



MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, October 18, 2023
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Councilors Present:	Greg Abbe, Jo Ann Bodemer, Charlie Harak, Brian Beote (for Elliott Jacobson), Paul Johnson, Meg Lusardi, Commissioner Elizabeth Mahony, Deirdre Manning, Kyle Murray, Robert Rio, William Rose, Jonathan Schreiber, Mary Wambui, Sharon Weber, Brooks Winner, Dennis Villanueva, Cindy Carroll, Tim Costa, Maggie Downey, Michael Ferrante, Hammad Chaudry, Chris Porter, Stephanie Terach, Katelyn Mazuera (for Kate Peters)
Councilors Absent:	Paul Gromer
Consultants Present:	Eric Belliveau, Adrian Caesar, Gretchen Calcagni, Ben Cartwright, Margie Lynch
DOER Staff Present:	Ina Dasso, Alissa Whiteman, Ian Finlayson, Jo Ann Bodemer

1. Call to Order

Bodemer, acting on behalf of the Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM.

2. Public Comment

Anne Wright (Massachusetts Building Electrification Accelerator)

Wright commented that the EEAC facilitated a thoughtful and transparent process for developing recommendations for the 2025-2027 Plan. Wright said that in order to meet the urgency of the climate crisis, the Mass Save program must surpass the 2022-2024 equity targets and expand to achieve equitable building decarbonization at scale. Wright said that the Massachusetts Building Electrification Accelerator strongly supports the EEAC Equity Working Group (EWG) recommendations for the 2025-2027 Plan and provided additional recommendations for the programs:

1. Mass Save should direct community-scale solutions around identifying priority neighborhoods or building clusters, which would require an equity- and data-driven approach to effectively target program services.

2. Community First Partners and community advocates require support and resources including connections to existing state resources, service providers, and building-decarbonization coaches.
3. Mass Save needs targeted assessments that include a building-decarbonization plan coupled with a single point-of-contact for program services, quality assurance, and quality control. Long wait times and service delays are most daunting for underserved populations.
4. The program administrators (PAs) must improve coordination with state-decarbonization efforts. The benefit-cost-analysis framework for Mass Save must align with Massachusetts' climate and equity goals. In addition, the PAs must set ambitious goals tied to key-performance indicators for climate and equity.
5. The Council and PAs should work toward a statewide approach for funding building decarbonization since the full cost will exceed budget constraints for Mass Save.
6. Rate reforms, such as time-of-use rates or heat-pump-discount rates for low-and-moderate income households, will be necessary to avoid increasing energy burdens while decarbonizing buildings.
7. Improved data sharing and transparency are critical for decarbonizing buildings efficiently and equitably.

Vernon Walker (Green Justice Coalition)

Walker concurred with Wright that the EEAC led a thoughtful and transparent process for developing recommendations for the 2025-2027 Plan. Walker said that the PAs must steer Mass Save toward more equitable outcomes, as the program is one of the Commonwealth's most powerful tools for achieving climate goals. Walker suggested that the upcoming Plan requires legislative and regulatory shifts, in addition to changes in program design and strategy. Walker noted that Mass Save has historically failed to achieve an equitable distribution of program benefits, but the 2022-2024 Plan created a foundation to support more equitable outcomes with its equity targets. Walker urged the PAs to consider the needs of environmental justice municipalities (EJMs) and unintended consequences of program designs, including adverse bill impacts from electrification. Walker recommended that the PAs simplify income-verification and increase the income-eligible threshold from 60% of area-median income (AMI) to 80% AMI in order to better serve moderate-income customers. Walker said that the Boston Climate Action Network administered a focus group in which renters noted that discount-rate customers do not automatically qualify for the Weatherization Assistance Program. Walker said that delayed services and rebates have exacerbated equity issues, so Mass Save should implement software that instantly verifies income and streamlines program services.

Richard Hanlon (Embue)

Hanlon commented that continuous monitoring and commissioning are critical to ensure that sites remain in optimal configuration after initial commissioning or retrofit projects. Hanlon said that subscription fees for monitoring-based commissioning (MBCx) allow buildings to optimize energy consumption, but the fees are a barrier to project acceptance even though MBCx vendors can effectively communicate benefits to customers.

