



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

## **EERMC FULL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**

**Thursday, February 15, 2018 | 3:30 - 5:30 PM**

Conference Room A, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Department of Administration, Providence, RI

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**Members in Attendance:** Chris Powell, Carol Grant, Betsy Stubblefield Loucks, Karen Verrengia, Joe Garlick, Bob Bacon, Michael McAteer, Joe Cirillo, Shigeru Osada, Roberta Fagan, Diane Williamson, Tom Magliocchetti.

**Others Present:** Mike Guerard, Rachel Henschel, Becca Trietch, Sara Canabarro, Carrie Gill, Mark Kravatz, Erika Niedowski, Kat Burnham, Mona Chandra, Matt Ryan, Kevin Rose, Matt Ray, Brad Hevenor, John Richards, Alice Hourihan, Dilip Shah.

All meeting materials can be viewed at: <https://rieermc.ri.gov/meeting/eermc-meeting-february-2018/>

### **1. Call to Order**

Chairman Powell called the meeting to order at 3:31PM.

### **2. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Chairman Powell requested a motion to approve the minutes for January's meeting. Ms. Verrengia made a motion, and Mr. Cirillo seconded it. All Approved.

### **3. Executive Director Report**

#### *a) General Update*

Commissioner Grant had two brief updates. First, she reported that Nick Ucci, OER and National Grid are leading efforts on a large-scale renewable, clean energy procurement that the Governor announced on February 5<sup>th</sup> as part of the 1000MW goal.

Secondly, she stated that the RGGI draft plan will be posted for public comment on OER's website, and it states the follow:

- \$500,000.00 for RIIB Residential Loan Product
- \$110,000.00 for DEM Trees Planting Program
- \$250,000.00 for DEM Farm Energy Efficiency Program
- \$350,000.00 for Municipal LED Street Lights
- \$800,000.00 for Renewable Energy Fund
- \$100,000.00 for Pascoag Utility Energy Efficiency

Commissioner Grant noted she will keep the Council members informed of both the RGGI plan review process and the renewable energy procurement as both progress.

### **4. Chairperson Report**

#### *a) General Update*

Chairman Powell stated that today's meeting will focus on some council business, followed by an update from National Grid about 2017's Quarter 4 performance. Today's special topic presentation will be given by OER and National Grid on code efforts. He noted that in order to make the agenda lighter, the 2017 EERMC year-end budget report has been placed in the left-hand pocket of Council member folders. Since no time has been allocated to discuss the report, please email Becca if you have any questions regarding it.

There was a request to change the agenda order, specifically to reverse the order of items #7 and #8. Ms. Stubblefield Loucks made a motion to approve, and Mr. Magliocchetti seconded it. All approved.

Chairman Powell also added that Becca will be sending an email after today's meeting about scheduling the EERMC Retreat. A suggestion has been made to hold a half-day retreat on the same day as the May EERMC meeting (Thursday, 5/17). She will be soliciting feedback on this idea. If there are any substantial conflicts with this date, she will then begin the process of organizing another day and time via a doodle poll. Please respond to her email as quickly as possible. She will include a deadline to respond in the email.

## **5. Council Business**

### *a) Update on Legal Services Proposals*

Ms. Trietch reported that the due date for the Legal Services Proposals was February 7<sup>th</sup>, and the Council received two proposals. She stated that Chairman Powell, Ms. Stubblefield Loucks and Mr. Garlick have volunteered their time to be part of the evaluation team. They should have a recommendation ready by March's meeting, so the members can vote on it.

### *b) Discussion & Vote on Energy Education Needs Assessment Proposals*

Ms. Stubblefield Loucks stated that at the end of last year, the Council had put out an RFP for an energy education needs assessment. The Council received only one proposal from Evergreen Economics for this RFP. She added that this RFP sought to better understand the energy educational needs of the public, public officials and business stakeholders in Rhode Island. Referring to the RFP Evaluation Team's recommendation to the Council (meeting material document), Ms. Stubblefield Loucks noted that the recommended contract amount for the Evergreen Economics proposal changed from \$15,000 to \$25,000 during the proposal review process.

Mr. Osada asked for more details/explanation about how they are going to do this assessment. Ms. Verrengia responded that the proposal isn't going to be focused on properties, instead it is going to focus on the different sectors of the State of RI that may need energy education. She stated that Evergreen Economics will use previous data from different sources, including National Grid, and they will conduct more in-depth interviews with key groups such as public officials and business stakeholders, to find out their knowledge on energy efficiency and other energy topics. Ms. Verrengia noted that page 5 (Refer to Evergreen Economics' Proposal) highlights the sectors the work will focus on.

