



MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, November 18, 2020
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Councilors Present: Greg Abbe, Cindy Arcate, Jo Ann Bodemer (for Maura Healey), Amy Boyd, Cindy Carroll, Tim Costa (for Victoria Rojo), Steve Cowell (for Paul Gromer), Justin Davidson, Maggie Downey, Frank Gundal, Charlie Harak, Elliott Jacobson, Paul Johnson, Jane Lano, Deirdre Manning, Maggie McCarey (Chair), Cammy Peterson, Chris Porter, Robert Rio, Stephanie Terach, Mary Wambui, Sharon Weber (for Martin Suuberg), Patrick Woodcock

Councilors Absent: Michael Ferrante, Andrew Newman

Consultants Present: Eric Belliveau, Adrian Caesar, Jeff Schlegel

DOER Staff Present: Rachel Evans, Ian Finlayson, Emily Powers

1. Call to Order

McCarey, as Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:08 PM.

2. Public Comment

McCarey indicated that no public comment was submitted for the meeting.

3. Council Updates & Business

Virtual Meeting Procedure Review

McCarey reviewed the virtual EEAC meeting procedures, 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 and other participants should speak instead of using any chat functionality.
4. Councilors who disconnect from meetings need to announce when they rejoin.

5. All Council votes would be taken by a roll call for accuracy.

McCarey stated that Dennis Villanueva was formally appointed by the Department of Public Utilities as the Large Commercial and Industrial Customer Representative on the Council. Villanueva, Energy and Sustainability Manager at Mass General Brigham, said he looked forward to collaborating with Councilors and other stakeholders.

Executive Committee Terms and Nominations

McCarey noted that three seats on the Executive Committee would be opening for nominations: Environmental Community, Residential and Low-Income sector, and C&I Sector (currently vacant). McCarey requested that interested Councilors email DOER by 5PM on Monday, November 30th. Powers would post written statements from each candidate by December 11th in preparation for the December Council meeting.

Bodemer asked for clarification on which Councilors would be eligible to fill each of the Executive Committee seats, as it would not make sense to have certain Councilors eligible for each seat. McCarey replied that DOER could clarify any specific eligibility questions Councilors pose.

Peterson asked if current Executive Committee members were eligible for renomination. McCarey responded that they are eligible for renomination, as there is no term limit for Executive Committee members.

Evans indicated that the formal responsibility of the Executive Committee was defined in the Charter posted on the Council website. Evans added that the Executive Committee had the informal responsibility to review and approve agendas for upcoming Council meetings.

DPU 12-120: Eversource Gas Rate Case Update

Commissioner Woodcock announced that the DPU did not approve of Eversource's proposed Gas Demand Response Demonstration, since such a demonstration should be implemented in the energy efficiency (EE) framework under Council direction. Commissioner Woodcock also noted that the DPU did approve geothermal projects proposed by Eversource. Commissioner Woodcock added that National Grid filed a rate case on November 13th that raised Gas Demand Response, hydrogen blending, and geothermal projects.

DPU 20-80: Natural Gas Company Long-Term Net Zero Planning

Commissioner Woodcock stated that this docket would require natural gas distribution companies to work with consultants for long-term net zero planning, and complete a report by March 2022. Bodemer added that the Attorney General's Office has made a motion to clarify the stakeholder input process that the DPU included in the order, with respect to procurement of consultant services and reports for the gas distribution companies.

4. New Savings Opportunities

Program Administrator Presentation

McCarthy and Klint, on behalf of the program administrators (PAs), presented the PA framework for bringing new measures to market, recent program additions, and other technologies under consideration. Klint discussed the Massachusetts Technical Assessment Committee (MTAC), which assess energy efficiency opportunities and recommend technologies to PAs.

Council Discussion

Weber was concerned that any investment in gas heating technologies would be working against achievement of state climate goals. McCarthy replied that many gas customers are reluctant to fuel switch given the price of gas heating, so providing incentives for efficient gas heating equipment would be better than nothing. Gundal noted that channel partners present gas potential technologies, so the PAs are simply being responsive to the market instead of dedicating time to develop these technologies.

Cowell asked if there were formal reports on the cost-effectiveness of solar photovoltaic (PV), electric vehicle charging, geothermal microgrid, and air source heat pumps (ASHP). McCarthy said electric vehicle charging is already incentivized, ASHP cost effectiveness reporting is definitely underway, but nothing formal has been reported for solar PV projects. Gundal said there is not an available benefit-cost model for geothermal microgrid projects. Cowell noted that E4TheFuture published its National Standard Practice Manual on their website and would be happy to present it to the Council and PAs.

Bodemer asked how consideration of state climate policies was included in the new measure evaluation process. McCarthy said the Green Communities Act (GCA) is the first point of consideration when pursuing new cost-effective savings, followed by other state policies.

McCarey noted that discussion on fossil fuel measure incentives would be a point of discussion during the upcoming Planning Workshops on Existing Buildings.

Johnson wondered if there was a list of all rejected measure technologies. McCarthy said the MTAC page on the Mass Save website has a list of all referred technologies to the programs, but there is not a list of rejected ones. Johnson asked what programs came as a result of the proposal pathway for new program ideas. McCarthy cited Passive House as a concept that resulted from an external stakeholder proposal. Klint also used Smart Stack, efficient laboratory exhaust ventilation, as a specific technology that came from this pathway.