Robert Zogg (HeatSmart Alliance)

Zogg commented that the PAs possess data that would provide enormous benefits to community groups if shared. Zogg said the PAs have improved data transparency, but measure-level data capturing the number of heat-pumps installed over time will help track progress. Zogg said that the PAs should also indicate which installers are active in each community and how many heat-pump projects different installers have completed in order to make customers more comfortable.

3. Council Updates & Business

Virtual Meeting Procedure

Bodemer reviewed the virtual EEAC meeting procedure:

1. The Council meeting 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 function.
4. Councilors who disconnect from meetings need to announce when they rejoin.
5. All Council votes would be taken by roll call.

July, August, and September, 2023 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Murray motioned to approve the July 12, August 2, and September 6 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes, as submitted. Commissioner Mahony seconded. All were in favor with none opposed or abstaining. The July, August, and September Executive Committee Meeting Minutes were approved, as submitted, by the Executive Committee.

July, August, and September, 2023 EEAC Meeting Minutes

Weber commented that the top of Page 3 of the September 20 EEAC Meeting Minutes should read that “she and Abbe would not have to submit statements of interest.” Murray motioned to approve the July 19 and August 16 Meeting Minutes, as submitted, and the September 20 EEAC Meeting Minutes, as amended. Weber seconded. All were in favor with none opposed or abstaining. The July and August EEAC Meeting Minutes were approved, as submitted, and the September EEAC Meeting Minutes were approved, as amended, by the Council.

Department of Energy Resources (DOER) Updates

Bodemer announced that the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) approved the 2023 EEAC Budget and the appointment of Kyle Murray as the EEAC Representative of the Environmental Community until December 31, 2023.

Bodemer encouraged Councilors to share the openings for seats on the EEAC with their networks to ensure a robust reappointment process. Bodemer shared a list of Councilors with terms expiring at the end of 2023 and explained that incumbent Councilors will need to submit statements of interest if they seek reappointment. Current terms are expiring for the EEAC Representatives of:

- Executive Office of Economic Development
- Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection

- Environmental Community
- Organized Labor
- Low-Income Weatherization & Fuel Assistance Network
- Manufacturing Industry
- Energy-efficiency Experts
- Large Commercial & Industrial Customers
- Residential Customers

Bodemer said that resumes and statements of interest are due on November 15.

Program Administrator Updates

Carroll and Porter, on behalf of the PAs, provided updates on several topics including:

- Mass Save Climate Leaders
- Supplier Diversity Summits
- The world’s largest passive house project, Winthrop Center, located in downtown Boston
- Mass Save Community Education Grants
- A community-electrification grant from the Department of Energy (DOE) for the town of Everett
- The notice to the Department of Public Utilities (DPU) on commercial and industrial (C&I) turnkey lighting.

In addition, Porter shared year-to-date data on completed home-energy assessments and weatherization projects.

Villanueva asked if PAs could share the energy-use and carbon intensity for the Winthrop Center building. Porter confirmed that the PAs can share this information.

Bodemer stated that the PAs post a monthly-data dashboard that the Council can reference.

Johnson requested the distribution of weatherization projects among home-performance contractors (HPCs) and independent-insulation contractors (IICs). Lyne replied that the breakdown of HPC and IIC projects is listed at the bottom of slide 11 of the PAs’ presentation.

Wambui highlighted the DOE Buildings UP Grant awarded to Everett and the role of Mass Save sponsors in the Electrify Everett grant. Wambui said that the grant is remarkable and illustrates that while energy efficiency remains the core business of the EEAC, electrification and other decarbonization efforts are occurring parallel to Mass Save programs. Wambui said that all clean-energy programs including Mass Save are crucial for accomplishing statewide goals for reducing greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions. Porter responded that non-ratepayer funds are powerful for supporting decarbonization efforts. Porter added that the DOE grant will enable the city of Everett to support new engagement strategies while driving customers into Mass Save programs so they can access additional incentives to electrify buildings. Porter also said that the PAs are collaborating with other entities to coordinate funds in a similar fashion.