Chairman Powell asked Becca Trietch about the current budget for the energy education needs assessment. Ms. Trietch reported that the Public Education budget for 2018 is \$100,000, therefore the Council has sufficient funds for this effort.

Ms. Williamson asked if it's the first time they are doing this type of research regarding public education, and if the findings will be shared with the Council. Ms. Stubblefield Loucks replied that it is the first time the Council has issued this type of RFP, and once the research is done, Evergreen Economics will share the results with the Council.

Chairman Powell requested a motion to approve the recommendation from the Evaluation Team. Mr. Garlick made a motion to approve the evaluation team's recommendation as is, and Mr. Cirillo seconded this motion. All approved.

*c) Discussion & Vote on 2018 EERMC Consultant Team Optional Items within Scope of Work*

Mr. Guerard gave a brief presentation on the 2018 Activities & Tasks for Supplemental Budget Consideration (please refer to slide presentation) per Council's request. In the 2018 proposed scope of work, 5 areas of "special projects" were identified as possible tasks for EERMC consideration:

1. Broaden Educational Opportunities - To supplement legislatively directed roles for the EERMC to "Promote public understanding of energy issues and of ways in which energy efficiency, energy conservation, and energy resource diversification and management can be effectuated," through support for a group of stakeholders that have begun meeting to coordinate and leverage activities to provide information on the benefits of EE to residents, business and legislators.
2. Innovation and 2019 Target True-Up - To fully vet innovation tied to approaching the 25,000 MWh "innovation" line item in the 2019 targets, additional efforts will likely be required given the continuing rapid evolution of the market for measures, program delivery options and regional/national research activities.
3. Expanding Finance Product Offerings - As part of EERMC objective to support cost-efficiency and participant equity, evolving and adding effective financing options is critical. RIIB plans to introduce a residential program that will need to align with the existing HEAT loan to achieve effective integration and avoid market confusion. Additionally, National Grid is proposing additional C&I loan options that will need to be balanced with RIIB's C-PACE product and the existing revolving loan funds.
4. Potential Study Preliminary Work - The EERMC's proposed overall budget for 2018 includes a line item for \$70,000 to start developing the research and analysis that would result in an effective Achievable Potential Study to inform 2021-2023 targets. This supplements ~\$185,000 National Grid will spend in 2018 for primary data collection for the potential study. A plan to support the sequencing and launch of the potential study is required to meet the deadline of early 2020 for completion.
5. National Grid Rate Case, Docket #4770/4780 - The two dockets before the PUC will have wide ranging impacts on energy supply and distribution costs, and will likely have impact on LCP objectives, especially performance incentives and low-income rates/services. Monitoring the range of impacts, and supporting input from OER and the Division (interveners in the dockets) would be a valuable activity to support the interests of the EERMC, as was done in the past on Docket #4600.

Ms. Stubblefield Loucks stated that these items seem to be a lot of work, and asked if Mr. Guerard has enough staff to handle the tasks. Mr. Guerard replied that they have a team built to deliver on this. Mr. Osada asked what their approach is on pursuing the 25,000MWh innovation line item for 2019. Mr. Guerard stated that all the tasks and efforts they are working on will help towards identifying those savings and developing plans for them in 2019 IF they can be cost-effectively achieved. He noted all these efforts are working to find ways to help Rhode Islanders save more energy, and ideally get as close to the 25,000MWh as possible. Ms. Henschel added that by working on these items, it will give them experience about new initiatives, as well as add to what the team already knows, and in bringing it all together, it will help to make sure they can deliver more savings to their customers.

Chairman Powell requested a motion to approve the Consultant Team Optional Items. Ms. Verrengia made a motion to approve the Consultant Team’s proposed Optional Items as described in their Scope of Work, and Mr. Magliocchetti seconded this motion. All approved.

