



# FULL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, April 16, 2026 | 3:00 - 5:00 PM

Department of Administration Conference Room 2B, Providence, RI 02908

With public participation available via Zoom.

**Members in attendance:** Harry Oakley, Peter Gill Case, Joe Garlick, Chris Kearns, Dr. Carrie Gill, Brett Feldman, Priscilla De La Cruz (3:20 PM)

**Others in attendance:** Craig Johnson, Josh Cornell, David Augustyn, Mark Seigel, Katie Critelli, Emily Koo, Brendan Dagher, Atticus Makuch, Theo Smith, Sam Ross, Claire Williams, Rachel Sholly (3:30 PM), Adrian Caesar (virtual), Jordan Galluzzo (virtual), Toby Ast (virtual), Jeanne Cherry (virtual), Spencer Lawrence (virtual), Jeremy Newberger (virtual), Leigh Edie (virtual), Ann Clarke (virtual), Kristin Dupre (virtual), Ann Clarke (virtual), Steven Chybowski (virtual), Yiran He (virtual)

## 1. Call to Order

Chair Oakley called the meeting to order at 3:06 PM.

## 2. Chair Report

Chair Oakley provided instructions on how to make public comments and outlined the meeting agenda.

## 3. Executive Director Report

Acting Commissioner Kearns, of the Office of Energy Resources, spoke about the Home Show and stated that the Rhode Island Builders Association will review the show results at an upcoming EEC meeting. He then shared updates on energy programs, including NEHPA, (a \$35 million heat pump accelerator program), the launch of the state's first energy storage rebate program, OER's preparations to launch the retail pathway of the HEAR program and the clean transportation programs. Acting Commissioner Kearns noted that the transportation programs, particularly in the EV and e-bike rebate programs, continue to be very active, and that OER's Lead by Example team is engaged on over 160 energy projects.

## 4. Meeting Minutes – March 19, 2026

The Energy Efficiency Council did not reach a quorum of their voting members; Chair Oakley stated that the minutes will be voted on at an upcoming meeting. The meeting continued as an informational meeting.

## 5. Public Comment

None.

## 6. Council Business

### a. *Presentation and Discussion of 2025 Energy Efficiency Program Performance*

Mr. Caesar outlined the Consultant Team's presentation and the key takeaways that focused on the commercial and industrial (C&I) sectors. One of these key takeaways was that traditional energy efficiency measures were maturing in their impact on savings. His presentation slides shared the results of the electric sector and gas sector energy efficiency programs.

Mr. Seigel of Rhode Island Energy compared electric C&I performance results for 2024 to 2025 actuals and the estimated 2026 planned performance. The presentation slides also displayed the 2025 planned and 2025 actuals for electric C&I performance costs, and Mr. Seigel shared the difference in savings. He explained that they started an opportunity study last year to inform the 2027-2029 plan.

Mr. Caesar, then, presented the gas sector performance results. He noted diminishing savings from measures such as boilers and water heaters. Mr. Siegel commented that RIE has been developing products and offerings to better achieve savings.

Chair Oakley spoke about directing focus towards the measure that is producing the most lifetime savings which in this case is HVAC insulation.

**b. *Rhode Island Energy 2027-2029 Energy Efficiency Plan Outline Memo Presentation***

Mr. Ast shared that RIE submitted the plan outline memo and that the public comment period is open until April 30<sup>th</sup>. The first draft of the plan will be delivered on July 1<sup>st</sup>, and the plan will be submitted to the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) on October 1<sup>st</sup>. Affordability is a central theme of this first three-year binding plan. He reiterated a key part of the Consultant Team's presentation that traditional savings are maturing; so the plan is looking to other ways to optimize savings. RIE is working with Clean Heat RI, Commerce RI, GHHI and ACEEE.

Acting Commissioner Kearns mentioned some federally funded programs such as Clean Heat RI, HEAR, HER and the Heat Pump Accelerator. In reply, Mr. Ast spoke about leveraging those funds to provide the most benefits in the most accessible way to participants.

Mr. Ast reported that the plan's priorities are as follows: cost effective investments, data-driven targeting, equitable participation and customer experience.

Chair Oakley commended RIE on having priorities that are in line with what he expects the EEC's priorities to be. He suggested reaching out to technology companies for consultation on new technologies and high-efficiency equipment.

Vice Chair Gill Case spoke about the difference in a one- and three-year plan, in that he's concerned about having a forecast that is too focused on short-term responses.

**7. Council Business**

**a. *Discussion and Potential Vote on Council Efficiency Plan Priorities***

Mr. Johnson, Senior Consultant of the Consultant Team, summarized the content of his prepared presentation to provide more time for discussion. He spoke about previous priorities being too big and not specific enough. Chair Oakley felt that there is an opportunity to specify priorities along with opportunities in the demand response (DR) space. Dr. Gill spoke about how specificity is actionable and suggested focusing on the vision for the end of three years. The Council discussed having a 'vision statement.' The Council discussed the importance of the customer understanding the charges on the bill and what those funds provide for the customer. Council Member De La Cruz suggested focusing priorities on the targeted audience. Council Member Gill Case warned against setting priorities that are too vague and suggested creating a task force.

**b. *Discussion of the Council's 2026 Annual Report***

On behalf of the Consultant Team, Ms. Sholly stated that the Council is required to submit an annual report. She asked for the Council's input on structure and content, planning for a draft to be presented and potentially voted on during the May EEC meeting. Council Member De La Cruz suggested thinking about how to have a dialogue with policymakers since the annual report is mandated by statute. Dr. Gill suggested changing the aesthetics of the new annual report slightly so that it is recognized as a new one. Chair Oakley suggested adding something about the challenges the Council is facing along with the successes.

**c. *Planning Discussion for 2026 LEAD Sessions***

Ms. Sholly proposed dates for the LEAD Sessions: Monday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, Monday October 26<sup>th</sup>. She shared past topics and possible 2026 topics. Council Member De La Cruz expressed interest in the Green and Healthy Homes Initiative presenting on their work removing pre-weatherization barriers. Council Member Gill Case asked about filming these projects. Acting Commissioner Kearns mentioned that OER could potentially assist with stakeholders in obtaining before and after pictures for energy efficiency projects and providing those pictures to the Council. Council members also discussed changes to the structure of EEC meetings as a potential meeting topic.

**8. Public Comment**

Emily Koo, *The Acadia Center*

Ms. Koo asked about customer engagement as a result of the Providence benchmarking program. She suggested setting specific goals such as a specific amount of load reduction. She also suggested including data graphs for legislative sessions.

**9. Adjournment**

Chair Oakley adjourned the meeting at 5:03 pm