4. 2022-2024 Plan Mid-Term Modifications (MTMs)

Cape Light Compact (CLC) MTM: Review Draft EEAC Resolution

Calcagni, on behalf of the EEAC Consultants, described the EEAC Resolution on the Cape Light Compact which supports the Cape Light Compact MTMs regarding increased spending in three CLC programs and decreased spending in one program.

Council Discussion and Vote

Manning motioned to approve the EEAC Resolution on the Cape Light Compact MTMs. Murray seconded. All were in favor with none opposed or abstaining. The EEAC Resolution on the Cape Light Compact MTMs was approved by the Council.

Berkshire MTM: Review Draft EEAC Resolution

Bodemer reviewed the EEAC Resolution on the Berkshire MTMs caused by high demand for electrification measures and weatherization and its impacts on cost-effectiveness. Bodemer said that the EEAC Resolution was modified to correct clerical errors in addition to the latest information on how Berkshire will achieve cost-effectiveness by modifying the filed MTMs.

Council Discussion and Vote

Johnson asked how Berkshire plans to use the enhanced weatherization offering to meet cost-effectiveness requirements for each sector. Chaudry responded that Berkshire considered several strategies to achieve cost-effectiveness, such as targeting customers who never completed weatherization projects, which will be described in the modified MTMs.

Rose stated that the Office of the Attorney General (AGO) continues to work with Berkshire and Liberty in order to improve the modeled-cost-effectiveness of the Berkshire and Liberty MTMs, but will not support the MTMs unless each sector achieves cost-effectiveness.

Abbe recommended that Berkshire implement rigorous quality assurance and control as they “increase Wi-Fi thermostat production significantly” to ensure that the thermostats are installed and produce savings for customers. Chaudry replied that Berkshire intends to employ direct-install strategies for Wi-Fi thermostats.

Weber asked when Berkshire would update the filed MTMs to illustrate that benefit-cost ratios exceed 1.0. Lyne said that Berkshire and Liberty expect to file updated MTMs within the next two weeks. Chaudry said that Berkshire and Liberty are actively modeling different scenarios for cost-effectiveness. Lyne thanked the AGO, DOER, Liberty, Berkshire, and the EEAC Consultants for their contributions to the intensive modeling work.

Bodemer indicated that DOER and AGO, as intervenors in the MTM proceedings, submitted discovery requests to which Berkshire responded. Bodemer stated that the final EEAC Resolution on the Berkshire MTMs would include the tracked changes as implemented today and the original MTM filing as an attachment.

Commissioner Mahony motioned to approve the EEAC Resolution on the Berkshire MTMs, as amended. Rio seconded. All were in favor with none opposed. Rose and Villanueva abstained. The EEAC Resolution on the Berkshire MTMs was approved, as amended, by the Council.

Liberty MTM: Review Draft EEAC Resolution

Bodemer reviewed the EEAC Resolution on the Liberty MTMs caused by high demand for electrification measures and weatherization and its impacts on cost-effectiveness. Bodemer said that the EEAC Resolution was modified to correct clerical errors in addition to the latest information on how Liberty will achieve cost-effectiveness by modifying the filed MTMs.

Council Discussion and Vote

Commissioner Mahony motioned to approve the EEAC Resolution on the Liberty MTMs. Abbe seconded. All were in favor with none opposed. Rose abstained. The EEAC Resolution on the Liberty MTMs was approved by the Council.

5. Evaluation, Measurement, & Verification (EM&V) Primer

EEAC Consultant Presentation

Prahl, on behalf of the EEAC Consultants, presented a briefing on the EM&V framework utilized in Mass Save-program evaluation. Prahl described different EM&V study types, methodologies, and how they are applied to assess program impacts and refine program delivery. Prahl noted that many studies that will impact the 2025-2027 Plan are scheduled to conclude between November 2023 and April 2024.