*d) Discussion on Policy Recommendations for the 2018 EERMC Annual Report*

Ms. Trietch highlighted the 2018 Policy Recommendations (please refer to 2018 Policy Recommendations document). Ms. Henschel believes recommendation #1 is the most important one, and makes a clear statement about how important preserving the Least-Cost Procurement law is. Mr. Osada disagrees with Ms. Henschel statement. He noted his disagreement is because the definition of the cost of energy efficiency was changed, therefore he believes, in some cases a budget cap may be appropriate for energy efficiency programs. He requested that the reference to budget caps be removed from recommendation #1. Chairman Powell added that all the Council is trying to emphasize is that every time they take a cut from our programs, they are taking a cut from ratepayers. Commissioner Grant also stated that this document isn’t telling Legislators what they can, or cannot do, it simply emphasizes that this a program that delivers savings to RI customers. Ms. Stubblefield Loucks suggested that #1 be rewritten more positively with a focus on what these programs have already achieved.

Mr. McAteer noted that these recommendations, particularity #4 is an area to keep focus on. Ms. Fagan added that she is very happy about recommendation #3, and there’s a lot of opportunity to help others.

Chairman Powell asked the Council members to send any additional changes or input to Ms. Trietch by next Thursday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**6. Council Communications & Outreach**

*a) Discussion & Vote on an Op-Ed*

Ms. Verrengia stated that the Communications Sub-group worked on putting an Op-Ed (refer to Saving Energy Saves Money document) together to help educate the public. Ms. Trietch noted that if the Council approves this document, it would go back to OER’s Communications Manager, and from there it would hopefully get issued/published by a newspaper.

Mr. Osada suggested adding “This funding comes from ratepayer energy efficiency charge” to the first paragraph of the Op-Ed. All members agreed with his suggestion.

Ms. Williamson noted that she would like to change the wording in paragraph 4, which is currently suggesting that the public shop for third-party electric suppliers. After a brief discussion amongst the members, Ms. Trietch proposed to change the language to “Explore and understand your options” and to highlight behavior change opportunities and new technologies along with shopping for third-party electricity supply. All agreed with Ms. Trietch’s suggestion.

Chairman Powell requested a motion to approve the Op-Ed. Mr. Garlick made a motion to approve the Op-Ed with the amended changes highlighted by Ms. Trietch and Mr. Osada, and to direct the Chair to sign on behalf of the Council, and OER to send the Op-Ed to Rhode Island publications sequentially until the Op-Ed is published. Ms. Verrengia seconded this motion. All approved.

*b) Discussion & Vote on a Public Education Event*

Ms. Trietch gave a brief overview of some ideas for the Public Education Event (please refer to Public Education Event document). She asked the Council to review the proposal and approve up to \$4,000 for its funding.

Chairman Powell requested a motion to approve the proposal and to allocate up to \$4,000 to this event. Ms. Verrengia made a motion to approve the request for allocating Public Education funds as described in the Public Education Event document. Mr. Bacon seconded this motion. All approved.

## **7. Special Topic (Originally Topic #8)**

### *a) Codes Presentation*

Ms. Trietch gave a presentation on Rhode Island Stretch Codes, which explained why RI developed Stretch Codes, how the documents will help the State, and how the EE programs supported and will continue to work with the Stretch Codes.

Kevin Rose provided an update on National Grid's Code Compliance Enhancement Initiative (CCEI), including CCEI Savings Summary and opportunities, and summarized two new evaluation studies on new construction that will be posted to the EERMC website very soon.

## **8. National Grid (Originally Topic #7)**

### *a) National Grid Presentation on 2017 Quarter 4 Report: Energy Efficiency Programs*

John Richards reviewed the 2017 Quarter 4 Electric and Gas Sector Results. Matt Ray followed by giving an overview of the Residential Highlights in Q4 2017 which included the Community- Based Initiatives, Income-Eligible Single and Multifamily, and *EnergyWise*. Mr. Osada asked Mr. Ray how many people participated in the *EnergyWise* program during 2017. Mr. Ray did not have an exact number, but will provide that information for next time.

Mona Chandra reviewed the Commercial Highlights, which included the C&I End of Year Preliminary Overview, Small Business Direct Install Project and C&I Pilots in 2018. Mr. Osada expressed that he wants to see a trend to compare the C&I savings with previous quarters and the past few years. Commissioner Grant stated that this presentation is focused on the Quarter 4 results, thus the reason they are not comparing all the previous quarters/years. Those comparisons will be available in the year-end report later this year.

## **9. Public Comment**

Brad Hevenor from the Appraisal Institute: RI Chapter introduced himself, and thanked the Council for approving funds at during January's meeting to help with energy education for Appraisers.

## **10. Adjournment**

Chairman Powell requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Verrengia made a motion to adjourn; Mr. Cirillo seconded the motion. All approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:34PM.