



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

EERMC FULL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, May 19, 2022

Full Council Meeting | 3:00 – 5:00 PM

Department of Administration Conference Room 2B, Providence, RI 02908 with additional audio/video participation available through Zoom

Members in Attendance: Peter Gill Case, Commissioner Nicholas Ucci, Sue AnderBois, Tom Magliochetti, Karen Verrengia (arrived at 3:26)

Others in Attendance: Adrian Caesar, Craig Johnson, Steven Chybowski, Carrie Gill, Kate Grant, Brett Feldman, Jessica Darling, Nelson DiBiase, Sam Ross, Mal Skowron, Maggie Hogan, Karen Bradbury, Jesse Duroha, Matt Chase, Rachel Calabro, Josh Kessler, Rachel Sholly

All meeting materials can be accessed at: <https://rieermc.ri.gov/meeting/eermc-meeting-may-2022/>

1. Call to Order

Acting Vice Chair Gill Case informally called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m. Acting Vice Chair Gill Case noted that the Council did not yet have a quorum and therefore would not hold any votes unless and until a quorum is achieved.

2. Executive Director Report

Commissioner Ucci updated the Council that the Senate Environment and Agriculture Committee unanimously approved all Council member appointments, who will next go through a vote of the full Senate.

Commissioner Ucci thanked Karen Verrengia for her years of service, commitment to the Council, and service to energy efficiency! Thank you, Karen!

Commissioner Ucci described the process for nominating Chair and Vice Chair of the Council, and hoped for a further update in June.

Commissioner Ucci reminded the Council of the upcoming Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council Advisory Board meeting (for more information: www.climatechange.ri.gov) and the public comment period on the DRIVE electric vehicle rebate program, which concludes on May 22 (for more information (www.drive.ri.gov)).

3. Acting Chair Report

Acting Chair Gill Case noted attendees are able to join this meeting virtually as well and reviewed the agenda and where Council members and attendees could find meeting materials (www.rieermc.ri.gov).

Acting Chair Gill Case solicited volunteers from the Council to serve at the technical review team for the two education RFPs that were issued after last month's Council meeting. Acting Chair Gill Case volunteered.

4. Meeting Minutes – [April 27, 2022](#)

Tabled due to lack of quorum.

5. Program Oversight (25 Minutes, 3:05 – 3:30 p.m.)

a) [Presentation of 2022 Q1 Energy Efficiency Programming](#) (15 minutes, 3:05-3:20 p.m.)

Adrian Caesar and Craig Johnson from the Consultant Team provided an update on 2022 energy efficiency programming for the first quarter of the year (see presentation).

Acting Chair Gill Case asked whether lighting savings was driving energy savings performance in 2018. Mr. Johnson confirmed lighting contributed to more claimed savings in 2018.

Commissioner Ucci asked whether today's economic pressures were preventing customers from participating in programs. Mr. Johnson concurred that costs related to supply chain issues are having an impact. Council Member Magliochetti agreed that economic pressures could attenuate participation. Commissioner Ucci advised National Grid to develop contingency plans, such as by changing incentive structures, to continue to drive participation and energy savings.

Brett Feldman from National Grid supplemented the presentation with some additional first quarter highlights (see presentation).

b) [National Grid Presentation on the 2021 System Reliability Procurement Year-End Report](#) (10 minutes, 3:20-3:30 p.m.)

Matt Chase from National Grid presented an overview of the 2021 System Reliability Procurement Year-End Report (see presentation).

Council Member AnderBois asked how members would receive the year-end report. Mr. Chase confirmed that Mr. Chybowski would email the report to Council members.

Council Member Magliochetti asked why there was no funding requested. Mr. Chase clarified that there is no funding requested because of the nature of this report being a year-end reflection; any funding requests would be associated with proposals and plans.

