



## MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, April 14, 2021  
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

---

- Councilors Present:** Greg Abbe (for Jennifer D Maddox), Cindy Arcate, Jo Ann Bodemer (for Maura Healey), Amy Boyd, Cindy Carroll, Hammad Chaudry (for Jane Lano), Avadhish Dewal (for Tim Costa), Maggie Downey, Frank Gundal, Charlie Harak, Elliott Jacobson, Paul Johnson, Deirdre Manning, Maggie McCarey (Chair), Cammy Peterson, Chris Porter, Robert Rio, Catherine Rollins (for Justin Davidson), Dennis Villanueva, Mary Wambui
- Councilors Absent:** Michael Ferrante, Paul Gromer, Andrew Newman, Sharon Weber
- Consultants Present:** Eric Belliveau, Adrian Caesar, Adam Jacobs, Margie Lynch
- DOER Staff Present:** Rachel Evans, Ian Finlayson, Emily Webb
- 

### 1. Call to Order

McCarey, as Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:04 PM.

### 2. Public Comment

#### *Al Scaramelli (Beacon Capital)*

Scaramelli expressed support for public comment provided by A Better City regarding the importance of deep energy retrofits in meeting the 2030 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction target. Scaramelli said more robust incentives for HVAC equipment providing shorter payback periods would motivate higher participation, especially among large commercial customers. Scaramelli also expressed support for continued combined heat and power (CHP) incentives, noting that CHP plants could be retired in the future once renewable energy comprises more of the electric portfolio.

#### *Emily Jones (LISC)*

Jones emphasized the importance of building decarbonization since the climate roadmap bill was signed into law. Jones suggested that the refinancing process established by affordable housing stakeholders aligns funding from the Department of Housing and Community Development

(DHCD), Low-income Energy Affordability Network (LEAN), and all other sources to support deep energy retrofits. Jones also urged the Council to request that the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) include the full Social Cost of Carbon in cost-effectiveness screening.

***Russ Aney (AVID Solar)***

Aney commented that the National Grid Connected Solutions initiative for behind-the-meter solar inverters did not involve stakeholder input or Council discussion prior to rollout. Aney added that the online solar marketplace included in the current National Grid Three-Year Plan would be inappropriate since it would utilize a lead generation company that charges solar installers for listing on the marketplace. Aney said the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (CEC) has a comprehensive guide for residential solar projects and Massachusetts installers.

***Darien Crimmin (WinnCompanies)***

Crimmin echoed public comment from LISC, and noted that the mandate to use the Social Cost of Carbon may significantly impact cost-effectiveness screening. Crimmin urged the Council and program administrators (PAs) to incorporate changes to measure cost-effectiveness into 2022 program implementation. Crimmin suggested that beginning the 2022-2024 term under a business-as-usual scenario could result in missed savings opportunity.

***Rosemary Wessel (No Fracked Gas)***

Wessel recommended that nonprofit community organizations implement energy efficiency programs instead of for-profit utilities. Wessel said dealing with multiple entities to participate in programs is a large barrier for single parents, people working more than one job, and language isolated customers. Wessel noted that community organizations can offer comprehensive guidance on program participation, strong support to communities in which they are already embedded, and cross-community coordination between organizations.

**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.

***February Executive Committee Meeting Minutes***

Boyd motioned to approve the minutes as submitted. Bodemer seconded. All were in favor, with none opposed or abstaining. The minutes were approved, as submitted, by the Executive Committee.

***February EEAC Meeting Minutes***

The meeting attendance was corrected to show that Manning was absent from the February Council meeting. Arcate motioned to approve the minutes as amended. Rio seconded. All were in favor, with none opposed. McCarey and Wambui abstained. The minutes were approved, as amended, by the Council.

***March Executive Committee Meeting Minutes***

Bodemer motioned to approve the minutes as submitted. Boyd seconded. All were in favor, with none opposed or abstaining. The minutes were approved, as submitted, by the Executive Committee.

