



## MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, April 27, 2022  
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

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**Voting Councilors Present:** Cindy Arcate, Jo Ann Bodemer (representing Maura Healey), Amy Boyd, Justin Davidson, Brian Beote (representing Elliott Jacobson), Charlie Harak, Paul Johnson, Deirdre Manning, Brooks Winner (representing Cammy Peterson), Mary Wambui, Sharon Weber, Commissioner Patrick Woodcock

**Voting Councilors Absent:** Greg Abbe, Robert Rio, Dennis Villanueva

**Consultants Present:** Eric Belliveau, Adrian Caesar, Gretchen Calcagni, Margie Lynch

**DOER Staff Present:** Rachel Evans, Maggie McCarey, Emily Webb

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### 1. Call to Order

McCarey, as Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:06 PM.

### 2. Public Comment

***Paulina Casasola (Clean Water Action/Green Justice Coalition)***

Casasola commended the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) for prioritizing renter access and equity in its order on the 2022-2024 Plan. Casasola commented that many renters are concerned about high oil and gas prices and wondered what protections could be implemented for renters who have had their landlords weatherize their units. Casasola noted that home heating electrification could increase rent, so energy efficiency services need to be affordable and accessible to avoid pushing people out of their homes or communities. Lastly, Casasola asked how the Green Justice Coalition and other grassroots organizations can facilitate trust building between the program administrators (PAs), renters, residents, and landlords. Casasola thanked the PAs and Council for their collective work.

Harak indicated that the Commonwealth allocated \$20 Million dollars to increase the fuel assistance program benefit to \$2,100. Harak encouraged meeting participants to share that the deadline to apply for the benefit is May 13<sup>th</sup>.

### **3. Council Updates & Business**

#### ***Virtual Meeting Procedure Review***

McCarey reviewed the virtual EEAC meeting procedures:

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.

#### ***Staffing and Personnel Updates***

Marie Abdou announced that she accepted a new role at National Grid as the Director of Customer and Communications Engagement on the Advanced Metering Infrastructure Team, Abdou thanked McCarey and the Council for their engagement over the years. McCarey and Commissioner Woodcock thanked Abdou for their shared time working with the Council.

Commissioner Woodcock indicated that Webb is transitioning away from EEAC support work to serve as Chief of Staff at the Department of Energy Resources, so she will be phasing out of Council-specific work over the next few weeks. McCarey thanked Webb for her critical contributions to Council operations and planning.

#### ***EEAC Bylaws Updates***

McCarey announced that DOER is working on updates to the EEAC Bylaws to allow for continued virtual meetings in a hybrid fashion. McCarey indicated the Council would need to approve the modified Bylaws before July to enable continued virtual meeting participation. Evans indicated that current Open Meeting Law does not allow for fully remote meetings, but a quorum of the EEAC could be present at a physical meeting location to enable virtual participation by additional councilors and the public.

#### ***Residential Home Energy Assessments ) and Contractor Pricing Update***

Mazuera, on behalf of the PAs, provided an update on contractor pricing. Mazuera confirmed that a more detailed presentation would be shared in May following closing of the bid. Mazuera said the PAs want to solicit market-based pricing for program weatherization measures, and over 100 contractor bids were both submitted and accepted. Mazuera said the PAs plan to communicate pricing updates in May when the RFQ closes and the PAs can review the results.

#### ***Program Administrator Update on COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols***

Gundal, on behalf of the PAs, indicated that in light of Center for Disease Control and state updates to COVID-19 protocols, the PAs reengaged with the health and safety expert to align Mass Save practices. Gundal noted that personal protective equipment (PPE) is no longer required unless requested by customers. Gundal said that all other protocols will still be in place related to compliance with state and federal guidelines, but detailed protocol updates would be posted.

McCarey asked if contractors have reacted to the updated health and safety protocols. Gundal said they have not had a chance to respond with feedback yet.

Johnson wanted the PAs to provide an update on the three data requests included in the March EEAC meeting minutes during the May EEAC meeting. Johnson thanked Webb and Abdou for their support. McCarey recalled Johnson's three data requests. Lyne also thanked Abdou and Webb for their time with the Council. Lyne replied that the PAs have been focused on 2022-2024 Plan Compliance Filings, but the DPU ordered that the PAs cannot recover data request costs until DPU regulatory guidance is provided. Lyne said the PAs will follow up with DOER after this meeting. McCarey hoped first quarter marketing spending could be pulled together easily. Lyne agreed and said that the PAs still want to treat data requests collaboratively.

#### **4. Workforce Development: Program Administrator Update**

##### ***PA Presentation***

Georges, on behalf of the PAs, shared an update on 2022 Q1 workforce development efforts related to tracking progress on workforce development equity targets, contractor industry trainings conducted in Q1, new workforce development offerings, and a high-level summary of Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) workforce grants.