Council Member Magliochetti asked for additional information to compare the content and spending in System Reliability Procurement (SRP) to that in Infrastructure, Safety, and Reliability (ISR). Mr. Chase and Ms. Grant explained that non-wires solutions were proposed through SRP, while traditional upgrades to poles, wires, transformers, etc. are made through the ISR filing; and they stated that annual ISR spending is on the order of \$100M, while annual SRP spending is on the order of thousands of dollars.

Mr. Chase updated Council members that this would likely be his last meeting in his role as SRP Manager. Acting Chair Gill Case thanked him for his work and wished him luck.

6. Council Business (60 Minutes, 3:30 – 4:30 p.m.)

Acting Chair Gill Case officially called the meeting to order at 3:48 pm with a quorum.

a) Review of the [Consultant Team Services Request for Proposals](#) (15 minutes, 3:30-3:45 p.m.)

Mr. Chybowski from the Office of Energy Resources presented a draft request for proposals (RFP) for Council consultant services. Commissioner Ucci additionally noted that the RFP now references the 2021 Act on Climate and includes language about equity considerations.

Acting Chair Gill Case noted he was pleased to see reference to the 2021 Act on Climate. Acting Chair Gill Case described his concern over how to describe the number of hours required and budget required to conduct this work, suggesting perhaps the Council may include estimates of hours for each task in the RFP. Commissioner Ucci noted that information on hours required were likely findable in public spheres, and suggested the Council instead ask for a not-to-exceed budget for completing the scope of work regardless of actual hours spent.

Acting Chair Gill Case also raised the question of whether there was value in requiring an in-state presence by the selected bidder, citing the Council meets in person and Rhode Island's unique energy laws and policy as justification for requiring some in-state presence.

Council Member Verrengia concurred about compiling hours to complete tasks historically and about requiring in-state presence. Commissioner Ucci noted the balance between requiring in-state presence and achieving cost efficiency through remote engagement, and noted the Office of Energy Resources would take this back for further consideration to include explicit encouragement of at least some in-state presence.

Commissioner Ucci noted all revisions to the RFP will be redlined in the future for easy review.

Acting Chair Gill Case requested a motion to move agenda item 4 to agenda item 6.b.2. Council Member AnderBois motioned, and Council Member Verrengia seconded. All in favor, no objections or abstentions.

b) Review and Potential Vote on [Market Potential Study Refresh Request for Proposals](#) (15 minutes, 3:45-4:00 p.m.)

Mr. Chybowski from the Office of Energy Resources and Sam Ross from the Consultant Team presented a draft request for proposals (RFP) for an update to the market potential study.

Mr. Feldman noted National Grid would like to provide comprehensive comments but needs some additional time to develop those comments and requests postponing the vote until the next meeting in June. Commissioner Ucci suggested the Office of Energy Resources could work with Mr. Feldman and all commenters over the next month to address comments. Council Member AnderBois suggested the next iteration of the revised RFP be posted for Council and public review at least a week in advance of the next meeting. Mr. Chybowski confirmed this schedule. Acting Chair Gill Case recounted his conversation with Mr. Ross about the sufficiency of the proposed budget for this work.

Agenda Item 4 → 6.b.2: Meeting Minutes – April 27, 2022

Council Member AnderBois motioned to approve. Council Member Magliochetti seconded. There was no discussion. All approved, none opposed, no abstentions.

c) Review [2023 Draft EERMC Budget Proposal](#) (20 minutes, 4:00-4:20 p.m.)

Acting Chair Gill Case prefaced this agenda item with a reminder to the Council about how the Council's schedule for budgeting and planning for the subsequent year will now occur earlier as a result of guidance and requirements from the Public Utilities Commission in the most recent energy efficiency annual plan proceeding. Mr. Chybowski from the Office of Energy Resources presented the proposed 2023 Council budget.

Commissioner Ucci questioned whether the Council should budget and pay for printing Annual Reports and supported broadening this budget line item to include translation. Commissioner Ucci also clarified the timing of spending for the Market Potential Study Refresh, with that line item reflecting the full budget with the expectation that some invoicing will occur in 2023.

