



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
**ENERGY EFFICIENCY &
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, March 3, 2016

2:00 PM - 3:30 PM

Conference Room B, 2nd Floor

Department of Administration, One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI

In Attendance: Abigail Anthony, Marisa Desautel, Marion Gold, Mike Guerard, Chris Kearns, Jeremy Newberger, Scudder Parker, Rachel Sholly, Betsy Stubblefield Loucks

1. Call to Order

Chairman Chris Powell called the meeting to order at 2:07 PM.

2. Approval of Executive Committee February Meeting Minutes

Chairman Chris Powell abstained. Betsy Stubblefield Loucks moved to approve the February meeting minutes. Abigail Anthony seconded and all approved.

3. Executive Director Report

EERMC Annual Report

The Office of Energy Resources (OER) will take the lead on developing the EERMC Annual Report, as it has in the past two years. The process has been delayed because of reduced staff capacity, so the report will be submitted in May instead of April. Ms. Anthony suggested that the Council notify the legislature of the delay. OER will follow up on outreach to the legislature prior to report submission. Chair Powell offered to present the Annual Report before the legislature.

EERMC Website

OER has hired an intern to update and redesign the EERMC website. Headshots will be requested from Council members who have not already provided one. The new website will be previewed at an upcoming meeting.

Energy Expo at the Home Show

Commissioner Gold reminded the Committee that the Energy Expo was coming up on March 31-April 3. Rachel Sholly provided an update from the organizers at the Rhode Island Builders Association. There are now over 300 students from 20 career tech schools engaged in the construction of the three feature energy demonstrations, which are the solar demonstration exhibit, the Cox Communications home technology showcase, and two solar tree houses. Some of these students will be working the show to help describe the energy installations to attendees. The advertising campaign started last week, which includes TV and radio spots and promo videos featuring Commissioner Gold and Michael McAteer, web content, social media, and \$2 off coupons in National Grid bills. The Council and OER get 500 free tickets to distribute, which Ms. Sholly will bring to the full Council meeting next week.

Council members will be informed of key energy events during the show that would be good to attend. The opening ceremony will feature Senators Reed and Whitehouse, Representatives Langevin and Cicilline, and Providence Mayor Jorge Elorza and will be held on Thursday, March 31st at 4:00 PM on the show floor. Lastly, the invoice for \$50,000 EERMC sponsorship has been paid out of the client fund being held with Council attorney Marisa Desautel.

New Member Appointments

Should soon submit recommendations for reappointments, which include Abigail Anthony, Joe Newsome and Betsy Stubblefield Loucks, and the two new positions. She said they are looking for recommendations for large and small nonprofit. She said it might be good to get someone from a hospital. Chairman Powell asked if anyone from the Providence Sustainability Roundtable would be suited for one of those roles. Kat Burnham from People's Power and Light volunteered as a small non-profit representative. Brigid Ryan recommended Christian Belden of Church Community Housing.

Legislation

Most of the proposed legislation concerns renewable energy, including a bill to extend the Renewable Energy Fund and a bill to expand net metering to allow third party financing and also to allow more virtual net metering. The latter ties into the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) docket #4600 which will be discussed later in this meeting. The delivered fuels bill has not yet been released. Additionally, a renewable thermal bill was introduced by the Senate President to create a surcharge to fund renewable alternatives for heating systems. There are also a number of bills relating to the PUC.

4. Consultant Team Updates

a) Finance

Mike Guerard reported that Dunksy has been helping to monitor several developments, including those related to Commercial-PACE (C-PACE) and the Efficient Buildings Funds. Dunksy will also do an evaluation on National Grid's request for proposals for the on-bill repayment tied to the revolving loan fund. Mr. Guerard said that the focus has been to confirm that National Grid is working closely with the vendor hired by the Infrastructure Bank to ensure the programs are synchronized. This work may help to understand if and how financing can inform 2018-2020 savings targets. The consultant team would also like to work with National Grid to understand how Dunksy can follow up on the heat loan issues noted in the evaluation plan. C-PACE is aiming for an April launch, while Residential PACE will launch later in the year. However, it is important to make sure Dunksy is up to speed in advance.

b) Savings Targets

Mr. Guerard reported that the targets working group met this past Tuesday and has moved more aggressively into key drivers work, including working with National Grid to identify key points of contact for each item. The consultant team recommended that the Council hold a special stakeholder engagement meeting in May, where Council members would invite their constituents and also announce it broadly, to get wider input into targets development. Mr. Newberger suggested laying out the questions stakeholders will be asked to think about in advance. Ms. Anthony felt that most of the comments will probably relate to program design, but such a meeting would still be helpful.

c) Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnership's Evaluation, Measurement & Verification Forum

Commissioner Gold has been asked to serve on the EM&V Forum on behalf of the EERMC and OER. Mr. Newberger felt that some of the activities being undertaken by the Forum may not have value to Rhode Island, however, if Commissioner Gold were on it, she could potentially help guide the work. NEEP's work on this is funded by U.S. Department of Energy grants and utility subscriptions, including National Grid.

