



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

EERMC FULL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, January 19, 2023

Full Council Meeting | 3:00 - 5:00 PM

Department of Administration Cafeteria Conference Room, Providence, RI 02908 with additional participation via Zoom.

Members in Attendance: Harry Oakley, Peter Gill Case, Sue AnderBois, Brett Feldman, Chris Kearns, Tom Magliochetti, Bob Izzo, Kate Grant, John Santoro

Others in Attendance: Sam Ross, Steven Chybowski, William Owen, Anika Kreckel, Karen Bradbury, Hank Webster, Adrian Caesar, Craig Johnson (virtual), Josh Kessler, Michael O'Brien Crayne, Toby Ast, Spencer Lawrence, Diane Quesnelle, Nelson DiBiase (virtual), Kimberly Koriath (virtual), Angela Tuoni (virtual), Rachel Sholly (virtual), David Bradley (virtual), Katie Schibler (virtual), Samantha Caputo (virtual), Frank McMahon (virtual), Jon Erickson (virtual)

1. Call to Order

Chairperson Oakley called the meeting to order at 3:13 p.m.

2. Chair Report

Chairperson Oakley delivered the Chair report including an overview of the agenda, including topics of the market potential study data refresh, the council budget, the results of the branding and communications review committee's efforts, and 2023 priorities for special topics and LEAD sessions.

3. Executive Director Report

Mr. Chybowski delivered the Executive Director's report, updating the council on the State's request for proposals (RFP) for an administrator for the High-Efficiency Heat Pump program, efforts to fill the vacant seats on the Council, and work on the federal funding opportunities from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). He also introduced Karen Bradbury, OER's new Administrator of Energy Legislation and Programs.

4. Meeting Minutes – December 15, 2022

Vice Chair Gill Case motioned to approve the December 15th, 2022 Meeting Minutes. Council Member AnderBois seconded. All in favor, none opposed.

5. Program Oversight (40 Min, 3:10 – 3:50 p.m.)

- a. *Regulatory Updates on the 2023 Energy Efficiency Plan Docket Proceedings (20 min, 3:10 – 3:30 p.m.)*

Rhode Island Energy (RIE) and the Council's Consultant Team presented updates on the regulatory process and plan updates for the 2023 Energy Efficiency Plan. Mr. Ast of RIE shared that RIE had received 113 data requests, provided updates on the plan reallocation for the requested electric resistance heating conversions and the plan to execute that effort, the Public Utility Commission's order on the System Benefit Charge, a slight gas budget change and a spending forecast deadline of June 30th. Council discussed the electric resistance heating conversion plan. Mr. Ross presented an update on the Council's budget for 2023 and the potential of the Council's budget being restricted by the statutory budget cap. The Council discussed the history of the Council's budget and the potential implications for 2023.

b. Discussion of the Council's Priorities for the 2024-2026 Three-Year and 2024 Annual Plans (20 min, 3:30 – 3:50 p.m.)

The Council's Consultant Team led a discussion of the Council's priorities for energy efficiency programming and planning for the next Three-Year Plan and the 2024 Annual plan. Mr. Caesar and Mr. Ross presented an update on the Council's priorities and next steps for development of energy efficiency (EE) priorities into the full EE plans. The Council discussed the ordering of priorities and the Consultant Team shared feedback on the process in Massachusetts, the impact of the 2021 Act on Climate on the priorities, the schedule for priority development, the malleability of the Three-Year Plan to respond to statutory changes, the crafting of targets in the Three-Year Plan to be achievable, and the state of delivered fuels decarbonization with the potential for a future special topic presentation on the subject.

6. Council Business (45 Min, 3:50 – 4:35 p.m.)

a. Update on the Market Potential Study Data Refresh Process (10 min, 3:50 – 4:00 p.m.)

The Council's Consultant Team shared updates on the market potential study (MPS) data refresh. Mr. Ross presented the timeline of preliminary conversations with the MPS consultant and the schedule for discovery and preliminary results. The Council discussed the schedule, materials, and the C-team presented potential reallocations to the budget to fund the full scope of the study.

b. Review of the 2023 Council Budget and Potential Vote for Reallocation Adjustments (15 min, 4:00 – 4:15 p.m.)

The Council reviewed their budget for 2023 and the allocation needed to fully fund the MPS refresh. Chairperson Oakley proposed that the Council reallocates funds from the market-based solutions study to the MPS and to still plan to pursue the market-based solutions study in 2024. Vice Chair Gill Case motioned to reallocated \$68,884 from the market-based solutions line item to the MPS data refresh line item, to fully fund the MPS data refresh. Council Member AnderBois seconded. All in favor, none opposed.

c. Council Branding and Communications Proposal Recommendation and Vote (10 min, 4:15 – 4:25 p.m.)

The Technical Review Committee and the Office of Energy Resources shared the results of the scoring for the Council's branding and communications services and the Committee's recommendation for next steps in moving forward with the preferred vendor. The Council discussed priorities with the preferred vendor and set expectations for results of the vendor's work respective to the funding level allocated.

Chairperson Oakley motioned to approve the Technical Review Committee's recommendation to select Advocacy Solutions, LLC to conduct the Council's branding and communications development as described in the submitted proposal and associated work plan and to direct the Office of Energy Resources and the Council's legal counsel to prepare and execute a contract with the chosen vendor. Council Member AnderBois seconded. All in favor, none opposed.

- d. *Finalize Timeline and Potential Discussion Topics for 2023 (10 min, 4:25 – 4:35 p.m.)*
The Council's Consultant Team led a discussion regarding the Council's meeting schedule and topics of relevance for 2023. Mr. Johnson presented a schedule and overview of the EE planning schedule for the Three-Year and annual plans, and the system reliability procurement (SRP) planning timeline.

7. Special Topics (15 min, 4:35 – 4:50 p.m.)

- a. *Office of Energy Resources Presentation on Federal Funding (15 min, 4:35 – 4:50 p.m.)*
Ms. Bradbury from the Office of Energy Resources presented on the federal energy funding opportunities that the State is planning to pursue with time for Council Members to share initial thoughts and feedback on the opportunities. She presented an overview of the opportunities in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act, the nature of how the funding is administered, and the one-time nature of the funding. She outlined RIE's applications and application deadlines, OER's applications and coordination with other agencies, and the status of pending guidance from the Department of Energy. The Council discussed how funding can be applied for and administered and the role of stakeholder entities in assisting realization of benefits from the funding to the state.

8. Public Comment – Chair opened the floor to public comment.

Mr. Chybowski presented the public comment received online from Glenn Rhodes of Trinity Solar inquiring about the timeline for the 2023 Council Meeting schedule and 2023 policy recommendations be published considering the Inflation Reduction Act incentives for efficiency and job growth. Mr. Chybowski noted that the schedule has been posted to the EERMC website and that the Annual Report would be posted in the spring with the Council's policy recommendations.

Hank Webster – Acadia Center

Mr. Webster reiterated his desire to see the MPS study targets achieved and the value of the electric resistance to air source heat pump conversions, and the need to discuss the future of the energy configuration of the state.

9. Adjournment

Council Member AnderBois motioned to adjourn the meeting. Council Member Izzo seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.