

August 27, 2014 EEAC Executive Committee Meeting Notes

Attendees: Christina Halfpenny (DOER), Matt Saunders (AG), Amy Boyd (ENE), Elliot Jacobson - (LEAN), Emmett Lyne (PAs), Shaela Collins (PAs), Carol White (NGrid), Lisa Shea (NU), Cindy Carroll (Unitil), Eric Belliveau – phone (Consult), Paul Johnson (Greentek), Ian Finlayson (DOER) Lyn Huckabee (DOER), Maggie McCarey (DOER), Alex Pollard (DOER), Steve Venezia (DOER)

Agenda:

- Optimal Budget Update
- Winter Peak Price Concerns
- RFR for Process Consultant
- New Councilor
- Mid Term Modifications
- September Agenda

Meeting began at approximately 10:06am

Optimal Budget Update

- (Halfpenny) The Optimal budget as of last month was 90-100% spent in C&I and travel. The assumption is that they have now exceeded in both
- (Belliveau) Assured the EC that they expect a considerable slower burn rate in August and December. He admitted that the travel budget was just underestimated and that the mechanism for sharing time with RI did not pan out. The invoices are not yet in for August but he seemed confident that the Consultants will be under their total budget by the September report.

Winter Peak Price Concerns

- (Halfpenny) Electric rates will increase by 45% on average statewide. We will know the winter gas rates in September. NEEP and NASEO are working with NE states, including NY, to develop an informational campaign about the issue. The campaign will consist of a broad message that states can then tailor with specific services, contacts, and calls to action. A State House News Service article will ran about the issue this week. The Governor would like to start communicating the message before the regional communications begin.
- (Jacobson) Added that here is Federal uncertainty in low income services. They won't know what the winter budgets will look like until 11/1. He requested that this pricing emergency not lead to DIY energy kits which have happened in the past with little success.
- (Halfpenny) The questions for stakeholders include how much more can we do and at what cost?

- (Jacobson) Wants to ensure that low income customers are in the seasonal funnel as soon as possible so they can plan for demand. Although there may be significant reduction in heating system replacement funding.
- (Johnson) Isn't sure contractors are able to keep up with the increased demand. Asked about what decisions are being made to combat the issue.
- (Halfpenny) Assured that the PAs are working on action steps and the state is looking to supplement their activities through separate funding sources.
- (Boyd) Asked when any supplemental budget request would be made.
- (Halfpenny) By mid-September there should have a better idea.
- (White) Clarified that the discussions have questioned whether stakeholders should focus on short, medium, or long term and current thinking points to long term planning.
- (Halfpenny) Stakeholders will start by creating an information map. She doesn't think that an increase in 2015 rebates is the appropriate answer. She also cautioned that we don't have the same market inputs about gas that are helpful in determining longer term strategies.
- (Boyd) Asked if the coalition messaging will take a position on major gas policy issues.
- (Halfpenny) Answered that the coalition message will be broad and informative while the states will be responsible for any positions and call to action.

Process Evaluation RFR

- (Halfpenny) The RFR has been fully vetted by the EC and DOER procurement. She clarified that all contract responsibility is on DOER. If the EC accepts the draft, she can send it to the full Council by COB.
- [all EC members agree]
- RFR responses will be due by September 10th (the end of a two week hold). Responses can be submitted electronically. A decision will be made about what teams to interview after the 16th. If anyone other than the providers she approached directly are interested in bidding, they can check the solicitation on CommBuys.

New Councilor

- (Halfpenny) Wanted to announce that Betsy Glynn of LISC has been appointed by the DPU to fill the residential customer representative's seat.

Mid Term Modifications

- (White) The PAs are working on a joint resolution on MTMs. Grid would like to share the info sooner. In the short term, she is looking for feedback on the proposal.
- (Halfpenny) Verified that she had the information for Grid and Unitil but not yet for CLC.
- (Lyne) Verified that CLC doesn't have a draft yet. They are trying to determine what triggers MTM requests. He also clarified that they are not yet looking for a formal endorsement – they are sharing info and soliciting feedback.

- (Belliveau) Clarified that the documents that have been released are for support and that the actual resolution for action is forthcoming.
- (White) This is not intended to be as detailed as a filing (no updated 08-50 tables) but they want to be sure that they have everything that they need.
- (Johnson) Asked for more info on the source of the C&I problem, justification for not making goals, and more info about why the extra money is needed.
- (White) Explained that the field people are not finding the projects but that they are now studying market conditions using data analytics. They are trying to determine actual achievable potential.
The PAs may need to go to the DPU to reconcile cost recovery. The fact that direct install programs are doing better than the custom programs shifts their portfolio to more expensive savings.
- (Saunders) Would like to see more information on where the money will come from and why it should go to the residential sector. He would also like to know about the effect on performance incentives – maybe with an updated appendix J1?
- (White) There are no proposed changes to PI yet because that would affect other PAs. She assured the group that this doesn't mean that Grid is faltering in their commitment to the C&I sector – it means they are working even harder by hiring more people and learning more about the market.
- (Halfpenny) Would like the information to be more comprehensive, including where all the changes will be.
- (Jacobson) Would like to understand when the approval for the extra work taken on by LI will be approved so they can begin acting on increased budgets.
- (Halfpenny) Assured Jacobson that she hadn't heard any hesitation on the approval – they are just looking for more details about how and why. [EC agreed]
- (Halfpenny) Asked to hear more about the data-assisted market assessments
- (Belliveau) Offered October as the time to discuss the assessments.
- (Carroll) Said Until's request is based on unprecedented demand on gas HES program. All of 3 year budget will be spent by end of 2014 and they don't want to stop service. They recently hired RISE as a lead vendor because they could no longer handle the volume without one. They give credit to their HPCs for an excellent close rate.
- (Halfpenny) Requested initiative level data.
- (Finlayson) Asked if requested increase in demand took projected gas costs in to account.
- (Carroll) No
- (Saunders) Service backlog should also be considered.
- (White) Currently pushing to get more companies and workers in to the programs.
- (Johnson) Added that many of the Home Performance Contractors are switching to the new construction program because it is more profitable. He also asked for a presentation on the PA's market assessment activities.

- (Halfpenny) Asked how the EC wanted to proceed with the MTMs.
- (Jacobson) Requested that the questions get answered and the action be expedited to avoid any delay in service.
- (Saunders) Wanted to get back the requested information and get the opinion of the consultants.
- (Boyd) Agreed and recapped the needed information including: 1. Where did C/I go wrong? 2. Where will the money come from? 3. Where will money go? 4. How will winter peak be addressed? 5. What is the impact on performance incentives?
- (White) Added that the consultants can look to much of the deep dive information to answer questions and they will also have the evaluation results that had not been released earlier.

September EEAC Agenda

Additional Discussion

- [Discussion ensued about how to fit in the whole agenda and about the Council's propensity to go over their allotted time without completing their agenda. Several suggestions were made to trim time in the September agenda which are reflected in the above list. Additional suggestions are included below.]
- (Johnson) Requested more question and answer time for HES
- (White) Asked that people read data dashboard and quarterly reports before the meeting to ensure that we have enough time for everything in the agenda
- (Halfpenny) Suggested a back to basics primer for new (or any) Councilors. Thought that a webinar on the regulatory process might be an appropriate venue. She also suggested that Executive Committee meetings be extended to two hours to save time in the full EEAC meetings