



**LANSING BOARD OF WATER & LIGHT BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING  
January 16, 2024 – 5:30 P.M.  
REO Town Depot - Board of Water & Light Headquarters  
1201 S. Washington Ave., Lansing, MI 48910**

BWL full meeting packets and public notices/agendas are located on the official web site at <https://www.lbwl.com/about-bwl/governance>.

**AGENDA**

Call to Order

Roll Call

Public Comments on Agenda Items

- 1. Committee of the Whole Meeting Minutes of November 7, 2023 ..... **TAB 1**
- 2. Board Self-Evaluation Survey ..... **DISCUSSION**
- 3. Board of Commissioners’ Roles & Responsibilities Handbook ..... **DISCUSSION**

Other

Adjourn

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**November 7, 2023**

The Committee of the Whole of the Lansing Board of Water and Light (BWL) met at the BWL Headquarters-REO Town Depot located at 1201 S. Washington Ave., Lansing, MI, on Tuesday, November 7, 2023.

Committee of the Whole Chairperson David Price called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and asked the Corporate Secretary to call the roll.

Present: Chairperson David Price; Commissioners Beth Graham, Semone James, DeShon Leek, Tony Mullen, Dale Schrader, Tracy Thomas and Sandra Zerkle; Non-Voting Commissioners J.R. Beauboeuf (East Lansing), Brian Pillar (Meridian Township), and Robert Worthy (Delta Township)  
Absent: None.

The Corporate Secretary declared a quorum.

**Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

**Approval of Minutes**

**Motion** by Commissioner Sandra Zerkle, **Seconded** by Commissioner Tracy Thomas, to approve the Committee of the Whole Meeting minutes of September 12, 2023.

**Action:** Motion carried. The minutes were approved.

**Energy Waste Reduction (EWR) Programs**

Patrick Walters, Energy Program Manager, presented on the energy waste reduction programs. Mr. Walters summarized the program goals and results, the residential and business programs and carbon neutrality programs.

Commissioner Price asked for the cost of a separate meter and a new hardwire charger at the first level for electric vehicle programs. Kellee Christensen, Director of Strategic Planning & Development, responded that the separate meter was developed to reduce the cost of rewiring a house with a larger panel. The price could run between \$500 and \$1500 depending on the state and where the home is. Customers can charge during off peak hours and measure the usage.

Commissioner Leek asked whether BWL or a third party installed the separate meter. Ms. Christensen responded that a licensed electrician would acquire a permit and the meter would be installed after inspection.

Commissioner Graham commented that when selling a house it would be helpful to point out the energy efficiencies available and provide the information to new buyers. Mr. Walters responded

that BWL works through community members such as realtors, churches, contractors and trade allies to provide the information.

Commissioner Mullen asked what was being measured with the energy waste reduction program goal budget and final results. Mr. Walters responded that expenses and incentives for the programs are measured and GM Peffley added that the final results indicated that BWL was under budget. Commissioner Mullen also asked whether information on energy savings is provided to the City Council. GM Peffley responded that the information is not sent to the City Council separately.

Commissioner Zerkle commented that the information is provided in the packet and is also posted on the BWL website. Commissioner Zerkle asked if energy efficiency information can be gathered for and provided to the customers. GM Peffley responded that the Communications Department would put together a response and provide next week.

#### **Regular Board Meeting Schedule 2024**

**Motion** by Commissioner Tracy Thomas, **Seconded** by Commissioner Sandra Zerkle, to forward the Resolution for the Regular Board Meeting Schedule 2024 to the full Board for consideration.

**Action:** Motion Carried.

#### **PA 95 – How Does It Work for Our Customers**

General Manager Dick Peffley presented information on PA-95, assistance programs to help customers with bill paying, 211 reconnection fees, and time of use rates. The goal of PA-95 is to have enough funding to suspend shut-offs and BWL will monitor to ensure the funding is returned to help in the BWL service territory.

In response to Commissioner Thomas asking the length of time of the opt in, GM Peffley responded one year.

Commissioner Leek asked how long after the LIEAF funds are collected would it be evident that the community is being helped and Commissioner Zerkle asked how the assistance program information was tracked. GM Peffley responded that bill payment assistance and accounting records would indicate whether the community is being helped.

Commissioner Leek asked what qualifies a customer for assistance. Deanna Sparks, Customer Operations Manager, responded that the state sets the requirements and the agencies that provide the assistance would qualify the customer based on the requirements.

In response to Commissioner Schrader asking about the deposit required for utility service, GM Peffley responded that the deposit can be waived for a first-time late payment and deposits will be returned after one year of on time payments.

Commissioner James asked whether a customer can be notified of assistance programs prior to falling behind in payment and whether BWL could change the requirement of a deposit and

reconnection fee for those with limited income or a lower credit rating. GM Peffley responded that payment plans can be arranged before a disconnection is made and the agencies that assist can help with the deposit and reconnection fees. GM Peffley added that deposits are based on energy consumption. Ms. Sparks responded that whether a deposit is requested is based on the results of a credit check and the energy usage of the last twelve months.

In response to Commissioner Mullen asking how he could determine whether the off-peak savers rate would save him money, GM Peffley responded that the BWL's Energy Department could assist him with that information.

Commissioner Thomas commented that each Board Member could send the rate information to 100 people they know and to use utilities during off-peak hours.

Commissioner Schrader commented that 211 has a 24-hour operator that can assist with preventing shutoffs and asked what was the amount in payments that the 7,000 customers in April 2023 were behind. GM Peffley responded about \$1 million and that the information in uncollected debt can be highlighted in the financial reports and sent to the Commissioners.

In response to Commissioner Pillar asking if PA 95 offered eligible customer support for electric and water service and when the decision would be made to continue to opt in or to opt out, GM Peffley responded electric only and in July 2024.

In response to Commissioner James asking about re-opting in, GM Peffley responded that BWL had planned on a two-year pilot unless there was a disadvantage.

### **Commissioners' Handbook for Roles and Responsibilities**

Commissioner James led the discussion on the Commissioners' Handbook for Roles and Responsibilities which is being created for the roles, responsibilities, and requirements of the governing body. Supporting governing documents will be added to the handbook, including the Rules of Procedure and Governance Policy.

Commissioner Price suggested creating a narrated Commissioners' Roles and Responsibilities PowerPoint presentation and signing off on receipt of the Commissioners' Roles and Responsibilities.

### **Other**

A discussion was held on reviewing the Board of Commissioners' Self-Evaluation document. HR Executive Director, Michael. Flowers will provide the APPA Board of Commissioners' Self-Evaluation form and the Executive Committee will review the self-evaluation.

Commissioner Thomas asked if the self-evaluation form would be sent to the Committee of the Whole after being reviewed by the Executive Committee. It was affirmed that the self-evaluation would go to the Committee of the Whole after being reviewed by the Executive Committee.

**Adjourn**

Chairperson Price adjourned the meeting at 6:53 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted  
David Price, Chairperson  
Committee of the Whole