

# MEMO

## CONSULTANT TEAM

**TO:** Energy Efficiency Council  
**FROM:** EEC Consultant Team  
**DATE:** June 18, 2026  
**RE:** Opportunities for Council Improvements Summary



## INTRODUCTION

The Energy Efficiency Council<sup>1</sup> (EEC or “the Council”) discussed at its Learning, Education, and Advancement Discussion (LEAD) Session meeting on June 8, 2026 opportunities for improving its processes and effectiveness. The core theme of the discussion revolved around the Council wanting to use its limited meeting time (~2 hours per month) much more effectively by shifting from passive presentations to active, focused, and decision-oriented discussion.

This memo is intended to briefly summarize the key challenges identified, priority areas for improvement, guiding principles, and initial ideas for implementing next steps.

## CURRENT CHALLENGES

### OVER-RELIANCE ON PRESENTATIONS

- Meetings are dominated by presentations (~75% of time), limiting meaningful engagement.
- Non-presentation materials often repeat slide content rather than enabling discussion.
- Additional clarity is needed on what input or decisions are being requested from Councilors.

### LIMITED TIME AND PREPARATION CONSTRAINTS

Given that most Council members participate on a voluntary basis, time constraints create challenges for both preparation and engagement.

- Council members are primarily volunteers with limited bandwidth.
- There is no consistent baseline for pre-meeting preparation or expectations.
- Briefing memos exist but are underutilized as tools to streamline meetings.

### LACK OF FOCUS AND STRUCTURE

Meeting agendas do not consistently establish clear priorities or intended outcomes, which can reduce overall effectiveness.

- Meetings do not consistently define clear objectives or desired outputs.

---

<sup>1</sup> All materials associated with the Energy Efficiency Council are the work of the “Energy Efficiency and Resource Management Council” and any public meeting materials posted on the RI Secretary of State website should be searched using that title.

- Discussions fluctuate between high-level and detailed topics without a clear strategy.
- Some discussions feel rushed or remain at a “101-level”, limiting depth.

### **INCONSISTENT UNDERSTANDING OF CORE CONCEPTS**

Differences in how Councilors interpret key concepts can make it difficult to align priorities and recommendations.

- Varied perspectives on energy efficiency, including differences between benefits-based framing vs. return-on-investment and ratepayer impact.
- This can lead to misalignment in discussions and priorities.

### **PRIORITY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

#### **REDESIGN MEETING STRUCTURE**

Improving how meeting time is allocated will be critical to increasing productivity and engagement.

- Rebalance meetings toward ~75% Council discussion and 25% presentation.
- Use briefing memos more effectively to convey background information in advance.
- Clearly define for each agenda item what input is needed from Councilors and what outcomes or decisions are expected

#### **INCREASE FOCUS AND DEPTH**

A more intentional approach to topic selection and discussion depth will enable more meaningful contributions.

- Adopt a “deep and narrow” approach—prioritizing a few key issues per meeting.
- Focus on areas within Council control, such as underperforming programs, implementation challenges, and lessons learned.
- Consider multi-meeting arcs to allow deeper exploration of complex issues across multiple meetings.

#### **STRENGTHEN COUNCILOR EXPECTATIONS AND ONBOARDING**

Clarifying expectations and improving onboarding will help ensure all members are prepared to participate effectively.

- Establish clear expectations for preparation (e.g., review of briefing materials) and participation and engagement.
- Enhance onboarding through orientation to Council roles and energy efficiency basics and pre-meeting sessions with technical consultants and Council leadership.
- Consider whether updates to Council by-laws or formal expectations are needed.

#### **IMPROVE FACILITATION AND ENGAGEMENT**

More active facilitation can help guide discussions, maintain focus, and increase participation from all members.

- Shift toward more actively facilitated meetings, including a stronger role for the Chair in guiding discussion and intervening when discussions are too basic or unfocused
- Consider rotating facilitation roles among Councilors and calling on members based on areas of expertise (i.e. the seat they serve on the Council)

### **INCORPORATE EXTERNAL CONTEXT AND EXPERTISE**

Providing additional context and outside perspectives can strengthen the quality and relevance of Council discussions.

- Bring in outside experts (e.g., ACEEE, NEEP, RAP) to inform discussions.
- Provide more context on state and national trends.
- Utilize scenario planning and practical examples to ground discussions.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

These principles can serve as a foundation for improving how the Council operates and prioritizes its work.

- Focus on what the Council can control
- Prioritize depth over breadth (“deep and narrow”)
- Emphasize clear outcomes over information sharing
- Balance ratepayer impact and broader program benefits
- Use time efficiently—allocate sufficient time to key issues, but no more than necessary

### **INITIAL IMPLEMENTATION STEPS**

The following steps outline a phased approach to implementing improvements while maintaining current responsibilities.

### **NEAR-TERM ACTIONS**

These actions can start to be implemented immediately to begin improving meeting effectiveness.

- Reduce presentation time in upcoming meetings
- Clearly define desired outcomes for each agenda item
- Expand use of briefing memos to define desired outcomes and convey information
- Begin incorporating more structured facilitation

### **MEDIUM-TERM ACTIONS**

These steps will help institutionalize improvements and build consistency.

- Pilot focused agenda segments on specific issues
- Define and communicate Councilor expectations and meeting preparation protocols

- Improve onboarding process to prepare new Councilors and set expectations

### **LONGER-TERM OPPORTUNITIES**

Over time, these changes can further strengthen the Council's structure and impact.

- Establish multi-meeting topic arcs
- Integrate regular program performance reviews
- Formalize meeting design and participation expectations

### **CONCLUSION**

Improving Council effectiveness will require intentional redesign of meeting structure, clearer expectations, and a stronger focus on actionable discussion. By concentrating on high-priority issues and increasing engagement, the Council can make more effective use of its limited time and better fulfill its role.