***March EEAC Meeting Minutes***

Evans reminded Councilors that they can vote on minutes even if they were absent. Peterson motioned to approve the minutes as submitted. Arcate seconded. All were in favor, with none opposed or abstaining. The minutes were approved, as submitted, by the Council.

***Public Comment Summary***

Webb shared a summary of public comment topics submitted throughout the 2022-2024 Planning cycle through Fall Planning Workshops, Council meetings, and written public comment. Webb indicated that additional virtual public comment sessions on the 2022-2024 Plan would be held in June.

Bodemer commented that the public comment analysis was extremely helpful. McCarey said DOER could summarize comments received after the April Draft Plan if there is interest from Councilors.

**4. April Draft Plan Review Process**

***Review Process and Timeline***

Webb presented a flow chart detailing the April Draft Plan review process, indicating that additional April Draft Plan review and public comment sessions would precede development of the July Resolution on the 2022-2024 Plan. Belliveau explained that the Key Drivers process would involve a technical review of initiatives that drive the majority of planned savings.

***Data Table and Benefit-Cost Model Format Review***

Chambers and Menges, on behalf of the PAs, provided an overview of key data tables and narrative sections in the 2022-2024 Plan, in addition to the Mass Save Data portal. Menges indicated the data tables will include initiative-level granularity, while the benefit-cost (BC) models contain measure-level data. Menges added that the BC models have been improved for increased alignment across PAs.

***Council Discussion***

Johnson asked if the PAs would respond to specific Council recommendations in the April Draft Plan. Lyne replied that the Plan itself would embed Council feedback in the content, and there would be specific responses to recommendations after the April Draft Plan is released.

Peterson asked if the PAs have incorporated the Social Cost of Carbon into the Total Resource Cost Test. Menges said the Social Cost of Carbon will be used for benefit-cost analysis for the April Draft Plan.

## **5. Active Demand Management: Assessment of Potential**

### ***Consultant Team Presentation***

Jacobs, on behalf of the C-Team, presented the Assessment of Potential on active demand management (ADM) strategies, including peak demand energy use curtailment, direct load control, and energy storage. Jacobs indicated that packaging offerings across energy efficiency and ADM programs can yield significantly higher savings.

### ***Council Discussion***

Johnson asked why smart thermostats are being promoted so heavily when only 4% of smart thermostat owners are enrolled in direct load control programs. Jacobs responded that direct load control programs will grow over time, and there are examples of other similar programs further along in the marketplace. Johnson felt that direct load control program marketing should target customers with smart thermostats already installed.

Villanueva suggested that technical support during installation and higher enrollment incentives would motivate more participation in direct load control programs. Villanueva also asked whether C&I incentives were based on individual building size or size of whole organizations. McCarey said small business offerings were based on account consumption. Harak said Eversource bases incentives on the customer's size. Villanueva urged the PAs to revisit this model, since non-vertically integrated customers with many small buildings could benefit from small business incentives.

Abbe encouraged the PAs to explore more Residential direct load control initiatives and strategies, such as offering free smart thermostats for program enrollment as PEPCO offers in Washington, DC. Abbe said there will be substantial opportunity to support load shifting as renewable generation increases.

Wollenburg noted that participation in direct load control programs is generally low across the country, with the Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE) program yielding under 2% participation according to E-Source. Wollenburg asked if free smart thermostat installation for direct load control program enrollment would be cost-effective. Jacobs said the goal is to have PAs consider different delivery models to promote smart thermostats and direct load control enrollment, but Eversource might have a better understanding of cost-effectiveness since it was included in their potential study.

Arcate said that commercial customers on competitive electric supply contracts are already incentivized to reduce peak demand, and asked if the potential studies quantified this as a baseline. Jacobs indicated programs were previously hindered by the lack of prevalence of controls, but current programs support many active demand management technologies for these customers on competitive contracts.