Davidson asked how the building envelope panel retrofit differed from other standard envelope insulation methods. Klint said new methods being implemented in New York and other areas involve attaching highly insulated panels on the exterior of the building. Klint noted that this process takes significantly less time than current insulation practices, but the panels are more expensive. Davidson asked if external insulation panels could overcome knob and tube wiring as a barrier to weatherization. Johnson replied that this method would be great for older buildings, as knob and tube wiring could be remediated after the panels were installed if necessary. McCarey said this new insulation method would be interesting to discuss in the C&I Existing Buildings Workshop.

Peterson seconded Weber and Bodemer's points regarding aligning measure assessment criteria with statewide climate goals. Peterson added that PAs should be leaders in the market, and determine how to bring novel measures and program designs to scale.

McCarey asked which types of ground source heat pumps (GSHPs) were passing cost-effectiveness screening. McCarthy responded that different GSHPs were passing screenings on a case by case basis for custom projects, but they have not yet screened a prescriptive C&I offering. Klint said the evaluation group is having a third-party assessment on how they screen geothermal applications.

Johnson asked if individuals or groups that submit program ideas through the proposal pathway receive assistance in implementing those ideas. Klint said they have not used funds to support those efforts. McCarthy added that PAs often assist people with obtaining Clean Energy Center (CEC) grants for pre-commercial stage technologies.

5. Active Demand Management Program Updates

Consultant Team Presentation

Schlegel, on behalf of the Consultant Team (C-Team), reviewed recent summer and winter active demand management (ADM) performance, ADM forecasts for the remainder of 2020, and 2021 ADM program priorities.

Program Administrator Presentation

Bryant, Roshan Bhakta, on behalf of the PAs, presented on ADM programs. Bryant clarified the difference between active and passive demand, and provided historical system capacity data in the context of ADM programs. Bhakta described current ADM customer participation options, customer engagement strategy, and 2020 summer events called.

Council Discussion

Villanueva wondered if the ADM program participation incentive was based on monthly capacity savings or the number of events called. Bhakta said the participation incentive was based on the average capacity savings during dispatch hours for a given season. Villanueva worried that this would create uncertainty in cash flow compared to receiving a static dollar per kilowatt saved. Bryant clarified that this was a performance-based incentive, so customers could expect to earn incentives if they did not opt out of events called. Villanueva also asked if current electric vehicle (EV) battery level would be accounted for when curtailing the load for charging stations. Bhakta noted that customers are made clear on the number of hours and time of events, but they always have the ability to opt out of load curtailment events. In addition, Bhakta said a commercial pilot site is being tested to see how to effectively include workplace charging.

Weber was excited by the number of thermostats enrolled, but worried that negotiations with manufacturers would delay National Grid's EV charging program rollout. Bryant said the manufacturers are cautious about customer data sharing requirements, necessitating non-

disclosure agreements and other information protections. Weber urged the PAs to be transparent about obstacles to program rollout during the coming months.

Peterson was glad that Schlegel framed demand response work as comprehensive demand management instead of only peak reduction. Peterson said that ramping up ADM programs will allow more technologies to scale up as well. Peterson asked how non-energy impacts would be considered into the cost-effectiveness of different demand management initiatives, like winter dispatch. Bryant replied that the Avoided Energy Supply Cost (AESC) study draft coming out in February should inform the non-energy impact benefits that could be claimed.

Cowell asked how transmission and distribution reduction benefits were calculated, and how these benefits could be monetized and compared to a scenario without ADM programs. Bryant said these benefits are included in the BC models for ADM programs, but they cannot be bid into the forward capacity market (FCM) to offset programmatic costs.

Johnson commented that a \$25 incentive would be insufficient for encouraging customers with Wi-Fi thermostats to participate, and asked if PAs considered the effects of increasing participation incentives. Bhakta said Wi-Fi thermostats are very affordable when the other EE and DR benefits are considered, but the PAs could explore the impacts of different participation incentives. McCarey said raising ADM participation incentives should be explored in an evaluation study and incorporated into the 2022-2024 recommendations.

6. Third Quarter Report

Program Administrator Presentation

Menges and Chambers, on behalf of the PAs, presented 2020 Q3 performance to date, and comparisons to historical Q3 achievement. Menges noted that savings levels have rebounded from the COVID-19 shutdown, and gas savings were tracking closer to historical Q3 achievement than electric savings. Chambers noted the PAs anticipate a strong Q4 performance, provided there is no shutdown due to rising COVID-19 cases.

7. Adjournment

Arcate recognized the passing of Lydia Pastuszek, the first director of conservation and load management programs in the 1980s. Arcate noted that Lydia was a leading woman that overcame gender discrimination and other challenges to become a chief architect of today's statewide EE programs. Cowell said Lydia was a wonderful person to work alongside. Jacobson reflected on his work with Lydia on a Department of Energy advisory board and noted that Lydia was instrumental in supporting Low-Income programs. McCarey offered her sympathies to Lydia's colleagues and thanked Arcate for recognizing her role in establishing energy conservation programs.

McCarey, as chair, adjourned the meeting at 3:54 PM.