Council Discussion

Bodemer asked why impact evaluations are labeled “net-to-gross studies” instead of “gross-to-net studies.” Prahl replied that the ratio of net-to-gross savings is an output of impact evaluations, which determined the nomenclature for the studies.

Weber asked why spending on EM&V decreased from 3% to 2% of total Mass Save budgets. Prahl indicated that 2% is nominally lower than the portion of program budgets allocated toward EM&V in many other jurisdictions, but Massachusetts has a large program budget which supports a strong EM&V framework.

Abbe asked if the results of EM&V studies could improve the cost-effectiveness of particular measures or programs such that their benefit-cost ratios exceed 1.0, thus enabling the PAs to implement new offerings. Prahl confirmed that study results can impact cost-effectiveness in the manner described since the programs have working assumptions for all energy impacts and non-energy impacts (NEIs). Prahl noted that NEI studies almost always increase net benefits since many existing assumptions set NEIs to 0; contrarily, baseline and net-to-gross studies generally reduce benefits since naturally occurring efficiency reduces claimable benefits. Abbe asked if the DPU has ever contested the findings of an evaluation study. Prahl said that the DPU has taken positions on the implications of study results and asked why the PAs have not adopted study recommendations, but the DPU has not questioned study methodology. Abbe asked Prahl to distinguish deemed savings from other savings calculations. Prahl responded that deemed savings assume specific savings values or values for parameters like operating hours, while other

measures use custom calculations to determine savings. Prah said that the EM&V framework must also determine realization rates to understand how much of the forecasted savings are realized after project installation.

Johnson asked how Councilors can get involved in the Evaluation Management Committee (EMC), which oversees EM&V and makes decisions on studies. Prah said that EMC welcomes Council input on studies and participation in meetings, subject to the Open Meeting Law. Johnson asked if the EMC is considering a moderate-income participation study similar to the upcoming Residential Customer Profile Study. Prah said that some studies have investigated trends in moderate-income participation, such as a 2022 study that explored lighting purchasing by moderate-income customers. Prah indicated that moderate-income customers have not been a primary focus of evaluations like other equity-focused subjects, but this could change in the future. Johnson asked who makes policy decisions for EM&V. Prah replied that decision making in the EM&V framework is stratified, where the DPU and DOER make overarching policy decisions while the EMC and evaluators make decisions on studies.

Winner asked when the Residential Customer Profile Study was published. Prah said that this 2022 study is one of many recent, equity-focused studies. Winner asked how the EM&V framework is changing with the shift toward electrification and decarbonization. Prah indicated that more budget is allocated toward studies on electrification and decarbonization measures including heat-pumps.

Johnson asked if there are major surprises from recent studies or upcoming studies. Prah said that there are no shocking results from recent studies and draft results of the Heat-Pump Market Effects Study suggest there are market effects attributable to the Mass Save programs, but it is too early to confirm.

Commissioner Mahony left the virtual meeting at 2:40 PM.

6. 2025-2027 Plan Workshop Recommendations

Bodemer presented recommendations from the 2025-2027 Plan workshops that require further refinement prior to finalizing the EEAC recommendations, but indicated that certain discussion on recommendations will be reserved for the final workshop.

Council Discussion

Villanueva asked how the Council can integrate the C&I Working Group (CIWG) into the 2025-2027 Plan because some EEAC recommendations are also under consideration by the CIWG. Bodemer said that the CIWG is not a specific EEAC subcommittee, but the insights from the CIWG are valuable for informing development of the 2025-2027 Plan. Villanueva asked why the CIWG is not a formal EEAC subcommittee. Evans clarified that the CIWG acts a liaison between the customers and PAs that does not directly report to the EEAC. Villanueva said that the CIWG has made notable progress on several issues highlighted in the EEAC recommendations for the 2025-2027 Plan, so it would be a waste if the Council does not integrated findings from the CIWG into the EEAC recommendations.

