



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, September 7, 2022
Virtual Meeting: Zoom

Executive Committee Members Present: Greg Abbe, Jo Ann Bodemer, Amy Boyd, Emmett Lyne, Maggie McCarey

Executive Committee Members Absent: Dennis Villanueva

Other Attendees: Eric Belliveau, Adrian Caesar, Rachel Evans, Paul Johnson, Elliott Jacobson, Alyssa Vargas, Audrey Eidelman Kiernan, Kate Peters, Joe Dorfler, Bill Graham, Jerrold Oppenheim, Kate Peters, Chris Porter

1. Call to Order

McCarey, as Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:07 AM.

2. Executive Committee Updates and Business

McCarey announced that the program administrators (PAs) submitted a letter with the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) regarding winter energy price increase mitigation strategies. McCarey said the Department of Energy Resources (DOER) and Office of the Attorney General (AGO) contributed to the development of the mitigation strategies. McCarey said the Council should have access to the letter through the DPU, but it would also be posted to the EEAC website.

Porter summarized winter price increase communication and mitigation strategies for Massachusetts customers and that the DPU had expressed general support of the proposed strategies included in the letter, so the PAs would move forward. Porter noted that the PAs will spend an incremental \$3 million to \$5 million to support statewide program awareness and targeted marketing within each PA service territory to promote customer participation. Porter said the PAs have developed consistent messaging for both marketing efforts, which would be shared with the AGO and DOER. Porter said the efforts will not fully mitigate energy price impacts, but the awareness campaign would be released before early October and that targeted PA marketing would follow shortly after. Porter said the PAs would implement a streamlined

approach for 100% weatherization incentives in census tracts with higher proportions of moderate-income customers. Porter said this offering would be available through January 2023 and would not require residents in target census tracts to complete income verification. Porter clarified that projects can be completed after January 2023, but contracts must be signed prior to the end of that deadline. Porter said the PAs would provide new pre-weatherization remediation incentives for 2-4-unit rental properties, which is an expansion of current PA effort to expand renter access. In addition, Porter noted that increased discounts would be offered on the Mass Save online marketplace. Porter said the marketplace is an important tool in and of itself, but it can also lead to customers receiving home energy audits and weatherization services. For the Small Business segment, Porter said the PAs would increase the volume of Main Street initiatives, which are door-to-door outreach campaigns in specific communities to increase program awareness and participation. Porter said incentives covering 90% of project costs would be offered by all PAs and 100% weatherization incentives would be offered where small business renters occupy properties.

Boyd supported the winter energy price mitigation strategies that Porter described, as energy efficiency programs are important for helping people. Boyd asked if the PAs could expand the census tract-level qualification for enhanced weatherization incentives. Boyd believed the strategies could be implemented beyond the winter rate increase mitigation efforts. Porter thanked DOER and AGO for effectively collaborating with the PAs on the rate increase mitigation efforts. Porter said the PAs will determine whether some of these efforts can persist, as some are driven by the time sensitivity of winter energy price impacts, especially for vulnerable communities. Porter added that the PAs anticipate learning from the implemented strategies to assess what can be permanently applied to program delivery. McCarey said the mitigation strategies will be structured in a way that will facilitate future evaluation. McCarey recalled that geotargeted energy efficiency efforts have been a Council interest for years so evaluation will be important. McCarey said the scale of the mitigation strategies need to balance contractor capacity with the need to serve customers.

Belliveau asked if small businesses occupied by renters were also eligible for 100% weatherization incentives. Porter explained that 100% weatherization incentives will be provided to small business renters and properties primarily occupied by renters.