##### ***Council Discussion***

Commissioner Woodcock asked if the PAs considered using the Community First Partnerships to geotarget workforce development efforts at a local scale. Commissioner Woodcock also appreciated how methodical the PAs were in their workforce development planning, but wondered if there were any initiatives that could start now. Georges indicated that the PAs would be very open to sharing workforce development programs with Community Partners and local organizations in order to help underserved populations access Mass Save program benefits. As part of the Clean Energy Pathways, Georges said a lead vendor researched different workforce development programs across the state, but the specific focus of Mass Save training presents a challenge for helping Community Partners understand which contractors are hiring. Georges stated that the vast majority of community-based workforce organizations are not well-informed in energy efficiency and clean energy.

Harak asked whether the 120 Clean Energy Pathways placements referenced in the presentation meant 120 job placements resulting from the internships. Georges clarified that this meant 120 internship placements since the PAs cannot control actual job placements. Harak asked if 120 placements is just an estimate of what is attainable for the Clean Energy Pathways internships, or whether it considered turnover or the projection of overall workforce needs. Georges responded that the PA workforce evaluation informed the internship target, and the target is nationally competitive since there are not many programs to place this many interns into the energy efficiency workforce. Harak asked if the PAs would provide regular reports on job placements. Georges said the PAs are working to place the first cohort of Clean Energy Pathways interns into jobs, but a full report would be provided toward Q4.

Johnson commented that one trainee was laid off due to a weatherization contractor reducing staff, which does not bode well for the workforce and work availability. Johnson asked for more details on the subsidy provided to partnering contractors in the Clean Energy Pathways, including what portion of wages are subsidized by the program. Georges replied that the PAs cover a wage of \$20 per hour for the first two months, followed by a \$5 subsidy for employee wages. Johnson asked how PAs find these contractors, since some indicated that they would like to engage with the PAs once they have job openings. Johnson suggested that the PAs create and share a list of contractors with whom they engage. Georges said the PAs conducted extensive contractor outreach via email, but the PAs welcome any recommendations on how to best engage contractors. Johnson noted that transportation is a big challenge for workers and asked if the PAs had solutions for workers and interns far from public transit. Georges indicated the PAs have been unable to develop a long-term transportation solution, despite their attempts to work with entities to solve the issue. Georges added that the PAs will ask whether Clean Energy Pathways interns have vehicles, though this will not bar them from participating.

Beote commented that LEAN, and its various Community Action Program (CAPs), is very interested in supporting workforce development given their ability to provide job training. Beote suggested that workforce development and diversification are critical for reaching communities, and LEAN will be able to meet candidates everywhere since CAPs are headquartered in all target locations listed in the PA presentation. Beote added that LEAN is interested in supporting any growing contractor businesses. Beote also echoed Georges' point on workforce transportation challenges. Georges agreed to coordinate with LEAN on the Clean Energy Pathways and other workforce development efforts. Georges said the Build Back Better Plan includes funding for clean energy, but hoped the Department of Labor and Department of Energy will work to address transportation and training. Georges also noted that the Governor of North Carolina recently launched a solar training program that took the form of an immersive camp, which interested the PAs.

Winner asked if the PAs work with employers to prepare them for placed interns, since the workplace environment is equally important to the preparedness of incoming cohorts. Georges replied that the PAs provide diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) training to both contractors and recruits. Georges said that ICF, a program implementation vendor, has a scope of work that includes standing up a contractor network, and the PAs hope to continue supporting contractor business development. Winner asked if minority- and women-owned business enterprise workshops are being conducted in languages other than English to overcome language barriers. Georges said the PAs posed this question to MassCEC, but no workshops are currently being translated. Georges added that MassCEC would consider this feedback for consideration. Winner wondered if it would make sense for future workforce development updates to be collaborative presentations between MassCEC and the PAs. McCarey said joint presentations or presentations during the same EEAC meeting will be the intent in the future.

Wambui asked if there was a correlation between underserved areas and areas that lack sufficient contractor workforces or training opportunities. Georges confirmed that many underserved communities lack local contractors. Wambui asked how the PAs and MassCEC will coordinate to meet equity targets. Georges said that successful delivery of available MassCEC grants will be key for reaching equity targets, and the PAs regularly coordinate with MassCEC on workforce

development offerings. Wambui stated that a diverse workforce is necessary to promote program participation and access, though the barriers referenced in the presentation suggest planned workforce development efforts will not effectively promote access. Wambui urged the PAs to view workforce development through the lens of supporting access. Wambui noted that the goal of 120 interns may be ambitious compared to national standards, but it does not directly address underserved communities in the Commonwealth. Wambui suggested the PAs set ambitious goals relative to actual problems being faced.

McCarey noted that the link between workforce development and participation has been a theme in the Equity Working Group and wondered if focused workforce development efforts could be conducted in target communities and among community partners. McCarey said the goal is to develop a program that addresses workforce and access for those specific communities. Commissioner Woodcock suggested the PAs work with MassCEC to geotarget workforce development. Georges said that traditional workforce development programs do not face the same challenges as clean energy workforce development programs, so the PAs are looking to apply learnings over time.

