTED: To adjourn the regular session of the Municipal Light Board meeting.

Chairman Sacco declared the regular session portion of the meeting adjourned at 9:52 p.m.

A TRUE RECORD.

Attest:


Robert C. Sacco, Chairman

Documents Presented at REGULAR SESSION January 2, 2019			
Name of Document	Author		Strategic Plan
Westfield Municipal Light Board Regular Session Meeting Minutes - December 5, 2018			
Westfield Municipal Light Board Executive Session Meeting Minutes - December 5, 2018			
Knowledge from Boy Scouts Troop 821	Boy Scouts 821 Western, Massachusetts		
Knowledge from Domus, Incorporated	Ann Lentini, Executive Director	December 19, 2018	
Knowledge from Junior Achievement of Western Massachusetts	Jennifer A. Connolly, President and Nicole Denette, SMC Committee Chair		
Knowledge from Westfield Foundation for Education	Laura Taylor, Lindsay Panis and Mary Zaydel		
Knowledge from YMCA Greater Westfield	Andrea Allard, CEO	November 26, 2018	
Customer Compliment - Amelia Park Ice Arena	Brian P. Barnes, Executive Director	November 29, 2018	
Customer Compliment - Facebook Post	Lesley Weber Lambert		
Monthly Lost Time Report	Beth Burns, HR Coordinator/Records Manager	January 2, 2019	Communications/Customer Service/Community Affairs Information Brief
LB Chair and Subcommittee Assignments 2017			
Quarterly Powerline			
Network Management Annual Report	John Leary, Information Technology Supervisor	January 2, 2019	Information Technology Information Technology Reliability IT-3.0
Telecommunication Services Reliability Report	John Leary, Information Technology Supervisor	January 2, 2019	Information Technology Technology Provider Strategy ORB-7.0
Report on Telecommunications Construction	Michael S. Lee, Operations Manager	January 2, 2019	Information Technology Information Technology Operations and Maintenance IT-1.0
November 2018 Financial Report	T. Fouche, Accounting Manager	December 17, 2018	Financial Annual Quarterly Report F-4.5
General Manager Westfield Gas & Electric Employment Contract Liability Issues	John W. Welch	January 2, 2019	Regulatory & Governmental Affairs Gas/Electric Regulatory issues, RGA-1.4; RGA1.5
Utility News/Pulse Line	Beth Burns, HR Coordinator/Records Manager	December 5, 2018	Communications/Customer Service/Community Affairs Media Relations - CCA-1.6
Utility Courses Update- 2017-2018 Seminars/Workshops	Beth Burns, HR Coordinator/Records Manager	January 3, 2018	Administration and Organization WG&E Training & Development, AO-3.6

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Letter to Attorney General's Office Division of Open Government	Brian W. Riley, Esq	December 6, 2018	
Letter to Marc Lichwan	Mira Netsky, Paralegal Division of Open Government	December 10, 2018	

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