He felt that it would be worthwhile for Commissioner Gold to accept on behalf of the EERMC on a trial basis. Mr. Guerard added that the utilities in MA and NY are not funding the Forum's work, so a question is, if Grid is operating in two other states without participating, should Rhode Island? Ms. Anthony said that Acadia Center feels that the EM&V Forum is one of NEEP's most valuable activities. She felt that the EERMC should not base its decision on what MA and NY regulators are doing because their motives are not aligned with Rhode Island's. The Council should strive to determine the value to Rhode Island, which can be achieved by Commissioner Gold's trial participation.

d) *EERMC Response to Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative Allocation Plan*

Ms. Anthony asked the Committee if the Council should submit written comments to OER on RGGI allocation plan, which has been done in the past. If yes, what should they say? Are there recommendations that the EERMC can make to OER on how RGGI funds can be deployed to support Lead by Example in the best way possible? The Committee discussed the importance of acting on the feedback it has received from stakeholders. Mr. Guerard reported that the 30-day public comment period has opened. There will be a public hearing on March 17th and final written comments will be due on March 27th. Ms. Anthony said that the Committee should recommend to the Council that it provide written comments. The consultant team should develop a short outline of recommendations of best practices for lead by example to be discussed at the full Council meeting. If certain Council members have individual comments, they can submit separately. Mr. Newberger recommended that the comments speak directly to specifics of the proposed plan rather than offering other ideas.

5. PUC Review into Changing Distribution System

Mr. Guerard reported that this docket has been officially opened and the PUC has hired a facilitator to help steer the discussion. It builds positively on where the ratecase docket ended and dovetails well with the work of the Systems Integration RI group (SIRI). Mr. Newberger said that the PUC staff prepared a memo for the Commission which provides a general scope of the docket. The Council should decide whether or not it would like to participate and if so who will be the designated representative. Ms. Anthony recommended that Council continue to participate through the involvement of the consultant team and then at some point decide whether to formally participate the time commitment.

Mr. Parker said that it is not likely that savings targets will be based on demand response. He recommended that Doug Hurley, who works with Synapse and is very knowledgeable on regional markets, be hired up to \$20K to update where the markets in New England are and how they are likely to evolve now that courts have decided on the 745 supreme court order. Mr. Parker recommended that the consultant team bring a scope of work and someone to hire to the Council. The Committee decided to postpone action for the time being.

6. EERMC Role in Resource Diversification

Ms. Stubblefield Loucks said that she is looking for a dashboard of the programs and activities that are going on in the name of the Council that support the EERMC's legislated responsibilities. This would be something that Council members can reference to figure out what their role for action and what they need to keep an eye on. She sketched out a template table that would outline the projects/activities, funding allocated, timeframe, lead agency and main partners for each of the Council's three main areas of responsibility. Mr. Newberger noted that this seems very similar to the consultant team's work plan approach. Mr. Guerard will frame this up for feedback at the next Executive Committee meeting.

7. Council Business

EERMC Unallocated Budget

Mr. Guerard reminded the Council that there is \$290,000 unallocated in the EERMC budget. Chairman Powell said that Council members could be asked if they have any recommendations, reminding them what types of activities these funds can be used for. Mr. Parker thought a potential opportunity might be looking at whether Rhode Island should move to a societal cost test and if so what would be in it and how would we measure it.

Open Meetings Issues

Marisa Desautel, the Council's attorney, offered to create a chart focused on the recurring confusions related to communications rules among members.

Draft EERMC March Meeting Agenda

The Committee asked to remove two agenda items – "Role in Resource Diversification" and "NEEP EM&V" – and add a discussion of the unallocated budget and a discussion of proposed policy recommendation concepts to be included in the Annual Report.

8. Adjournment

Ms. Stubblefield Loucks made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Anthony seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 3:47 PM.