Wambui reminded everyone that the Mass Save PAs are responsible for delivering energy efficiency services and meeting Plan objectives, including workforce development objectives.

## **5. Fourth Quarter 2021 Report**

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

Calcagni, Lynch, and Keating, on behalf of the Consultant Team (C-Team), provided a detailed review of Q4 2021 results and their implication on the 2022-2024 Plan implementation. Calcagni indicated the PAs are conducting additional Quality Assurance/Quality Control on the data prior to filing the 2019-2021 Term Report. Lynch covered Residential and Income Eligible sector results, noting that preliminary market rate Residential lifetime savings exceeded planned values despite COVID-19 impacts, but low- and moderate-income performance fell short of targets. Keating noted that Commercial and Industrial (C&I) savings achievement lagged behind planned goals, and decarbonization efforts present a challenge for the 2022-2024 Term.

### ***Council Discussion***

Johnson asked if the 15,000 planned mini-split heat pumps were all cold climate heat pumps. Lynch confirmed that these are cold climate heat pumps. Johnson asked if they would be employed during the winter or shoulder seasons. Lynch said there are metering studies done occasionally to estimate usage, but was unsure if there was an active study. Keating said there was a recent evaluation to assess how many installed heat pumps were being used for space heating, which showed that about half are used during the winter. Johnson asked if these evaluations are used in the greenhouse gas emission reduction calculations. Chambers said an evaluation was presented on heat pump programs in 2019-2021 that informed savings and program design inputs in the 2022-2024 Plan. Chambers noted that many partial displacements had their controls turned off or setpoints adjusted by customers, so additional contractor quality control was done to ensure heat pumps were set up appropriately. Johnson said many customers may use heat pumps for cooling because they do not have air conditioners and asked if the PAs consider these scenarios. Chambers replied that there are both customers replacing air

conditioners and customers adding additional air conditioning. Johnson asked if the incentives vary depending on displacement or planned use. Chambers said full displacements receive \$10,000 in incentives, but there is no confirmation of the customer's actual use. Johnson asked if the PAs could reach the heat pump installation goals for 2022-2024. Chambers suggested that Q1 results are promising, so the PAs believe they are on the right path.

Commissioner Woodcock asked for an explanation of the reported heat pump data. Keating said Residential and Income Eligible heat pumps are tracked based on customers or households, while C&I heat pump installations are based on tonnage and total square footage served by heat pumps.

Weber expressed interest in a chart showing how per-ton heat pump incentives have evolved over time. Keating said for C&I electrification, incentives are increasing tenfold to support adoption. For Residential, Keating said the \$10,000 whole home incentive is larger than the prior offer as well.

Johnson asked how the whole-home heat pump incentive accounts for customers that need multiple heat pumps. Porter indicated the \$10,000 whole-home incentive is for full displacements, but there are multiple pathways for customer eligibility such as a central system or multiple mini-split heat pumps. Porter added that the incentive for partial displacements is \$1,250 per ton.

## **6. 2022-2024 Plan PA Compliance Filings to the Department of Public Utilities**

### ***Program Administrator Presentation***

Chambers and Abdou, on behalf of the PAs, gave an overview of the program administrators' Compliance Filing and changes to the originally filed 2022-2024 Plan. Abdou indicated the April Compliance Filings included modified Plan text and tables, a matrix identifying the DPU Order's directives, updated data tables and benefit-cost models, and updated bill impacts analysis. Abdou also summarized the components of the upcoming May 2<sup>nd</sup> and September 30<sup>th</sup> Compliance Filings.

### ***Council Discussion***

McCarey indicated the C-Team has posted slides on the 2022-2024 Plan Compliance Filings that focus on shifts in quantitative data.

Weber asked if customers enrolling electric vehicle chargers would be able to choose between car or charger-based demand management. Chambers said the PAs intend to offer both options, so this will be clarified for the DPU.

Johnson asked how long lighting would be offered in home energy audits and how many bulbs would be included in packages. Chambers said the PAs have only planned to do this through the end of 2022, but it depends on what the evaluation determines about targeted lighting offerings in disadvantaged populations. Chambers said the packages would include twelve bulbs per home depending on customer needs. Johnson asked why auditors are not installing the bulbs directly. Chambers responded that the low savings do not justify the installation time.

McCarey asked why direct install lighting would continue if the cost-effectiveness is so low. Chambers believed that DPU guidance did not include a cost-effectiveness requirement and only focused on the evaluation aspect. Chambers said she would confirm this was the case with PA legal staff. McCarey asked if there was install rate data for packages during COVID-19. Chambers noted that an evaluation estimates an installation rate of 70% or more, and this is reflected in the Compliance Filing.

## **7. Adjournment**

McCarey, as chair, adjourned the meeting at 4:17 PM.