

MINUTES OF GAS & ELECTRIC COMMISSION MEETING
REGULAR SESSION
MARCH 10, 2026

A meeting of the Holyoke Gas and Electric Department was held on March 10, 2026, at 5:07 P.M. in the Department's offices. In attendance were Commissioners Hoey, Sutter and Marrero; Manager Lavelle; Superintendents Steve Roy and Brian Roy; Brooke McMahon, Kirk Jonah, Kate Sullivan Craven, Lisa Rogers, and Attorney John Ferriter.

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Hoey called the meeting to order at 5:07 P.M.

MINUTES:

On a motion from Commissioner Sutter, seconded by Commissioner Marrero, it was unanimously voted to approve the minutes from February 10, 2026.

REPORTS & RECOMMENDATIONS OF MANAGER:

Financial Report:

Ms. McMahon reviewed the draft December 2025 financial statements and gave an update on the 2025 year-end audit, noting that the auditors are on schedule to complete the audit by April 1st. There was a brief discussion on the matter.

DIVISION REPORTS:

GAS DIVISION

Mr. Brian Roy reported that 99% of planned winter gas is locked in price and that 23% of forecasted summer gas is also locked in price, and that wholesale natural gas purchases continue consistently with the hedging plan for the current 12-month procurement window. He then reported that the Purchased Gas Adjustment (PGA) was seasonally reduced from \$0.72/ccf to \$0.40/ccf for all firm customers effective for the March billing cycle. He further noted that the PGA for the G-2 and G-6 interruptible rates would be lowered from \$1.40/ccf to \$1.08/ccf. He noted that the adjustments would equate to an approximate 17% reduction compared to the February gas rates. He also reviewed March rate comparisons, noting that the Department remains very competitive in all rate classes.

Mr. Roy then reported that efforts are underway to resume construction activities on the LNG I&R project by April 1st, and he noted that the EFSB has taken no action on the Department's petition for a fifth storage tank. Commissioner Hoey suggested that a change in approach, and perhaps a lobbying resource, may be needed to prompt action by the EFSB. Mr. Roy then reported that distribution crews are targeting the week of March 30th to begin planned construction activities for the year, noting that projects on Sargeant Street, Alderman Street would be scheduled first, as well as the continuation of work on Cabot Street as part of the PHMSA FY2022 Grant project. He also reported that there are currently zero (0) leaks on file and that a total of 12 leaks were identified and repaired during February. Finally, he noted that the EH&S team completed hands-on CPR and First Aid training for the Department in February. There was a brief discussion on the matter.

ELECTRIC DIVISION

POWER SUPPLY

Mr. Steve Roy reviewed the March electric rate comparisons and reported that the Department remains competitive in all rate classes compared to regional peers and is currently the lowest, or second lowest, in all categories. He stated that the Purchased Power Adjustment (PPA) would be increased from \$0.02036/kwh to \$0.028769/kwh effective for the March billing, resulting in an approximately 4.5% electric rate increase for residential, general service and small industrial rate schedules. He noted that the PPA adjustment is necessary due to low river flows, and corresponding lower generation, coupled with higher loads at higher market prices, due to cold weather, which has resulted in a negative budget variance of \$3.5 million through February. He stated that even after the PPA adjustment, HG&E electric rates are still lowest, or second lowest, compared to Massachusetts peers. He then reviewed the March Mark-to-Market report and reported that all transactions and counter-party default risks are within policy limits. He also gave an update on peak load reduction activities and noted that the February peak occurred on February 8th, hour-ending 18, and that 5.723 MW were shed via Department load reducers. There was a brief discussion on the matter.

TRANSMISSION & DISTRIBUTION

Mr. Roy gave an update on electric distribution maintenance and construction activities, noting that planned padmount transformer inspections are 75% complete. He reported that P&G Power began mobilizing this week to start the 1894 Transmission Pole Line Replacement Project, which is expected to be completed within six weeks. He also noted that Haugland Energy Group will be mobilizing shortly to begin the 52W9 reconductoring project on Main Street, from Stebbins Street to Jones Ferry Road. He then reported that planned AMI meter installations are 22.6% completed with 542 AMI meters have been installed since January 1st. He also gave an update on other maintenance activities and battery storage projects. There was a brief discussion on the matter.