Johnson asked what specific messages would be conveyed using the additional \$3 million to \$5 million in marketing funding. Johnson asked how much in pre-weatherization barrier mitigation incentives 2-4-unit rental properties would receive. Johnson also asked if the PAs have the workforce required to deliver all additional services that will result from the winter energy price increase mitigation strategies prior to next summer. Porter replied that the messaging will communicate winter price increases and PA offerings that can offset price increases, with a particular focus on weatherization and other energy efficiency offerings. Porter said the messaging will explain program participation pathways, but more details would be shared with the Council. Peters said 2-4-unit rentals will be provided \$5,000 per unit for weatherization barrier remediation. Peters clarified that these incentives are already available for moderate-income customers, so the PAs are expanding it to increase renter access. Peters said the PAs believe there is sufficient workforce capacity to deliver the enhanced offerings after initial discussions with contractors. Peters said the PAs have targeted eight census tracts for the

streamlined weatherization offering in order to mitigate winter energy price increases for as many customers as possible. Porter said contractors have desired increased utilization, so the enhanced offerings should have this effect.

Jacobson expressed overall support for the energy price increase mitigation strategies, but emphasized that the Low-income Energy Affordability Network (LEAN) need to be involved in strategy discussions. Jacobson cautioned against unintended consequences of an incorrectly structured census tract-level delivery strategy. Porter said PAs are treating these expansions as an opportunity to learn and identify any consequences. Porter noted that census tracts with high concentrations of moderate-income customers were targeted to ensure income-eligible customers are served appropriately, but the PAs want income-eligible customers to participate in appropriate pathways. Jacobson said the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines low income as 60-80% of area median income, so Mass save programs should adopt this definition. Porter responded that this change could not be made for the winter.

Johnson asked what percentage of program contractors remain now relative to 2021. Johnson questioned whether the PAs have sufficient contractor capacity given the low prices provided to contractors during the past year. Peters said the PAs presented contractor capacity earlier in 2022, so that data can be reshared, but reiterated that the PAs believe they have contractor capacity. Peters said the PAs will work with contractors and lead vendors to ensure program capacity is met.

Bodemer hoped the enhanced efforts are successful and said it is fortunate that participation levels will warrant bolstering the workforce.

3. EEAC Management

Follow-Up from August EEAC Meeting

McCarey noted that Executive Committee agendas will now include follow-ups from previous EEAC meetings to ensure open questions and requests are addressed. McCarey listed four follow-up questions and requests for the PAs from the August EEAC meeting:

- Respond to the C-Team's multifamily recommendations and determine what is feasible.
- Indicate whether the other PAs have replicated the Eversource account management structure.
- Clarify whether an energy burden calculator is available to prepare residents for converting to heat pumps.
- Provide an update on workshops to support minority- and women-owned business enterprise participation in Mass save programs.

Porter noted that the home heating calculator is public, but the tool does not calculate actual energy burden. Porter said the calculator provides cost comparisons for different heating equipment based on prevailing energy rates, so customers would need to do actual energy burden calculations themselves. McCarey asked if the data inputs to the calculator have been updated. Porter responded that the PAs will be updating the inputs, but there is still volatility in winter energy rates. Porter said the PAs are actively improving the heating calculator's functionality and

will share an expected completion date when they distribute the link to the existing version of the calculator.

Lyne said the PAs provided positive feedback on the pace of the August EEAC meeting as agenda items were fully covered without rushing. Lyne said the PAs will be able to provide responses to the above questions posed in August.

Councilor Term Updates

Evans announced that five Councilors are approaching the end of their five-year terms, but all are eligible for reappointment through the DPU. Evans said Cindy Arcate representing Massachusetts Non-Profits, Paul Johnson representing Energy Efficiency Small Businesses, Cammy Peterson representing Commonwealth Cities and Towns, Justin Davidson representing Massachusetts Realtors, and Tim Costa representing the Regional Electric Transmission Organization (ISO New England) as the five Councilors with expiring terms. Evans said that representation of Massachusetts Realtors and Regional Electric Transmission Organization are handled through a separate process with the Massachusetts Association of Realtors and ISO New England. Evans noted that DOER will draft job descriptions and solicit interest for the representation of Massachusetts Non-Profits and Commonwealth Cities and Towns. Evans also said that representation of Energy Efficiency Small Businesses is an elected position under statute, which is a complicated process that DOER will begin soon.

