



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

ENERGY EFFICIENCY & RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

EERMC FULL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, December 12, 2019 | 3:30 - 5:30 PM

Conference Room A, 2nd Floor, Department of Administration, Providence, RI

Members in attendance: Anthony Hubbard, Karen Verrengia, Butch Roberts, Kurt Teichert, Peter Gill Case, Joe Garlick, Bob White, Carol Grant

Others Present: Nick Ucci, Mike Guerard, Mark Kravatz, Becca Trietch, Nathan Cleveland, Matt Ray, Matt Chase, Chris Porter, Joel Munoz, Kai Salem, Dr. Carrie Gill, Hank Webster, Mona Chandra, Tim Roughan, Arian Caesar, Rachel Sholly, Abigail Hasenfus.

All meeting materials can be accessed here: <https://rieermc.ri.gov/meeting/eermc-meeting-december-2019/>

1. Call to Order

Vice-Chair Hubbard called the meeting to order at 3:35pm

2. Approval of Council Meeting Minutes

Vice-Chair Hubbard requested a motion to approve the November meeting minutes. Mr. Gill Case made a motion to approve November meeting minutes as written and Mr. Roberts seconded it. All Approved.

3. Executive Director Report

a) General Update

Deputy Commissioner Ucci delivered the Executive Director report, as Commissioner Grant would be joining the meeting late. He provided an update on the accounting errors identified during the development of the SRP Report for 2020 and indicated that the Council would receive a full update at January's meeting, as the process improvements the Division has been working on with National Grid will be finalized and a full debrief on the errors and process improvements can be provided. He also reiterated that the impact on the 2020 plan was very minimal.

Deputy Commissioner Ucci also wanted to highlight the Office of Energy Resources (OER) recently launched [Electrify RI program](#), which is utilizing \$1.4 Million of the settlement funds from the Volkswagen lawsuit to incentive the installation of electric vehicle charging infrastructure across the State. In just under two months' time 30% of the available funds have been committed and 30 stations will be deployed (24 level II and 6 DC fast charging stations).

He also pointed out that tomorrow OER and the Division will be hosting the first of several Heating Sector Transformation workshops tomorrow at 10am and if anyone hasn't RSVPed that wants to attend, to please let him know so he can add you to the list.

Lastly, Deputy Commissioner Ucci mentioned that several Council seats will be up for reappointment in 2020 and in addition to discussing those seats, we will be working on filling the vacancy from the recent resignation of Ms. Stubblefield Loucks.

4. Chairperson Report (items 1-4: 10 mins, 3:30 - 3:40pm)

a) General Update

Vice-Chair Hubbard began by requesting a motion to adjust the agenda for today's meeting due to a presenter being stuck in traffic, and to move Agenda item 5a. *Workforce Development Update* until after item 6 on the agenda. Ms. Verrengia made a motion to adjust the agenda as suggested and Mr. Gill Case seconded it. All Approved.

He then asked the Council's consultant team to provide an update on the recent Public Utilities Commission (PUC) hearings on the energy efficiency and system reliability procurement plans.

Mr. Guerard gave an overview of the main topics that the PUC questioned National Grid and other witnesses on, which were: the SRP and other accounting errors, the Efficiency Buildings Fund and financing programs more broadly, Combined Heat and Power process updates, and heating electrification.

Vice-Chair Hubbard then gave an overview of the remaining agenda for the meeting and made a note for Council members that in their meeting packets was a summary of the 2019 Technical Working group meetings. While it is not a formal agenda item for today, the Council had committed to making a recap of the content of those meetings a part of the public record hence they are included as a meeting material.

5. Program Oversight (25 min, 3:40 - 4:15 pm)

a) Review Overall Process for 2020 (10 min, 3:55 - 4:05pm)

Please refer to the [2020 Schedule and Deliverables](#) presentation.

Mr. Kravatz provided a brief overview of the Least Cost Procurement standards, the three-year planning process and the target setting process which will all be part of the Council's work in 2020. He highlighted how the market potential study will help inform the target setting process, which will help provide guideposts for the three-year planning process and the 2021 annual plan development. He then highlighted the key meeting dates and votes the Council will need to make in 2020 to adhere to this tight schedule, including the time carved out for Council review of key documents in advance of meetings/votes.

Mr. Gill Case asked if and when the lifetime vs. annual savings conversation would be revisited after being shelved in the 2020 process. Mr. Kravatz indicated that this would be addressed through the revision of the Standard and the setting of targets. Mr. Teichert inquired as to what level of involvement the PUC has in this process and if it was just once they were asked to rule on things. Mr. Kravatz informed the Council that everything they vote on would follow a similar filing process to the annual plan they just completed, but that we would also be requesting some technical sessions with the Commission in early 2020 to have substantive conversations and get guidance on some of these issues.

6. Special Topics (15 min, 4:05 - 4:20 pm)

a) Summary of Council Public Education Efforts in 2019 & Presentation on Farm Energy Fellow Work (15 min, 4:05 - 4:20pm)

Please refer to the [Public Education Efforts in 2019](#) presentation.

Ms. Sholly provided an update to the Council on the various public education efforts undertaken during the Course of 2019. There were three main initiatives discussed: the Education Needs Assessment, the EERMC Public Forum event on workforce needs, and the URI Energy Lecture Series.

Ms. Sholly went over the results of the needs assessment conducted by Evergreen Economics and the identified areas of need and communications strategies to employ to reach these different constituencies.

She also provided a recap of the public forum held in October on Building Rhode Island's Workforce with Energy Efficiency Programs. There was a keynote address by Carolyn Sarno from Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships followed by two panels, one on jobs in energy efficiency and one on industry innovation in the energy space. She reported that the event was well attended, with people from many sectors of the economy represented and that the majority would recommend a future event to a friend or colleague.

