

Westfield Gas & Electric Municipal Light Board Regular Meeting Minutes March 2, 2022



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

Present: 7 Absent: 0

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

V. READING OF THE RECORD OF:

On motion by Commissioner Rivera and seconded by Commissioner Liptak, made a motion to accept, it was voted on a 6 to 1 (abstain vote due to absence Commissioner Mitchell) vote:

VOTED: To accept the minutes of the February 2, 2022, Regular Session Meeting of the Municipal Light Board as presented.

To accept the minutes of the February 2, 2022, Executive Session Meeting of the Municipal Light Board as presented, but not release to the public at this time.

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: None

VII. COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED BY GAS AND ELECTRIC:

- a) **Customer Compliment- 44 Montgomery Street-** Alberto Palazza of 44 Montgomery Street called to express his gratitude with Customer Service Representative, Tatiana Banari and Whip City Fiber Technician, Steve Kolek for their kind, professional attitude when assisting him with a fiber issue he had.
- b) **Customer Compliment-204 Russell Rd-** Tom Rickis of 204 Russell Rd was very pleased with the technical support he received from employees Ted Sisley and Ken Schabowski to resolve his TV streaming service issue, both were prompt and portrayed excellent customer service.
- c) **Acknowledgement- Amelia Park Children's Museum/Penguin Plunge** – Executive Director Ray Radigan of Amelia Park Children's Museum thanked Westfield Gas + Electric for the generous support of the 2022 Penguin Plunge.

VIII. REPORTS FROM THE GAS & ELECTRIC

A. Action Required Items

a) **Utility Supervisor, Jody Boucher-**

Utility Supervisor, Jody Boucher gave a PowerPoint presentation to the Municipal Light Board which included an outline of the following topics:

- i. Electric Division of Operations
- ii. Overview of the Transformer Project
- iii. Updates on 2021/2022 Systems Reliability Upgrade

b) **Human Resources Annual Report-** HR Coordinator/Records Manager, Robin Krok presented the Human Resources Annual 2021 Report to the Board.

c) **Human Resources Quarterly Update-** HR Coordinator/Records Manager, Robin Krok updated the Municipal Light Board the personnel transactions that have occurred since last reporting, this quarterly update reflects 1st Quarter of 2022.

New Hires: Jr. Application Development SCADA Technician (effective 12/6/2021)
Lineman (effective 1/3/2022), Marketing Intern (2/7/2022)

Resignations: Customer Service Representative (effective 1/19/2022), Application Development System Architect (effective 2/17/2022)

Promotions: Associate Lineman/Fiber Tech (effective 1/3/2022), Associate Lineman/Fiber Tech (effective 1/3/2022)

The department is in the process of filling the following positions:
Apprentice Lineman, Jr. Fiber Tech, Jr. Utility Engineer, Network Manager, Quantitative Energy Supply Analyst.

d) **Technical and Organizational Chart Update-** HR Coordinator/Records Manager, Robin Krok gave a brief update on the updated Technical and Organizational Chart.

e) **5 Year Total Wage Comparison- IBEW/GUILD-** The General Manager gave a 5-Year Total Wage Comparison overview to the Board of the IBEW, and GUILD provided by the Finance Department.

f) **2021 Safety and Health Annual Report-** Director of Operations, Mike Lee reported to the Board the 2021 Safety and Health annual update. Commissioner Rivera asked Mr. Lee if training is trending back to in person training rather than remote training. Mr. Lee explained training is back on track in comparison to when all training was remote when Covid-19 began. He explained a majority of the training is small hybrid groups, lineman apprentice training are able to have hands-on training. An example of training sessions completed in 2021 was attached to the annual report.

- g) **2021 Annual Street Lighting Report-** Director of Operations, Mike Lee reported to the Board an overview of the activities provided by the Westfield Gas + Electric for the City of Westfield streetlights. In 2021 the report shows the labor portion of the streetlights expense is relatively flat. Director of Operations reported there was a small uptick in maintenance cost in 2021 due to storm accidents, etc. and the LED style bulbs are more expensive to replace. Commissioner Liptak inquired if the LED lights that were given to the City on Park Square holding up well, Mr. Lee assured the Commissioner these style LED bulbs have a very low failure rate. At present there are 5,465 streetlights within the City of Westfield that are subject to inspection and repair by WG+E.
- h) **2021 Annual Outage Report-** Director of Operations, Mike Lee gave an overview to the Board on the annual outages in 2021 which were contributed to large storms in the summer months, provided in the report was 2021 Outage Analysis pie graph which gave the percentages of cause for the outages reported.
- i) **Westfield Warm Distribution Update-** Director of Finance and Energy Supply, Jay Kline gave a brief update on Westfield Warm Program status report provided by the Customer Accounts/Collection Manager. The program continues to provide a specific target of customers that are experiencing a financial hardship and attempt to make regular payments. During the months of January and February, funds from Westfield Warm program have been distributed to qualified customers. Majority of customers receive a payment from the Westfield Warm Fund in the amount of \$100-\$500. Letters to 251 customers informing of the program have been mailed, approximately \$58,000 have been applied to WG+E accounts. Currently the annual Westfield Warm funding of \$60,000 continues to be sufficient.
- j) **Energy Stabilization Funds Quarterly Report-** Director of Finance and Energy Supply, Jay Kline and Jamie Naughton, Financial Reporting Manager gave an overview of the Energy Stabilization Funds Quarterly report to the Board.
- k) **Winter Energy Supply Update-** Systems Support & Analyst of Energy Supply department, Kurt Dahdah gave a winter energy supply update to the Board on behalf of the Energy Supply team. The Power Point presentation entailed strategy review for the month of February, daily prices in February, the average sendout down 4% from 2021. The team explained storage deficit/global tensions is causing elevated natural gas prices.
The impact to residential ratepayers is up 11% exposure on electric less impactful than gas. Mr. Dahdah continued to share information to the Board on the electric division side the month supply cost comparison, annual supply cost projections as presented on the slides of the PowerPoint presentation.
- l) **Monthly Financial Reports-** Director of Finance and Energy Supply, Jay Kline and Financial Reporting Manager, Jamie Naughton provided an update to the Board on the monthly financials.

