



MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, May 20, 2020
Virtual Meeting via GoToWebinar

- Councilors Present:** Greg Abbe (for Jennifer Maddox), Cindy Arcate, Amy Boyd, Joseph Dorfler (for Don Boecke), Charlie Harak, Elliott Jacobson, Paul Johnson, Deirdre Manning, Maggie McCarey (Chair), Cammy Peterson, Robert Rio, Mary Wambui, Sharon Weber (for Martin Suuberg)
- Councilors Absent:** Justin Davidson, Paul Gromer
- Consultants Present:** Eric Belliveau, Adrian Caesar, Adam Jacobs
- DOER Staff Present:** Emily Powers, Rachel Evans
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1. Call to Order

McCarey, as Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:02 PM.

2. Public Comment

McCarey noted that no public comment was submitted for review in advance of the virtual May EEAC meeting.

3. Council Updates & Business

Commissioner Woodcock provided a brief update on the status of reopening programs and businesses in Massachusetts per Governor Baker's Reopening Massachusetts plan.

Commissioner Woodcock emphasized that the continuation plan for Mass Save programs would prioritize both maximizing economic benefits and maintaining worker and customer safety.

Commissioner Woodcock also said the Council will work with the PA's to establish a phased program continuation plan consistent with the statewide reopening plan.

Virtual Meeting Procedure Review

McCarey provided a brief review of the virtual meeting procedures during COVID-19, which included the following:

1. The Council meetings would be recorded
2. All attendees except for Councilors and presenters would remain muted for the duration of the meeting
3. Councilors would hold comments until the end of presentations, but Councilors should speak instead of using any chat functionality
4. Public comment would be posted to the Council website and reviewed by DOER during the meetings.
5. Councilors who disconnect from meetings need to announce when they rejoin.
6. All Council votes would be taken by a roll call for accuracy.

4. Mass Save Program Implementation Efforts During COVID-19: Update

Program Administrator Update

Kane and Lawrence, on behalf of the PA's, presented an update on the Energy Efficiency (EE) Business Continuity Health and Safety Plan amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Kane listed continued efforts including online audits, upstream offerings, enhanced incentives, and no-cost virtual trainings. Lawrence outlined the Energy Efficiency Business Continuity Health & Safety Plan, a phased approach for prioritizing customer and workforce safety while resuming on-site efforts. The Health & Safety Plan phases include understanding operational requirements, process development, procedure development, training development and delivery, field oversight, and program auditing.

Council Discussion

Commissioner Woodcock asked for additional clarity on the timelines associated with each EE Business Continuity Plan phase, and if there were barriers to restarting field work. After contracted vendors complete new health and safety guideline training, Lawrence anticipated no barriers to the continuation of field work. Lawrence added that contractors have about two months of backlogged projects, which will allow many workers to reenter the field. Wells hoped that after the June 11th health and safety training for interior work there would be no limits on eligible projects. Woodcock wondered if the C&I Multifamily classes would be available online after June 2nd, and Lawrence confirmed the virtual training would be posted online. Woodcock emphasized that EE safety protocols need to be consistent with state public safety protocols moving forward. Lawrence said they have adjusted field work requirements to match public health advisory.

Peterson asked if Virtual Home Energy Assessments (VHEA's) could allow programs to reach underserved populations more effectively, and if advanced technology such as thermal imaging had been considered for VHEA's. Kane replied the PA's are learning from the first wave of VHEA implementation, but would consider targeted marketing to help serve underserved populations after optimizing the assessments first. Regarding the addition of new technology, Kane indicated that VHEA's use photos to gather information on customer equipment. Porter said one lead vendor has piloted the use of a web-based tool to facilitate the homeowner experience working virtually with an assessor.

