

APPROVED

3/21/23

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
WALLINGFORD ELECTRIC DIVISION

100 JOHN STREET
WALLINGFORD, CT 06492

Tuesday, March 7, 2023

6:30 P.M.

MINUTES

PRESENT: Chairman Robert Beaumont; Commissioner Joel Rinebold; Director Richard Hendershot; Electric Division General Manager Tony Buccheri; Electric Division Business Office Manager Marianne Dill; and Acting Recording Secretary Michelle Bracale

Absent – Water and Sewer Divisions General Manager Neil Amwake; Water and Sewer Divisions Business Manager Donald Langenauer

Members of the public – Larry Zabrowski, John Pierlioni, Donald Mauritz, WED Energy Conservation Specialist

Mr. Beaumont called the Meeting to order at 6:30 P.M., and the pledge of Allegiance was recited.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Consent Agenda

- a. Consider and approve Meeting Minutes of February 21, 2023.
- b. Consider and approve PUC Workshop Meeting Minutes of February 23, 2023.
- c. Consider and approve Budget Amendment – FY 22/23 – Electric – Conservation Expense.

Motion to Approve the Consent Agenda

Made by: Mr. Rinebold

Seconded by: Mr. Beaumont

Votes: 2 ayes

3. Items Removed from Consent Agenda – None

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**4. Discussion and Possible Action: Consider and approve Budget Appropriation –
FY 22/23 – Injuries and Damages**

Mr. Buccheri stated that the WED has worked with the Town’s Risk Department to develop an amount that we feel is sufficient to meet our needs through the end of the fiscal year. He stated it is based on the injuries and employees that are out. It has been reviewed from year to year. He noted that we have had a few employees out on injury this year.

Mr. Beaumont commented that this is very straight-forward.

**Motion to Approve Budget Appropriation in the amount of \$190,000 in Account 925 –
Injuries and Damages.**

Made by: Mr. Rinebold
Seconded by: Mr. Beaumont
Votes: 2 ayes

5. Discussion Only : Quarterly Review of Rate Comparison.

Mr. Buccheri started the discussion stating that this is something that was requested by Commissioner Rinebold a few months back to review on a quarterly basis, rate comparisons with other utilities in the State of Connecticut. Mr. Buccheri informed that the information provided is a residential rate comparison for all of the utilities in Connecticut to show how WED compares. He noted that there is a significant difference between the IOUs and all of the municipal utilities, with the municipalities slightly lower. WED is about the same (within \$10 - \$20) of all the other municipalities in the State of Connecticut.

Mr. Rinebold thanked Mr. Buccheri and WED staff for providing this very valuable information. It helps to understand our position in electric rates and charges throughout the State.

Mr. Rinebold questioned the highlighting of the Energy Conservation Fund on the chart provided in the Agenda.

Ms. Dill explained that those items were presented in previous analysis that was completed before she was hired. She went on to explain that when she researches the information on the individual electric system websites, she does not see the energy conservation charge being specified, but has continued to include it, as it is a state imposed surcharge that everyone would have to pay and there is not a way to easily see if it is combined with something else. It is the conclusion that it still belongs, which is why it was highlighted.

Mr. Hendershot reiterated that he does not believe the charge is included in something else, however, it conceivably could be. We know that it is being collected, but we are noting it separately.

89 **Public Question and Answer Period**
90 **None**

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92 **Public Question and Answer Period Closed**

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95 **6. Discussion and Possible Action: Consider and approve updated Matching**
96 **Payment Policy.**

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98 Mr. Buccheri informed that this program was started in 2014 and put together with Wallingford
99 Electric Division and the Town of Wallingford Department of Youth and Social Services. It has
100 been a successful program for our ratepayers, the Electric Division and North Branford
101 Department of Social Services as noted in the memo from Marianne Dill to Mr. Buccheri on
102 February 28, 2023. The decision was made to update the policy as all of the paperwork had
103 previously shown that this was a “pilot program”. He stated that since it has been an effective
104 program, this documentation is being updated to state that this is a Wallingford Electric Division
105 Matching Payment Program, not a “pilot program”. The policy has been updated to show that it
106 includes Northford customers as well. We have reached out to the Town of North Branford
107 Department of Social Services to include WED customers who reside in Northford as they are
108 WED residential rate payers as well. Mr. Buccheri also mentioned that for this, there is no need
109 to increase the budget as he believes that the money allocated for this program should suffice.
110 (\$25,000 is allocated to Wallingford WED customers and \$5,000 is allocated to Northford WED
111 customers). He noted that if need be, WED staff will address the issue with the PUC if and when
112 it happens. He went on to explain the Agreement form as well as the Release of Information
113 form in brief detail.

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115 Ms. Dill added that the funds for this program come from the WED, not the Town of
116 Wallingford.

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118 Mr. Beaumont questioned how many customers have completed the program?

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120 Ms. Dill replied that Social Services keeps that data, however, she was notified that 41 customers
121 successfully completed the program since the beginning of it.

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123 **Motion to Approve the Matching Payment Policy in that it has been a successful program**
124 **noting it will be made available to all WED residential customers specifically, including**
125 **those in the Northford section of North Branford.**

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128 **Made by: Mr. Rinebold**

129 **Seconded by: Mr. Beaumont**

130 **Votes: 2 ayes**

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132 **Committee Reports**

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134 **Correspondence**

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136 Mr. Rinebold updated the group on his recent APPA meeting in Washington. He noted that CO2
137 Climate Change: The position was that federal climate policies must be designed to ensure grid
138 reliability, affordability and a diverse resource mix. With grid security, there was strong support
139 for industry and government partnerships, resiliency and cybersecurity. On the supply chain use,
140 there was consideration of the Federal Defense Production Act to increase the supply chain,
141 relaxation of efficiency standards – which would allow increased manufacturing of some of the
142 components (ie transformers).
143

144 Mr. Buccheri questioned if transformers were specifically mentioned and Mr. Rinebold answered
145 “yes”.
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147 Mr. Rinebold then added that a discussion ensued as to where and how to increase the production
148 of the distribution transformers, noting this is not a Wallingford issue, it is a national issue. It is
149 an issue that is being addressed, not very successfully as there has been pushback. The question
150 is educating the powers to be in the Biden Administration on where and how to get this on the
151 Defense Production Act and reduce the high efficiency standards so that they can be produced
152 more readily.
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154 Mr. Beaumont offered that it may be a good idea to write a letter to our two Senators and five
155 State Representatives on the importance of this issue.
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157 Mr. Hendershot stated that is a good idea as this is critical as we are one major hurricane away
158 from this being a national problem.
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160 Mr. Rinebold continued with permitting reform. A lot was focused on streamlining of citing
161 environmental reviews and a transparent review for transmission permitting. Some transmission
162 lines are not making it through the permitting process and are getting stuck. Too much time and
163 money is being taken in the process and a decision needs to be made sooner rather than later.
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165 The last thing Mr. Rinebold mentioned was the Stop the sequestration of the build America
166 bonds and the clean renewable energy bonds. Apparently, these have been sequestered.
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168 **ADJOURNMENT**

170 **Motion to Adjourn**

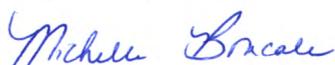
172 **Made by: Mr. Rinebold**

173 **Seconded by: Mr. Beaumont**

174 **Votes: 2 ayes**
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176 The meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:47 p.m.
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178 Respectfully submitted,

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181 Michelle Bracale

182 Recording Secretary
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Respectfully submitted,



Joel Rinebold

Secretary