Mr. Ross of the Consultant Team further described each budget line item and provided some context about what energy efficiency councils in other states budget for, which includes work related to equity and climate. Commissioner Ucci suggested the Market Potential Study Refresh RFP might include work to assess and improve equity considerations. Mr. Ross said he would work with the Office of Energy Resources to add it to the RFP.

Commissioner Ucci also expressed the importance of connecting energy efficiency work with economy-wide greenhouse gas emissions reductions and noted the value of the Market Potential Study in highlighting energy savings – and emissions reduction – opportunities. Acting Chair Gill Case and Mr. Ross noted the linkage between climate mitigation, energy efficiency, and public education.

Mr. Ross asked whether there was interest from the Council in exploring market-based solutions to drive energy efficiency adoption at lower total investment cost. Mr. Ross provided two other ideas for Council work: an audit of energy efficiency management and reserving funding to support oversight of a third-party energy efficiency program manager if proposed legislation is enacted.

In response to a question from Mr. Chybowski, Mr. Ross provided more explanation about the Consultant Team's and Council's work in the year prior to the start of the three-year planning cycle.

Acting Chair Gill Case and Commissioner Ucci reminded the Council about the process by which future budget proposals will be approved by the Public Utilities Commission. Acting Chair Gill Case asked for the Office of Energy Resources to advise the Council on how to best package budget proposals. Commissioner Ucci also suggested the Council and Office of Energy Resources should look for ways to leverage external funding, if and when, available.

d) Review Draft of the 2022 EERMC Annual Report (10 minutes, 4:20-4:30 p.m.)

Ms. Sholly from the Consultant Team provided an update on the development of the 2022 EERMC Annual Report. Ms. Sholly reminded the Council they received a draft of the Annual Report last month. This year, the Public Utilities Commission granted National Grid an extension to file their year-end report, data from which is required for the EERMC Annual Report. Ms. Sholly suggested comments could still be submitted, and a revised version will be available for action at the June Council meeting.

7. Special Topic (25 Minutes, 4:30 – 4:55 p.m.)

- a) [Rhode Island Department of Health Presentation on the intersection of climate and health](#) (25 minutes, 4:30-4:55 p.m.)

Rachel Calabro from the Rhode Island Department of Health presented on the health implications caused by the changing climate and recommendations for improving the health of Rhode Islanders (see presentation).

Council Member Verrengia suggested that there may be an opportunity to account for differences in energy use behaviors by income (i.e., lower income households allow their homes to heat more before turning on air conditioning to cool) and health outcomes within energy efficiency programs. Ms. Calabro noted anecdotal evidence from the Department of Health's cooling program that access to air conditioning can also improve education outcomes for students.

Council Member Magliochetti noted economic pressures driven by inflation today exacerbating energy equity issues. Council Member Magliochetti also noted that emissions and pollution impact everyone across Rhode Island. Ms. Calabro noted that pollution from out-of-state also impacts Rhode Islanders.

Ms. Calabro also noted an upcoming Department of Health study to quantify health benefits of electric transportation in Rhode Island.

Mr. Feldman noted that the results of National Grid's nonparticipant study will be out soon.

Acting Chair Gill Case asked why there is a deficiency in air quality monitoring stations. Ms. Calabro said Rhode Island's monitoring meets the US EPA standards, but that more funding might allow for additional monitoring.

Council Member Magliochetti asked for Ms. Calabro to give the key takeaway in plain language (i.e., what is the biggest benefit of cleaner air?). Ms. Calabro linked better air quality to better student attendance and therefore higher earning potential, to more days worked and higher income, and to economic impacts of seasonal industries in Rhode Island.

8. Public Comment

None.

9. Adjournment

Council Member Magliochetti motioned to adjourn the meeting. Council Member AnderBois seconded. Acting Chair Gill Case adjourned the meeting at 5:04 pm.