B. Informational Items

- a) **Utility Issues-** as presented.
- b) **Utility News-** as presented.
- c) **Utility Courses Update-** as presented.

IX. OLD BUSINESS:

- a) **Covid-19 Policy/Update-** The General Manager updated the Board on the policies the WG+E is following with regard to Covid-19 and the CDC guidelines. As of February 28th, the mask mandate was lifted at the WG+E to date no positive cases have been reported.

X. NEW BUSINESS:

- a) **Westfield Community Forum Update-**The General Manager informed the Board on a social media post on February 15th in the "We Love Westfield Community Forum" asking for help with WG+E bills. The General Manager wanted to make the Board aware that there were multiple pieces of misinformation which was concerning. The misinformation was resolved with the assistance WG+E employees and loyal customers.
- b) Due to scheduling conflicts, Commissioner Rivera asked to reschedule the April 6th meeting. Upon further discussion, it was mutually agreed that April's meeting will be moved to Tuesday, April 12th at 6:30 p.m.

XI. 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 not to reconvene the Regular Session after adjournment from Executive Session

Liptak	"aye"
Mitchell	"aye"
Sacco	"aye"
Roman	"aye"
Kelleher	"aye"
Rivera	"aye"
Renaudette	"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 not reconvene the Regular Session after adjournment from Executive Session.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

On the motion of made by Commissioner Renaudette, 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 8:47 p.m.

A TRUE RECORD.

Attest:



A. Edward Roman, Chairman

	Documents Presented at REGULARSESSION March 2, 2022		
Municipal Light Board Regular Session Meeting Minutes —February 2, 2022			
Municipal Light Board Executive Session Meeting Minutes February 2, 2022			
Customer Compliment- 44 Montgomery Rd.			
Customer Compliment- 204 Russell Rd.			
Customer Compliment- Amelia Park Children's Museum/Penguin Plunge			
Human Resource Annual Report- 2021	Robin Krok, HR Coordinator/Records Manager	3/2/2022	Administrative & Organization Employee Workforce AO-3.6
Human Resource Quarterly Status Report-1 st Quarter 2022	Robin Krok, HR Coordinator/Records Manager	3/2/2022	Administrative & Organization Employee Workforce AO-3.6
2022 Technical Organization and Functions Manual	Robin Krok, HR Coordinator/Records Manager	3/2/2022	Administrative & Organization Organizational Manual
5 Year Total Wage Comparison	Finance Department	3/2/2022	Administrative & Organization Wages and Benefits Administration A-O-4.2
2021 Safety and Health Annual Report	Greg Freeman, Operations Superintendent	3/2/2022	Administrative & Organization Safety & Health Training AO-3.10
2021 Annual Street Lighting Report	Jody Boucher, Utility Supervisor	3/2/2022	Communications/Customer Service/ Community Affairs Traffic Light Repair CCA-4.2
2021 Annual Outage Report	Michael S. Lee, Director of Operations	3/2/2022	Electric Utility Business Electric System Outage Minimization EUB-5.5
Westfield Warm Program-Status Report	Ariene Paton, Customer Accounts/Collections Manager	3/2/2022	Low Income Customer Assistance Program F8-2
Energy Stabilization Fund	J. Naughton, Financial Reporting Manager	3/2/2022	Financial Electric Rate Stabilization Fund Management F-6.1
Monthly Financial Reports	T. Fouche, Accounting Manager	3/2/2022	Financial Notes Monthly Financial Statements F-2.5
Utility Issues	John W. Welch	3/2/2022	Regulatory & Governmental Affairs Gas/Electric Regulatory Issues, RGA-1.4; RGA1.5
Utility News/Pulse Line	Leanne Cloutier, Executive Administrative Assistant	3/2/2022	Communications/Customer Service/Community Affairs Media Relations - CCA-1.6
Utility Course Update 2021 Seminars/Workshops	Robin Krok, HR Coordinator/Records Manager	3/2/2022	Administration and Organization WG+E Training & Development, AO-3.6