



# FULL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, March 21, 2024 | 3:00 - 5:00 PM

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## EEC Full Council Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 21, 2024 | 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Department of Administration, Conference Room 2A, RI 02908 with remote participation via Zoom.

**Members in Attendance:** Harry Oakley, Peter Gill Case, Susan AnderBois, Bob Izzo (arrived at 3:22 p.m.), Kurt Teichert, Priscilla De La Cruz, Chris Kearns, Brett Feldman, Joe Garlick, Dave Caldwell (departed at 4:15 p.m.), Tom Magliocchetti

**Others in Attendance:** Steven Chybowski, Carrie Gill, Craig Johnson, Sam Ross, Mark Siegal, Brendan Dagher, Jessica Reno, Spencer Lawrence, Mark Kravitz, Karen Bradbury, Kaeley Skakalski, Alison Donovan, Georgia Cheney (virtual), Rachel Sholly (virtual), Allison Archambault (virtual), Emily Ferrara (virtual), Daniel Tukey (virtual), Ann Clarke (virtual), Nancy Chafetz (virtual), Michael O'Brien Crayne (virtual), Sara Sultan (virtual), Nelson DiBiase (virtual), Karen Latta (virtual), Hillary Lima (virtual), Elizabeth Oke (virtual), Seth Gordon (virtual), Mar Bedoya (virtual)

### 1. Call to Order

Chair Oakley called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

### 2. Chair Report

Chair Oakley opened the meeting with meeting expectations including that any comments made by the public must be made during the Public Comment period and he provided instructions for virtual participants to provide their comments. The Council was then provided with updates noting that Council Member De La Cruz and Vice Chair Gill Case will be working with the Office of Energy Resources to review the State Energy Efficiency administrator request for proposals. The Council is currently in the process of procuring a legal services vendor for when the existing contract expires. Vice Chair Gill Case added his appreciation for the new meeting memos prepared by the Council's Consultant Team.

### 3. Executive Director Report

Acting Commissioner Kearns reported out to the Council on some of the current projects from the Office of Energy Resources (OER). First, Rhode Island Commerce Cooperation launched the Rhode Island Rebounds energy efficiency grant program which provides up to \$10,000 to small businesses for energy efficiency improvement measures. The new EEC website domain is making



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progress and may be completed and launched by the Home Show. The Rhode Island Home Show and Energy Expo will be held April 4<sup>th</sup> through 7<sup>th</sup> at the Providence Convention Center.

OER is now accepting nominations for its Lead by Example Clean Energy Awards. Any clean energy project in a public facility can be nominated and nominations are due by March 29<sup>th</sup>. Also, IOER and the Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank will be accepting applications for the Efficient Buildings Fund for energy projects through May 10<sup>th</sup>. Finally, OER is continuing to work on getting Council Members DOA Badges. Mr. Chybowski will be following up with Council Members on next steps.

#### 4. Meeting Minutes – February 15, 2024

Chair Oakley motioned to approve the February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, Meeting Minutes. Council Member AnderBois seconded. All in favor, none opposed, and the February Meeting Minutes were approved.

#### 5. Program Oversight

##### a. *Presentation and Discussion of 2023 end-of-year Program Performance*

The Council's Consultant Team and Rhode Island Energy presented on program performance for the fourth quarter of 2023 and the program's results for the year. The Consultant Team reviewed data on Single-family and Multi-family uptake in appliances, heat pumps, HVAC installs, and weatherization across the state. Rhode Island Energy presented on their 2023 electric portfolio goal results and the weatherization program. Lighting still accounts for a lot of commercial and industrial savings, and multifamily gas programming exceeded its goal for the first time in years.

Council Member AnderBois asked about the high-cost infrastructure upgrades needed for further electrification such as transformer upgrades, plans in place to address those barriers, and if there are incentives available. Dr. Gill of Rhode Island Energy answered this question by stating that transformers would be replaced once the load on the system appears. These matters are addressed through infrastructure, safety, and reliability plans and Rhode Island Energy is accommodating the electrification process, but the policy planning and stakeholder processes help determine the rate at these upgrades are made.

##### b. *Discussion and Potential Vote on Council Priorities for the 2025 Program Year*

The Council's Consultant Team lead a discussion on the Council's programmatic priorities for the 2025 energy efficiency program year. This included an overview of the proposed 2025 priorities and a reminder of the 2024 priorities. Chair Oakley motioned to approve the program priorities for the 2025 energy efficiency program year as presented by the



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Consultant Team on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024. Vice Chair Gill Case seconded. All in favor, none opposed.

***c. Discussion and Potential Vote on Council Comments for the 2024-2026 Connected Solutions Program Plan Proposal***

The Council's Consultant Team led a discussion on the Connected Solutions docket proceedings. Mr. Ross presented the PUC Docket schedule, a brief summary of the Connected Solutions plan proposal, and suggested testimony the Council could make. Council Member De La Cruz recommended that the Council should submit testimony to the PUC. Council Member AnderBois agreed and hopes that by listening to the public in the recent EEC meetings there will be more future public participation in EEC meetings. Chair Oakley motioned to approve the content of the testimony presented by the Consultant Team and to direct the Consultant Team to enter the intervener testimony in Docket 24-06-EE. Council Member De La Cruz seconded. All in favor, none opposed.

### **6. Council Business**

***a. Presentation and Discussion of the Future of Gas Docket***

The Council's Consultant Team summarized the docket proceedings to date. A Technical Analysis Report and Policy Development Report will be created as a result of this Docket. The Council is represented by Chair Oakley and the Consultant Team at the docket sessions. Council Member AnderBois is also involved in the Docket representing the Nature Conservancy and OER has staff members involved too. Stakeholder meetings are currently being scheduled through June for the Docket.

***b. Discussion and Vote on the Council Review Committee's Recommendation for the Energy Efficiency and Climate Public Awareness Campaign Proposals***

The Council's Review Committee, composed of Vice Chair Gill Case, Council Member De La Cruz, and Council Member Garlick shared their scoring and recommendation for a vendor to conduct the Council's Energy Efficiency and Climate Public Awareness Campaign. The request for proposals was re-issued January 29, 2024 and six proposals were received and scored by the Review Committee. The Review Committee felt there was consensus that Pivot Path was the best vendor and proposal for the Energy Efficiency and Climate Public Awareness Campaign. Council Member AnderBois motioned to approve Pivot Path to implement the Energy Efficiency and Climate Public Awareness Campaign and direct the Office of Energy Resources and legal counsel to execute a contract with the approved vendor. Council member Teichert seconded. All in favor, none opposed.



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**c. *Discussion of the Council's 2024 Annual Report and Policy Recommendations***

The Consultant Team and the Office of Energy Resources provided updates on the development of the 2024 EERMC Annual Report and the Council's proposed policy recommendations. Ms. Sholly updated the Council on the Annual Report process, reviewed the 2023 Policy Recommendations, and notified members of the drafted report timeline.

**7. Public Comment**

None.

**8. Adjournment**

Chair Oakley adjourned the meeting at 4:57 p.m.