ELECTRIC PRODUCTION

Mr. Roy reported that hydro production was 43.1% below plan for February and that year-to-date production is 26.8% below plan, due to low river flows. He noted that the low river flows, and corresponding lower generation, coupled with higher loads at higher market prices, due to cold weather, have resulted in a negative budget variance of \$3.5 million through February. He stated that recent warmer weather has resulted in increased flows allowing for all generators to be operational. He then gave an update on planned repairs to penstocks at the old Whiting Mill located upstream of Boatlock Station. He stated that planned repairs include a penstock flume plug and tailrace plug to address ongoing leaks in those structures. He also gave a brief update on Cobble Mountain Unit #3 rebuild status and reminded the Commission that the annual spring canal outage is scheduled for March 24th-26th. There was a brief discussion on the matter.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Jonah gave an update on sales and operations activity. He also gave a summary of 2025 cybersecurity education and testing results. There was a brief discussion on the matter.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Ms. Rogers reported that the utility shut-off moratorium would be lifted on April 1st and that standard shut-off procedures would be implemented at that time. There was a brief discussion on the matter.

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Sullivan Craven reported that the City Council referred a proposed data center moratorium to the Ordinance Committee and that a hearing was held on February 24th to discuss the matter. She stated

that the hearing was continued. She then noted that the Massachusetts House Energy Affordability Bill (HB-5175) was approved by the House and will be taken up by the State Senate in the coming days. She also gave an update on community outreach activities relating to safety, education and fishway tours. There was a discussion on the matter.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

SPONSORSHIP REQUEST – FIESTAS PATRONALES DE HOLYOKE: Mr. Lavelle reported that the Department received a sponsorship request in the amount of \$5,000 from the organizers of the Fiestas Patronales de Holyoke and he recommended that the request be approved as requested. Commissioner Marrero noted that the festival is now in its fourth year and has proven to be a well-run, successful event, drawing people into the City from all over the northeast. He asked if any consideration had been given to increasing the sponsorship amount to help the organizers take the event to the next level. Ms. Sullivan Craven stated that the recommended sponsorship level is consistent with what was requested and consistent with the level of support given to similar sized events. After a brief discussion and on a motion from Commissioner Sutter, seconded by Commissioner Marrero, it was unanimously voted to approve the sponsorship per the recommendation of management.

COMMERCIAL ENERGY ASSISTANCE REQUEST – CRAFTS BLOCK, LLC: Mr. Lavelle reported that the Department received a Commercial Energy Assistance Request from the owners of 141-147 High Street for the installation of eight (8) energy efficient air source heat pumps. Commissioner Marrero disclosed that he had a conflict with the matter and he abstained from deliberations. Commissioner Hoey disclosed that the customer is a client of his employer and that he was unsure if his firm had any involvement in the request before the Commission. Out of an abundance of caution, and on the advice of counsel, Commissioner Hoey invoked the Rule of Necessity to participate in the matter. After a brief discussion and on a motion from Commissioner Sutter, seconded by Commissioner Hoey, it was voted 2-0 to approve the assistance per the recommendation of management. Commissioner Marrero abstained from voting on the matter.

BID AUTHORIZATIONS:

HADLEY FALLS STATION ROOF REPLACEMENT: Mr. Lavelle requested authorization to solicit bids for the replacement of the Hadley Falls Station Roof. He stated that the current roof is at the end of its useful life and is in need of replacement in order to protect the generating equipment in the facility. After a brief discussion and on a motion from Commissioner Sutter, seconded by Commissioner Marrero, it was unanimously voted to authorize the bid per the recommendation of management.

BIDS RECEIVED:

ELECTRICAL SERVICES ANNUAL CONTRACT - EXTENSION: Mr. Lavelle recommended that the Commission authorize a one-year extension to the annual contract for Electrical Services (Contract No. 24-08) with Collins Electric Co., subject to labor rate increases of 5%, a vehicle rate

increase of \$5/hr. and other terms and conditions remaining consistent with the existing contract. After a brief discussion and on a motion from Commissioner Sutter, seconded by Commissioner Marrero, it was unanimously voted to authorize the contract extension per the recommendation of management.

ELECTRICAL SERVICES ANNUAL CONTRACT (SECONDARY) - EXTENSION: Mr.

Lavelle recommended that the Commission authorize a one-year extension to the annual contract for Electrical Services (Contract No. 24-10) with M. L. Schmitt, subject to labor rate increase of 3.7% and other terms and conditions remaining consistent with the existing contract. After a brief discussion and on a motion from Commissioner Sutter, seconded by Commissioner Marrero, it was unanimously voted to authorize the contract extension per the recommendation of management.

