

MEMO

CONSULTANT TEAM

TO: Energy Efficiency Council
FROM: EEC Consultant Team
CC: Office of Energy Resources
DATE: September 12, 2024
RE: September 12th EEC Meeting Briefing Memo



PURPOSE OF BRIEFING MEMO

The purpose of this briefing memo is to assist Councilors with digesting the many materials and decisions they may need to make at each meeting. It follows a similar format to the official meeting agenda so Councilors can follow along throughout the meeting. For each agenda item, this memo will highlight key considerations for the Council and clearly indicate what actions (if any) the Council needs to take. The Consultant Team (C-Team) has worked with the Office of Energy Resources (OER) to also incorporate the content that Councilors are used to seeing in the “Recommended Vote Language” document. This ensures the Council has a single point of reference during meetings. This memo will also note any supplemental materials that are provided, but not associated with, specific agenda items. The C-Team and OER welcome any feedback on the format and content.

6. SPECIAL TOPICS

6A. RHODE ISLAND BUILDERS ASSOCIATION HOME SHOW PRESENTATION

Key Considerations

- The Rhode Island Builders Association (RIBA) will present on outcomes from the 2024 Rhode Island Home Show and Energy Expo and will share plans for the 2025 event

Discussion Questions

- Has RIBA observed any changes in the demographics of attendees?
- What type of customer and participation data was collected this year, and what additional new or different data would be valuable to collect next year?
- How effective was the event at driving customer demand for energy efficiency services?

Council Actions

Required Vote

Potential Vote

No Vote

6B. OFFICE OF ENERGY RESOURCES PRESENTATION ON ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION BLOCK GRANT PROGRAMMING

Key Considerations

- OER will present on the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) funding provided to Rhode Island through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and share examples of projects being funded from around the state

Discussion Questions

- Which communities have not yet been awarded federal funds?
- Does OER coordinate with Rhode Island Energy on any of this projects?
- What happens if program funds are not spent by the end of 2025?
- Is there (or will there be) publicly available reporting on the use and impact of these funds?

Council Actions

Required Vote	Potential Vote	No Vote
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7. COUNCIL BUSINESS

7A. COUNCIL DISCUSSION AND VOTE ON THE 2025 DRAFT EEC BUDGET PROPOSAL

Key Considerations

- The C-Team and OER developed a budget allocation memo which provides a description of each budget item, how costs were estimated, and why it is within the Council’s statutory authority
- The Consultant Team has reduced its proposed budget allocation by \$100,000 to \$717,500 to better reflect expected needs known at this time in 2025
- URI Cooperative Extension submitted an updated Public Events & Outreach proposal with a budget that represents a decrease (from \$100,000 to \$91,250) compared to what the Council saw at its July meeting, which the Education Committee discussed during the August Education Committee Meeting
- A new item that hadn’t yet been considered may warrant some budget allocation in 2025, which would be for a portion of funding needed to begin work on the next Market Potential Study

Discussion Questions

- Do the modifications to the 2024 Proposed Budget for the Council’s 2025 Proposed Budget align with its interests and priorities?
- Does the Council need more information to support any individual item proposed in the 2025 budget?
- Given the timing of the next Three-Year Plan, does the Council want to request incremental budget and/or shift funding between 2025 budget items to support MPS procurement and vendor costs?

Council Actions

Required Vote

Potential Vote

No Vote

Recommended Vote Language

- **A motion to approve the 2025 EEC Budget Proposal:** A motion to approve the 2025 EEC Budget Proposal as presented by the Council’s Consultant Team, on September 12th, 2024, and to direct the Consultant Team to submit this budget to the utility (Rhode Island Energy) to file with the Public Utilities Commission as a part of the 2025 energy efficiency plan.
- **A motion to approve the 2025 EEC Budget Proposal, with amendments:** A motion to approve the 2025 EEC Budget Proposal as presented by the Council’s Consultant Team, on September 12th, 2024, with the following amendments *{state amendments}*, and to direct the Consultant Team to submit this budget to the utility to file with the Public Utilities Commission as a part of the 2025 energy efficiency plan.