Johnson believed the effectiveness of VHEA's is overestimated and asked what the timeline was for resuming work inside homes. In addition, Johnson recommended prioritizing exterior home projects if resuming interior work would take too long. Lawrence responded that in-home work will be launched after the June 11th training on in-home health and safety protocols. Wells said there are jobs that involve exterior work with no customer engagement, so these projects can be undertaken by contractors; Wells added that health experts are analyzing potential health risks tied to interior air flow affected by certain EE measures. Johnson asked again if the PA's have created a list of eligible insulation jobs from previous HEA's and if it was distributed it to contractors. Wells said CLEAResult and RISE are confident the backlog of projects will allow many workers to continue work after safety trainings are completed. McCarey asked for the number of eligible projects recorded by CLEAResult and RISE. Lawrence responded that RISE has about 400 insulation projects under contract in Massachusetts and Rhode Island that can be done without entering customer dwellings.

5. Equity Working Group Discussion

Council Discussion

McCarey described the EEAC Equity Working Group discussed during the April Council meeting and May Executive Committee meeting. McCarey also noted a more detailed draft charter for the working group would be fleshed out after its first meeting.

Jacobson said the draft Equity Working Group document is well-written and they will meet any criteria suggested by DOER. McCarey said the Working Group will include different stakeholders to provide expertise, but there will be non-Council members as official representatives to adhere to Open Meeting Law.

Porter said the PA's appreciate the desire to keep the Equity Working Group small, but the diversity in PA customer bases warrant representation from four PA's instead of two. Wambui agreed that including more PA's would be beneficial. McCarey supported Porter's request as well.

6. Commercial and Industrial (C&I) Program Implementation: Update

Program Administrator Update

The PA's presented an update on C&I program implementation efforts involving continuous energy improvement (also known as strategic energy management), energy optimization and new heat pump pathways, equipment & systems performance optimization, new construction, and lighting.

Consultant Team Update

Jacobs, on behalf of the Consultant Team (C-Team), gave a presentation on C&I savings, C&I energy consumption, market transformation, and workforce development that will enable deeper savings beyond commercial lighting projects.

Council Discussion

McCarey commented that the Department of Energy Resources has been supportive of energy optimization and fuel switching for small businesses. McCarey also expressed excitement about the new construction redesign factoring into market transformation.

Boyd asked Jacobs what form building operator training might take to support workforce development. Jacobs responded that training a building engineer on a specific system has merit, but keeping them constrained to one building type would prevent them from working on others. Jacobs added that general, baseline skill building should be done in parallel to more specific training. In addition, Jacobs said the PA's have been working on a workforce study and the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center included building operator training as a specific focus area.

Peterson was pleased by the improvements to Retro Commissioning (RCx) and Zero Net Energy New Construction. Peterson emphasized the need to look at whole building performance beyond lighting, but also capturing the lighting controls-related savings that still remain.

Harak asked where the Pacific Gas & Electric spending on workforce was allocated and what recommendations the C-Team has on bolstering workforce development. Jacobs said that training for both entry-level and advanced workers is necessary to build the workforce comprehensively. Harak asked what the PA's need to support that degree of workforce development. Song responded the PA's are issuing a bid for a vendor to assemble a comprehensive training plan to develop both entry-level and advanced contractors. Harak asked if there will be a point within the next year when the PA's and C-Team will recommend a discrete number to spend on workforce training. Jacobs said some requirements for making that workforce development possible are included in the workforce report the PA's funded.

Jacobson said there is increased federal interest in workforce development, so he anticipated additional federal funding, especially to address low-income customers. Jacobson hypothesized that a workforce committee would maximize the utility of all potential funding opportunities. McCarey said workforce could be a good deep dive topic in the future.

Abbe wondered when the inflection point between the non-lighting future and the present, in which lighting is still ubiquitous, would occur. McCarey indicated the PA's, C-Team and Council will map out the post-lighting future during the upcoming planning cycle. Song suggested the PA's are confident program design innovation will compensate for the loss in claimable lighting savings.

7. Mass Save 2020, Q1 Report

Program Administrator Presentation

The PA's indicated that electric and gas performances through 2020 Q1 are comparable 2019, but COVID-19 impacts will be reflected in the 2020 Q2 report. COVID-19 mitigation efforts, creation of heat pump qualified product lists, and the annual PA Business Partner Event were also highlighted by the PA's during the presentation. McCarey announced the Q1 results would be explored in greater depth and the Plan Year Report for 2019 would be available for the June Council meeting.

8. Adjournment

McCarey, as chair, adjourned the meeting at 4:04 PM.