To facilitate increased transparency, McCarey noted that a new process of developing job descriptions for open Councilor seats was implemented when the last Councilor left the EEAC. McCarey said this process will be used for all open seats that are not elected or pre-designated. Evans said after the solicitation process, the Council will make a recommendation to the DPU, which then determines the appointment of Councilors.

Hybrid Fall EEAC Meeting

McCarey suggested that the Council meet in person at points throughout the year, and asked if November would be suitable for an in-person hybrid EEAC meeting. McCarey said Commissioner Woodcock supported meeting in person as he has not had the opportunity to meet many Councilors.

Bodemer asked if more than one in-person EEAC meeting would be held. McCarey anticipated that only one hybrid meeting would be held for the remainder of 2022. Porter said the PAs would be traveling from various locations, but they would be able to support in-person meetings. McCarey said DOER would determine a physical meeting location for November. Evans added that there are five Wednesdays in November, so the EEAC meeting would be held the week prior to Thanksgiving.

4. EEAC Technical Consultant Request for Response (RFR)

McCarey announced that the EEAC technical consultant contract expires at the end of 2022, so DOER updated the procurement document for EEAC technical consultant services, which was shared with the Executive Committee for review. McCarey noted that the procurement is competitive so the RFR is confidential. McCarey provided Executive Committee members with

a tracked changes version of the RFR to highlight what changed from the prior procurement document, to reflect current programs priorities and Council needs.

Johnson asked what significant changes were made from the prior RFR version. McCarey said substantive discussion on the procurement is prohibited during this public meeting.

5. September EEAC Meeting – Draft Agenda

McCarey announced that the September EEAC Meeting would include Public Comment, Q2 2022 semi-annual reporting, 2019-2021 Term Report review, and PA updates on the Renter Strategic Plan.

McCarey said the C-Team will summarize results of the 2019-2021 term in the context of the 2022-2024 Plan. McCarey also expected that the PAs provide specific Q2 reporting related to electrification and equity metrics. Lyne and Porter confirmed this would be the case. Lyne also noted that the updated Renter Strategic Plan would be shared next Friday. McCarey said the exact time allotments for each agenda item may shift as presentations are developed and shared. Belliveau estimated that the C-Team would need 20-30 minutes to present 2019-2021 Term Report data, but the timing should be discussed further. McCarey said Council updates may need to be expanded so the PAs can share the winter price outreach and mitigation efforts.

6. October EEAC Meeting – Draft Agenda

McCarey stated that the October EEAC Meeting would likely include workforce development updates from the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC), in addition to evaluation, measurement, and verification (EM&V) updates from the C-Team. McCarey said Ralph Pahl has worked with DOER to identify relevant studies for Council discussion. McCarey also said that the intent is to bring MassCEC into EEAC meetings on a semi-annual basis to provide updates.

McCarey recommended that the Council evaluate the new Department of Energy (DOE) funding and how it will integrate into Mass Save programs. McCarey also said Commissioner Woodcock highlighted changes to the Climate Act in August that will apply to the 2025-2027 Plan. McCarey said an Income Eligible-focused meeting led by LEAN and the PAs will occur in the future and also recommended the November EEAC meeting agenda include follow-up on contractor pricing.

Johnson suggested that detailed analysis is done on the Inflation Reduction Act. Johnson asked how the legislation would impact Mass Save programs, how much more funding will be provided, and how additional funds will be spent. McCarey replied that the Council will need to wait until DOE provides direction on funding amounts, requirements, and additional tax credits. Johnson asked if homeowners will be able to apply for funding through the federal government or PAs. McCarey responded that funding for these programs will come through DOER after DOE provides it. Belliveau said the Boston Globe featured an article that explained federal funding guidance.

Boyd said the Boston Globe is hosting a Twitter Spaces chat on electric vehicle incentives at 2:00 PM and encouraged people to listen, as Kyle Murray from Acadia Center would participate in the chat.

7. Adjournment

McCarey, as Chair, adjourned the meeting at 11:07 AM.

Meeting Materials:

- September 7, 2022 Executive Committee Meeting Agenda
- September 21, 2022 EEAC Meeting Draft Agenda