8. PROGRAM OVERSIGHT

8A. PRESENTATION, DISCUSSION, AND POTENTIAL VOTE ON RHODE ISLAND ENERGY’S 2025 GAS DEMAND RESPONSE PILOT PROGRAM

Key Considerations

- The Company has developed a presentation on the System Reliability Procurement (SRP) investment proposal for a Winter 2024/2025 Gas Demand Response Pilot
- Objectives of the pilot are to understand the impacts of gas demand response on customers and the gas system, evaluate cost-effectiveness of gas demand response, and increase participation among commercial and industrial customers
- The proposal is a continuation of the pilot that the Council endorsed at its October 19, 2023 meeting
- A Draft of the Proposal is also included as a material

Discussion Questions

- Are there any changes proposed compared to the plan that was submitted last year?
- Does the Company have any strategies for increasing enrollment in this pilot?
- Can the Company discuss a bit more about the targeted demand program for Aquidneck Island that is referenced in the presentation?

Council Actions

Required Vote

Potential Vote

No Vote

Per Section 6.3 of the Least Cost Procurement Standards, the Council may determine its endorsement or opposition, involvement or abstention, or any other level of action related to the proposal. This essentially means the Council can take a position on the proposal, but is not required to do so.

Recommended Vote Language

- **A motion to endorse Rhode Island Energy’s 2025 Gas Demand Response Pilot Program:** A motion to endorse the Rhode Island Energy Gas Demand Response Pilot Program System Reliability Procurement Investment Proposal as presented by the Company to the Council on September 12th, 2024.
- **A motion to not endorse Rhode Island Energy’s 2025 Gas Demand Response Pilot Program:** A motion to not endorse, at this time, the Rhode Island Energy Gas Demand Response Pilot Program System Reliability Procurement Investment Proposal as presented by the Company to the Council on September 12th, 2024.

8B. RHODE ISLAND ENERGY PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE UPDATED DRAFT OF THE 2025 ENERGY EFFICIENCY PLAN

Key Considerations

- This presentation covers information on the final draft of the 2025 EE Plan, including sector-level budgets
- The presentation covers some notable updates to program details
- It also includes some information on Equity Working Group related activities

Discussion Questions

- What (if any) changes will the Company be making before filing the Plan with the PUC?
- What is driving the slight reductions in budgets for the electric residential and commercial and industrial sectors compared to second draft in August?
- What is driving the slight increase in budget for the gas commercial and industrial sector compared to the second draft in August?

Council Actions

Required Vote	Potential Vote	No Vote
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8C. CONSULTANT TEAM PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE UPDATED DRAFT OF THE 2025 ENERGY EFFICIENCY PLAN

Key Considerations

- The Consultant Team presentation is primarily focused on covering its assessment of responsiveness to the Council’s priorities for the 2025 EE Plan

- For each of the Council’s eleven priorities, the C-Team has provided some key takeaways to assist the Council in assessing responsiveness
- The presentation also tees up next steps, including a preview of the Council’s vote on the 2025 Plan at its next meeting on September 26th

Discussion Questions

- What additional information does the Council need to determine whether or not to endorse the 2025 Plan?
- What is the Consultant Team’s biggest concern(s) with the final draft of the 2025 Plan?
- What is the Consultant Team’s assessment of the 2025 Plan’s responsiveness to the Council’s priorities?

Council Actions

Required Vote

Potential Vote

No Vote

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

MONTHLY DATA SNAPSHOT

The Company’s process for transitioning from its legacy data-reporting systems to its new one is continuing to take longer than initially expected. The C-Team will begin distributing Monthly Data Snapshots to the Councilors again as soon as possible once the Company’s data reporting system transition is complete.

EE BUDGET TRACKER

OER has provided an update to the Council’s budget tracker.

COUNCIL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Consultant Team has provided an update to the Council’s Calendar of Events which includes meeting dates, topics, and milestones for planning activities related to the 2025 EE Plan.

INITIAL DRAFT OF SEPTEMBER 26TH COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

An initial draft of the September 26th Council meeting agenda is included. Councilors are welcome to share any feedback.

COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

The Consultant Team will be providing a September iteration of the Newsletter to the Council. The purpose of the Newsletter is to keep Councilors apprised of activities and developments that are relevant to the Council’s interests, but that may not be able to be covered as topics on Council meeting

agendas. The Newsletter covers a wide variety of topics such as updates on Future of Gas Docket proceedings, Equity Working Group and Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4) meetings, relevant regional energy news, and upcoming energy events. This will be available in time for the September 12th meeting, and will also be posted for the second September meeting on the 26th.