Michael Goldman – commented that the current storage project pipeline would be insufficient to meet storage goals in the presentation. Jacobs said the goals were largely aspirational and based on broader energy goals in the Commonwealth. Sean Becker, the C-Team storage expert, said the focus is on the 2024 storage goal, and high goals would signal to customers that their projects would fall under the ADM program.

Abbe commented that about 25% of BGE customers participate in their peak rewards program, though it may not be a direct load control program. Wollenburg said this may be a participation rate tied to their time of use rewards program.

Peterson indicated that many municipalities are interested in receiving peak demand notifications, but they are often unaware of how to participate. Peterson stressed the importance of controls and other enabling technologies to support load shifting for all municipalities.

Arcate clarified that ISO New England no longer has a demand response program, and demand response is included in the forward capacity market. Arcate added that low prices in the forward capacity market present a challenge for curtailment service providers to participate.

Johnson asked if the PAs tried sending load curtailment requests to customers without any incentives, as this practice has been employed in other jurisdictions. Wollenburg replied that National Grid has investigated and evaluated such behavioral demand response strategies, but the data assembled by E-Source suggests relatively low efficacy.

## **6. Q4 2020 Program Results**

### ***Consultant Team Presentation***

Belliveau, Lynch, and Jacobs, on behalf of the C-Team, presented unevaluated 2020 program results, showing that overall electric portfolio performance was close to planned achievement, while gas portfolio performance lagged due largely to CHP. Lynch indicated the Income Eligible performance was significantly inhibited by COVID-19 impacts, but virtual audits and enhanced incentives helped maintain market rate Residential savings. Jacobs noted that C&I gas achievement has been on a downward trend through 2019 and 2020, and custom HVAC projects will be critical to increasing C&I savings. Belliveau cautioned against relying too heavily on 2020 results to inform 2022-2024 planning due to highly irregular circumstances.

### ***Council Discussion***

Harak asked if there were any lessons learned from impressive Income Eligible performance for Until and Liberty. Carroll responded that a large multifamily lighting project boosted Unutil performance significantly, and added that Unutil works closely with CAP agencies to implement a hands-on approach in its small service territory. Terach also said Liberty's CAP agency is a valuable partner in serving the Income Eligible customers in their small service territory. Jacobson noted that Income Eligible results were lower overall largely due to the halt in onsite work in 2020, and the larger PAs will likely meet 2021 savings goals.

Peterson asked Jacobson if the large queue of projects would compensate for low Income Eligible savings achievement in 2020. Jacobson was unsure if 2020 underperformance could be

fully made up, but confident that 2021 goals would be met. Jacobson also noted that about \$10 million dollars in projects were not reflected in 2020 results due to delays. McCarey said resources would need to shift quickly to support recovering missed savings opportunities in 2020.

Wambui was pleased with projected 2021 Income Eligible savings goal attainment, and asked if the next quarterly report could break out public housing and small multifamily building data. Jacobson said the PAs should be able to provide specific breakouts for public housing and 1–4-unit buildings.

## **7. Proposed Mid-Term Modifications**

### ***Program Administrator Summary***

Abdou, Chambers, Downes, Terach, and Kopylec summarized the proposed mid-term modifications on behalf of each PA. The mid-term modifications were caused by overspending or underspending of program budgets. Cape Light Compact was the only PA that did not require a mid-term modification.

### ***Council Discussion***

McCarey indicated that additional data on each mid-term modification was provided to the C-Team, but a more detailed discussion would occur during the May meeting.

Wambui requested data specific to Lawrence, Andover, and North Andover since Eversource overspent budget due. Chambers said the quarterly report will include data on the Greater Lawrence area, but the overspending was largely driven by enhanced incentives for Lawrence, Andover, and North Andover during the first two term years. Chambers clarified that the enhanced incentives will only be extended for Lawrence residents in 2021.

## **8. Adjournment**

McCarey, as chair, adjourned the meeting at 4:14 PM.