FENCE MAINTENANCE, REPAIRS & INSTALLATIONS ANNUAL CONTRACT -

EXTENSION: Mr. Lavelle recommended that the Commission award the annual contract for Fence Maintenance, Repairs and Installations to Brodeur-Campbell Fence Co., Inc., the low bidder meeting all requirements of the solicitation. Commissioner Marrero disclosed that he recently contracted Brodeur-Campbell for personal services and abstained from deliberations. After a brief discussion and on a motion from Commissioner Sutter, seconded by Commissioner Hoey, it was voted 2-0 to award the contract per the recommendation of management. Commissioner Marrero abstained from the vote.

NATURAL GAS SYSTEMS WELDING SERVICES: Mr. Lavelle recommended that the Commission award the contract for Natural Gas Systems Welding Services to Spath & Son, Inc., the apparent lowest, responsible, and eligible bidder. After a brief discussion and on a motion from Commissioner Sutter, seconded by Commissioner Marrero, it was unanimously voted to award the contract per the recommendation of management.

GAS LEAK SURVEYS ANNUAL CONTRACT: Mr. Lavelle recommended that the Commission award the contract for Gas Leak Surveys to Omark Consultants, Inc., the lowest responsible and eligible bidder. After a brief discussion and on a motion from Commissioner Sutter, seconded by Commissioner Marrero, it was unanimously voted to award the contract per the recommendation of management.

RESTORATION OF MANHOLE NO. 28: Mr. Lavelle recommended that the Commission award the contract for the Restoration of Manhole #28 to Osmose Utility Services, Inc., the low, and only, bidder meeting all requirements of the solicitation. After a brief discussion and on a motion from Commissioner Sutter, seconded by Commissioner Marrero, it was unanimously voted to award the contract per the recommendation of management.

REPLACEMENT OF VEHICLE #49 (UTILITY STEP VAN): Mr. Lavelle recommended that the Commission award the contract for the replacement of Vehicle #49 to ATG Patriots LLC a cost not to exceed \$360,800 off of the State bid contract #VEH111. He noted that the two new vehicles would replace existing Gas Division one-ton crew cab trucks that have reached the end of their useful lives. Commissioner Marrero asked about the condition of the existing vehicles and if they would be traded in as part of the new vehicle purchase. Mr. Roy stated that the existing vehicles are over eleven (11) years old and have significant wear and tear. He noted that the existing vehicles have relatively low mileage, but they transport significant loads between facilities and are nearing the end of useful life. After a brief discussion and on a motion from Commissioner Marrero, seconded by Commissioner Sutter, it was unanimously voted to award the contract per the recommendation of management.

ELECTRIC LINE CONTRACTOR – SPACER CABLE INSTALLATION: Mr. Lavelle recommended that the Commission award the contract for the Electric Line Contractor (cable installation on Westfield Road and Southampton Road) to Haugland Energy Group, LLC, the lowest responsible and eligible bidder meeting all requirements of the solicitation. After a brief discussion and on a motion from Commissioner Sutter, seconded by Commissioner Marrero, it was unanimously voted to award the contract per the recommendation of management.

COMMUNICATIONS:

03/06/26 – Draft Commission Meeting Minutes from 02/10/26
02/27/26 – Sponsorship Request – Fiestas Patronales de Holyoke
03/03/26 – CEAP – Crafts Block, LLC
03/02/26 – SR/SL/Authorization to Bid – Hadley Falls Station Roof Replacement
03/03/26 – JL/CW/Recommendation – Extension of Electrical Services Annual Contract
03/03/26 – JL/CW/Recommendation – Extension of Electrical Services Annual Contract (Secondary)
03/03/26 – JL/CW/Recommendation – Extension of Fence Maintenance, Repairs & Installations Annual Contract
03/02/26 – JL/CW/Bid Recommendation - Natural Gas Systems Welding Services
03/02/26 – JL/CW/Bid Recommendation - Gas Leak Surveys
03/04/26 – SR/VO/Bid Recommendation - Restoration of Manhole No. 28
02/25/26 – SR/JP/Approval Request – Replacement of Utility Step Van #49
03/04/26 – SR/VO/Bid Recommendation - Electric Line Contractor 15kV Spacer Cable Installation

NEXT MEETING DATE:

It was agreed that the next Commission meeting would take place on Wednesday, April 15th at 5:00 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT:

On a motion from Commissioner Sutter, seconded by Commissioner Marrero, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the Meeting at 6:22 P.M.

HG&E Commission