Mr. Gill case asked if any notes, video, or slides from the event were available for those unable to attend and Mr. Cleveland indicated that one of National Grid's interns was taking notes during the event, to which Mr. Ray indicated he would try to track those down and share with the Council.

Ms. Sholly then concluded by reviewing the Plugged Into Energy Research (PIER) lecture series, which recently took place over two nights at the University of Rhode Island. The event was well attended both evenings, with 60-70 attendees each night, and the speakers did a good job of engaging with the audience and covering a wide variety of energy topics, also indicating that slides from the speakers would be available for those unable to attend in person.

Please refer to the [Promoting Clean Farm Energy Development in Rhode Island](#) presentation.

Ms. Hasenfus then provided a look into the outreach work she conducted within the agricultural community during her 2019 Fellowship. She reviewed the existing outreach process and the changes/improvements she made in 2019, including building out a social media presence and developing several resources and conducting a number of interviews. Ms. Hasenfus then reviewed the measurable impacts those efforts had and showed a short video interview she helped create highlighting the success of the farm energy grant program.

b) *[Previously agenda item 5a] National Grid Presentation on Workforce Development (15 min, 3:40 – 3:55pm)*

Please refer to the [Workforce Development in Rhode Island through Energy Efficiency](#) presentation.

Mr. Porter illustrated why workforce development was important to National Grid and how it was critical to them being able to achieve their goals, as well as the goals of this Council. He then highlighted the four core areas in the 2020 efficiency plan in which they were supporting and investing in workforce development. He also asked in what areas the Council felt there was significant opportunity for them to engage in this space.

Vice-Chair Hubbard asked in the Building Operator Certification level 1 training was the only entry level training opportunity the Company was supporting, to which Mr. Porter replied that it was.

Mr. Gill Case then inquired what dollar amounts were being allocated to support those four core proposals in 2020 and what participation levels and reporting was in place for those

efforts. Ms. Chandra indicated that the plan outlines in more detail the expected number of participants or number of trainings that National Grid is proposing to support, and the dollars earmarked to support those efforts. Mr. Gill Case then followed up by asking what the target audiences were for these training efforts – youth? Income eligible ratepayers? Delivered fuels customers? Vice-Chair Hubbard suggested that in the interest of time that National Grid and interested Council members have a follow up meeting to discuss some of these strategies in more detail and asked Mr. Guerard and the consultant team to coordinate that.

7. Council Business (50 min, 4:20 – 5:30 pm)

a) Overview & Discussion of the Standards (15 min, 4:20-4:35pm)

Please refer to the [Standards and Potential Study Update](#) presentation.

Mr. Guerard followed up Mr. Kravatz's earlier overview of the Least Cost Procurement Standards document with some more depth, covering the previous iterations of the Standards updating process and the changes that were brought forth through those efforts. He also reiterated the schedule for not only when the Council would need to vote on the suggested changes to the Standards but also the process for how stakeholders will be engaged in providing input to this process. He then provided some suggestions for areas in which updates to the Standards could be made, for both energy efficiency and system reliability procurement.

b) Overview & Discussion of the Target-Setting Process (15 min, 4:35-4:50pm)

Please refer to the [Standards and Potential Study Update](#) presentation.

Mr. Guerard then provided more depth on the Target setting process and how critical the potential study results would be in helping guide that process. He also provided Council members with a few key questions that will need to be wrestled with as they consider how to set the targets, including lifetime vs. annual savings targets and how to think about MMBtu goals, as well as deciding where exactly the targets should be set between the Program Achievable and Maximum Achievable levels the potential study will provide.

c) Council Discussion & Vote on a Workplan for 2020 Consultant Services (10 min, 4:50 – 5:00pm)

Please refer to the [Consultant Team Scope of Work](#) document.

Mr. Guerard briefly reviewed the scope of work document for 2020, including how some of the late 2019 work they had been planning on was cancelled and now will be moved to early 2020, which has a minor budget impact.

Ms. Verrengia made a motion to approve the consultant team work plan as written, which Mr. Garlick seconded. All approved.

d) Council Discussion & Vote on a Proposed 2020 Council Budget (10 min, 5:00 – 5:10pm)

Please refer to the [Proposed EERMC 2020 Budget](#) document.

Ms. Trietch reviewed the overall 2020 proposed budget, including walking through each of the line items and the rationale supporting the dollar amount allocated to each of them.

Mr. Garlick made a motion to approve the proposed 2020 budget as written, which Ms. Verrengia seconded. All approved.

e) *Council Discussion & Vote on Proposed 2020 EERMC Meeting Dates (10 min, 5:10 – 5:20pm)*

Please refer to the [Proposed 2020 EERMC Meeting Dates](#) document.

Ms. Trietch reviewed the proposed 2020 meeting calendar with the Council, indicating that it did not change from the November draft that was circulated.

Mr. White asked if the annual retreat was on this calendar and if it was a full meeting. Mr. Kravatz indicated that it was not only this calendar, as they work to schedule it at a time that all Council members can attend and also coordinate with a venue, but that it is an open meeting. He also indicated that the January Executive Committee meeting is open to all members but that only the Chair and Vice-Chair are required to attend.

Ms. Verrengia made a motion to accept the 2020 Meeting dates as written, which Mr. Gill Case seconded. All Approved.

8. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

9. Adjournment

Vice-Chair Hubbard called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. White made a motion to adjourn, which Mr. Teichert seconded. All Approved and the meeting was adjourned at 5:35pm.