Lusardi noted that Power Options submitted public comment regarding the implementation delays caused by evaluation requirements and asked if the programs could use nationally accepted assumptions to streamline processes. Villanueva supported the use of such assumptions to improve program implementation. Bodemer asked what outcome is desired for making this recommendation. Villanueva replied that using nationally accepted assumptions would ease the delivery of some measures.

Rio left the virtual meeting at 2:55 PM.

Belliveau advised Councilors to provide feedback on the Strategic Evaluation Plan, which lists all evaluations to be conducted during a three-year plan. Villanueva and Lusardi expressed their desire to provide input on the Strategic Evaluation Plan, and Lusardi asked how the CIWG could make recommendations. Bodemer replied that the EEAC Consultants can coordinate with the CIWG.

Rose suggested that the Council connect all recommendations for specific targets to mandated reductions in GHG emissions, in order to minimize ratepayer burdens. Bodemer confirmed that the GHG mandates will guide all recommendations, but the PAs will have to balance program and budget impacts of EEAC recommendations. Rose also suggested requiring weatherization in order to receive any heat-pump incentives. Bodemer said that Rose should raise this during the final EEAC workshop on the 2025-2027 Plan.

Bodemer noted that the EEAC recommendations reference the building-decarbonization clearinghouse, which is still in early development, so it should not affect the recommendations until it approaches completion. Lusardi asked how the EEAC recommendations leverage or reference the clearinghouse. Villanueva suggested that the language should describe how the EEAC recommendations leverage and support the clearinghouse.

Commissioner Mahony rejoined the virtual meeting at 3:18 PM.

Harak stated that the EEAC recommendations should discuss contractor-referral fees if they are not mentioned in the EWG recommendations. Harak said that it takes time to develop utility allowances for deed-restricted-affordable housing for multifamily-electrification projects. Harak indicated that the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) supports the recommendation to increase electrification measures to equitably meet the Commonwealth's GHG-reduction goals, but said that the recommendation requires further discussion. Wambui replied that coordination between DOER and EOHLC is ongoing and the language highlights the importance of exploring the issue through the EEAC framework. Harak agreed.

Harak anticipated that the programs will require at least \$15 billion to meet goals for installing heat-pumps and encouraged others to join him in securing non-ratepayer funds from the legislature.

Murray proposed that the Council develop a discrete coordinated plan for pursuing non-ratepayer funds. Bodemer said that such a plan may be beyond the scope of EEAC recommendations, but agreed that the Council should continue to discuss the issue.

Wambui said that the PAs provided updates on education programs today and asked if the Council should provide recommendation on energy-efficiency education for middle schools separately. Bodemer asked the PAs to confirm whether current K-12-education efforts focus on home-energy efficiency or career opportunities in energy efficiency. Downey indicated that K-12 education involves both, but most job training is delivered through technical schools.

Rio rejoined the virtual meeting at 3:35 PM.

Weber asked if the programs would shift toward enabling solar providers to provide energy-efficiency services. Bodemer clarified that the EEAC would recommend that HEAs shift from identifying solely energy-efficiency upgrades to more comprehensive plans for decarbonization.

Harak commended DOER for consolidating Councilor comments and questions on over 200 recommendations.

Bodemer announced that DOER would distribute the EEAC recommendations for further discussion at the October 26 EEAC workshop and requested that Councilors provide all feedback.

7. Adjournment

Bodemer, acting on behalf of the Chair, adjourned the meeting at 3:49 PM.

Meeting Materials:

- Official Meeting Notice
- Meeting Link
- Agenda
- July 12, 2023 EEAC Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
- July 19, 2023 EEAC Meeting Minutes
- August 2, 2023 EEAC Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
- August 16, 2023 EEAC Meeting Minutes
- September 6, 2023 EEAC Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
- September 20, 2023 EEAC Meeting Minutes
- October Mass Save PA Update
- EEAC Consultant Memo on Berkshire, Liberty, and CLC Mid-Term Modifications
- EEAC Resolution – Berkshire MTM
- EEAC Resolution – CLC MTM
- EEAC Resolution – Liberty MTM
- EM&V Primer Presentation